

Akim Jah

Deportations in the Nazi Era – Introduction

We – i.e., my father and I – were picked up from our apartment by a plain-clothed Gestapo officer on September 24, 1942, and taken by tram to the large synagogue in Levetzowstraße. We arrived there towards evening. The seats had been removed from the synagogue and many Jewish families, who had also been arrested, already lay on the floor there. There were young and old, women, girls, children, men. On the morning of September 26, 1942, the Gestapo began to take away the Jews who were kept there, i.e., smaller and smaller troops – around 50 to 100 people – were put together and had to walk to Putlitzstraße [= Moabit freight] train station. [...] My father – Bruno Drexler – and I arrived at the train station with the last troop from Levetzowstraße at around noon on September 26, 1942. I seem to remember that Jewish guards – men and women – were appointed, even in the synagogue in Levetzowstraße. [...] The train then set off at midday on September 26, 1942 [...]. After a train journey of several days and nights, I can't say the exact number now, we could read signs outside saying "Riga". There was crying and praying in the compartments during the journey. [...] As I recall, the train stopped in Riga for one night. Then the train suddenly continued its journey. Then a rumor passed through the compartment. Someone had said that the ghetto in Riga was full. People in the compartment said no one knew where to take us and we were sure to be shot now. I personally didn't believe that at the time. [...] The train continued and arrived in Raziku [sic] at the crack of dawn, i.e., it suddenly stopped and we could read the sign RAZIKU. I didn't know which country that was in. [...] The doors were opened and we had to get out.¹

Helga Verleger (née Drexler), the author of this description of the transport from Berlin to Raasiku in German-occupied Estonia in September 1942, was 17 years old at the time and among the few survivors of the deportations of Jews to the ghettos and death camps in German-occupied Central and Eastern Europe. Around half of Europe's Jews murdered in the Holocaust were deported there from their last places of residence, regions, or countries by train before being killed. There were also between several ten thousand to several hundred thousand Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja, who were transported, among other places, to the '*Generalgouvernement*' in German-occupied Poland, and to Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration and death camp, where they were murdered.² Alongside vic-

1 Statement Helga Verleger, 19.02.1968, B Rep. 058, no. 416, Berlin State Archives. Translation by the author. See also Akim Jah: "Strukturelemente – Forschungsfragen – Quellen. Die Deportation der jüdischen Bevölkerung aus Berlin 1941 bis 1945", in Anja Siegemund and Michael Wildt (eds.): *Gedächtnis aus den Quellen. Zur jüdischen Geschichte Berlins. Hermann Simon zu Ehren*, Berlin/Leipzig: Hentrich & Hentrich, 2021, 135–149, here 137.

2 The exact numbers of both deported and murdered Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja are still not secured in research, especially because of the incomplete empirical basis. Most researchers currently refer to around 200,000 murdered persons, however, determining the exact number of

tims from Germany, the deportations above all also involved German-occupied regions and states allied with Germany.

As the transportation took place ‘in the shadow’ of much more violent experiences at the places of destination, only a small number of descriptions of the transports themselves exist from the few survivors. These testimonies, as well as the perpetrators’ administrative documents about the transports and their preparations, have been preserved scattered in various archives in different countries around the world. The statement by Helga Verleger, which was created in the context of court proceedings against former employees of the Gestapo due to their involvement in the deportation of Jews from Berlin, can thus now be found in the Berlin State Archives.³ However, the transport list containing her name has been preserved in the Arolsen Archives.⁴

The subject of this volume are sources and research on the deportations of Jews as well as Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja during the Nazi era in Europe. Deportations are understood here as those transports beyond borders that ended with the death or murder of the majority of the deportees. The collected contributions are based on presentations at the conference *Deportations in the Nazi Era – Sources and Research* held by the Arolsen Archives in November 2020. In this introduction, the course of research on the two groups of persecutees will be described, followed by a historical outline as well as considerations on perpetrators and research gaps. After the narrowing of the subject, the contributions will be presented.

Research on the Deportation of Jews

The deportation of the Jewish population from the Reich and from German-occupied regions as well as allied countries became an independent field of research of Nazi persecution at a relatively early stage. Immediately after the end of the Second World War, the Jewish Communities, who were in the process of reconstruction, and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) began

deportees remains a research desideratum. See Karola Fings: “The Number of Victims”. Available at: <https://www.romarchive.eu/en/voices-of-the-victims/the-number-of-victims/>. Last accessed: 03.08.2022.

3 Cf. Akim Jah: “Unschuldige Mordgehilfen”. Das Bovensiepen-Verfahren gegen ehemalige Mitarbeiter der Stapo-Leitstelle Berlin”, in Sabine Moller, Miriam Rürup, and Christel Trouvé (eds.): *Abgeschlossene Kapitel. Zur Geschichte der Konzentrationslager und der NS-Prozesse*, Tübingen: Edition diskord 2002, 187–199.

4 For the transport lists, see the contribution by Henning Borggräfe in this volume.

the research on the destinations of the individual transports and on the fate of those who were deported.⁵ Furthermore, governmental commissions were set up in various countries to investigate the crimes committed by the Germans and shed light on what happened to the Jewish population.⁶ The sources created at that time are generally available for academic research today.

Within academic research itself, it was Raul Hilberg above all who presented in detail the history of events, key structural elements, and regional specifics of the deportations to German-occupied Europe in a chapter comprising over 400 pages in his groundbreaking overall presentation of the Holocaust, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, which he began as early as 1948 and published in 1961.⁷ In 1974, H.G. Adler submitted his study about the deportations from the German Reich, which remains unsurpassed in its comprehensiveness to this day. Adler investigates numerous aspects of the organization and processes of the deportations, including the theft of the deportees' assets. The involvement of the administration in the deportations represents a focal point of his work, whereby he also presented numerous individual fates of victims as examples. Adler, who was himself a survivor of the Theresienstadt ghetto, was above all able to refer to the preserved documents of the Würzburg Gestapo.⁸

Today, a multitude of studies exist that look at the deportation and murder of the Jewish population in individual countries and regions as well as cities and even smaller towns. Alongside academic historical studies,⁹ these also include remembrance projects and results from 'lay researchers' relating to the Jewish history of individual locations.¹⁰ Research has also differentiated itself thematically. As a result, there are investigations into the deportation of individual

5 See, for instance, for Berlin Larry Lubetsky: *Berlin AJDC Tracing Office 1945–1947*, Berlin: AJDC Tracing Office, 1948. Available at: <https://digital-library.arolsen-archives.org/content/titleinfo/7273639?query=Lubetsky&lang=en>. Last accessed: 25.02.2022.

6 Cf. as an example for Vojvodina in Yugoslavia Aleksander Bursać: "Material about the Deportation of the Jews of Bača in 1944 in the Archives of Vojvodina, Fonds F. 183. Commission for Investigation of Crimes Committed by the Occupiers and their Collaborators in Vojvodina – Novi Sad (1944–1948), 1941–1950", in idem., Vladimir Todorović, and Peter Đurđev (eds.): *Deportation of the Jews of Bača in 1944*, Novi Sad/Ramat Gan: Archives of Vojvodina/Bar-Ilan University, 257–266.

7 Raul Hilberg: *The Destruction of the European Jews*, 2 volumes, London: W.H. Allen & Co, 1961.

8 H.G. Adler: *Der verwaltete Mensch. Studien zur Deportation der Juden aus Deutschland*, Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1974, XVII–XVIII.

9 One example of this is Christian Gerlach and Götz Aly: *Das letzte Kapitel. Der Mord an den ungarischen Juden 1944–1945*, Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch, 2004.

10 See, for example, Arbeitsgruppe Pogromnacht in Warburg at the Warburg Hüffertgymnasium: *Mut zur Erinnerung. Zugang zur jüdischen Geschichte Warburgs*, Warburg: Hüffertgymnasium, 1988.

groups of victims, e.g. Jews living in ‘mixed marriages’.¹¹ Studies into the various agencies involved in the deportations, including those who seized the assets of the deportees,¹² take into consideration the actors, e.g. the regional offices of the Gestapo, Security Police, the SS, and the men who worked there.¹³ Attention in research has also increasingly been paid to the forced collaboration of Jewish Communities and their representatives with the responsible Nazi authorities.¹⁴ In addition, memorial books were created that are devoted to the biographies of people deported from a certain geographical entity and to the events in the respective places of arrival, particularly in the ghettos in occupied Central and Eastern Europe.¹⁵ The names and paths of persecution of the deportees, which were often not known at all for a long time, have thus gradually been researched. In this context, the memorial books are increasingly being made available digitally and online.¹⁶ The *Transports to Extinction: Holocaust (Shoah) Deportation Database* project, which is based at Yad Vashem, reconstructs all transports “of Jews from every Jewish community carried out by the Nazi regime during the period of the Shoah”.¹⁷ The aim of the project is “to collect reliable and detailed information about each transport route, the bureaucratic system as well as the socio-economic background of the victims, enabling a comprehensive research of the deportation apparatus”.¹⁸

Research literature specifically about the destinations themselves is also still expanding,¹⁹ sometimes also with new research approaches. With her mono-

11 Cf., for instance, Maximilian Strnad: *Privileg Mischehe? Handlungsräume “jüdisch versippter” Familien 1939–1949*, Göttingen: Wallstein, 2021.

12 Cf. for instance, Gerald D. Feldman and Wolfgang Seibel (eds.): *Networks of Nazi Persecution. Bureaucracy, Business and the Organization of the Holocaust*, New York/Oxford: Berghahn, 2006.

13 The contributions in the anthology by Gerhard Paul and Klaus-Michael Mallmann are particularly worthy of mention here. See Gerhard Paul and Klaus-Michael Mallmann (eds.): *Die Gestapo im Zweiten Weltkrieg. ‘Heimatfront’ und besetztes Europa*, Darmstadt: WBG, 2000. See also the recent articles in Thomas Grotum (ed.): *Die Gestapo Trier. Beiträge zur Geschichte einer regionalen Verfolgungsbehörde*, Cologne/Weimar/Vienna: Böhlau, 2018.

14 Cf. Beate Meyer: *A Fatal Balancing Act. The Dilemma of the Reich Association of Jews in Germany, 1939–1945*, New York/Oxford: Berghahn, 2013.

15 Cf., for example, Angela Genger and Hildegard Jakobs (eds.): *Düsseldorf | Ghetto Litzmannstadt 1941*, Essen: Klartext, 2010.

16 See the article by Max Strnad in this volume.

17 Yad Vashem: “The Deportations of Jews Project”. Available at: <https://www.yadvashem.org/research/research-projects/deportations.html>. Last accessed: 25.02.2022.

18 Ibid.

19 The following lexically structured series of books are fundamental here: Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel (eds.): *Der Ort des Terrors. Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager*, 9 volumes, Munich: C.H. Beck, 2005–2009; United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

graph on the Theresienstadt ghetto in 2020, Anna Hájková thus presented the first comprehensive examination for some time of the transit ghetto, which played an important role in the history of the deportation of Jews from Central and Western Europe. Following the experience-based approach of E.P. Thompson, she also takes into consideration the prison society of the ghetto and the experiences of the Theresienstadt victims.²⁰ For Hájková, this widening of perspective is part of a “good historical practice, for which it is the key to integrate all participants’ perspectives”.²¹ The integration of microhistorical studies and the presentation of different perspectives, including the perspectives of persecutees, also characterize approaches towards the historiography of the Shoah as demanded and practiced by Saul Friedländer²² and most recently by David Cesarani.²³ Both Friedländer and Cesarani also focus on deportations from various German-occupied regions. The recently completed multi-volume edition *The Persecution and Murder of European Jews by Nazi Germany, 1933–1945*, published by the Leibniz Institute for Contemporary History, presents comprehensively the persecution of Jews in various countries and territories, including deportations, with a high number of reproductions of relevant sources.²⁴

The many works on decision-making processes at the Reich level offer a very precise image of planned, discarded, and implemented considerations regarding the forcible deportation and ultimate murder of the Jewish population from the German Reich, the German-occupied countries of Europe, and the states allied with Germany.²⁵ The equally very well-researched reciprocal relationship between local party functionaries and the Reich Security Main Office (Reichssicherheitshauptamt, RSHA) in the initiation and preparation of the deportations in the Reich and the activities of local SS functionaries and Nazi representatives

(ed.): *Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos 1933–1945*, to date 3 volumes, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009–2018.

²⁰ Anna Hájková: *The Last Ghetto. An Everyday History of Theresienstadt*, New York: OUP, 2020.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 13.

²² Saul Friedländer: *Den Holocaust beschreiben. Auf dem Weg zu einer integrierten Geschichte*, Göttingen: Wallstein, 2007; *idem.*: *The Years of Extermination: Nazi Germany and the Jews, 1939–1945*, New York: HarperCollins, 2007.

²³ David Cesarani: *Final Solution. The Fate of the Jews 1933–49*, London: Macmillan, 2016.

²⁴ Leibniz Institute for Contemporary History (ed.): *The Persecution and Murder of the European Jews by Nazi Germany, 1933–1945*, to date 4 volumes, Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2019–2020. The German original edition comprises 16 volumes: Institut für Zeitgeschichte (ed.): *Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933–1945*, Munich/Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2008–2021.

²⁵ See, for example, Christopher Browning: *The Origins of the Final Solution. The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy 1939–1942*, London: Arrow, 2005.

in the occupied regions also show the dynamic that existed among the perpetrators in the lead-up to the deportations which further radicalized the antisemitic policy. However, the procedures in the individual countries differed and were sometimes also characterized by asynchronicity due to, among other reasons, the course of war, political developments on site, behavior of the associated governments, and foreign policy-related considerations.

Research on the Deportation of Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja

As with the history of persecution of the minority in the Nazi era as a whole, for a long time little attention has been paid to the deportation of Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja as a subject of research. Even today, the topic is much less differentiated within research than the deportation of Jews. In West Germany, the public discourse on this aspect of history was characterized by racist images and an apologia of the persecution of supposedly ‘antisocial’ people in the form of ‘crime prevention’ measures – even decades after the end of the war. In the book *The Destiny of European Gypsies* published in 1972, Donald Kenrick and Grattan Puxon systematically presented for the first time the persecution of Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja in Nazi Germany, in German-occupied Europe and countries allied with Germany during the Second World War. The authors provided a historical event-based overview of the deportations and the camps that were connected to them.²⁶

In 1996, Michael Zimmermann presented for the first time a comprehensive study showing the persecution and murder of Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja in German-dominated Europe while taking a detailed look at the deportations by examining the various persecution measures.²⁷ More recent publications on the persecution of Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja also describe the deportations in more detail by looking into specific aspects such as the treatment of people of mixed descent (*‘Mischlinge’*) and deferrals.²⁸ Today, many local studies and biographical accounts concerning the history of the deportation of Sinti/Sin-

²⁶ Donald Kenrick and Grattan Puxon: *The Destiny of European Gypsies*, London: Chatto-Heinemann-Sussex University Press, 1972.

²⁷ Michael Zimmermann: *Rassenutopie und Genozid. Die nationalsozialistische ‘Lösung der Zigeunerfrage’*, Hamburg: Christians, 1996.

²⁸ See, for example, Guenter Lew: *The Nazi Persecution of the Gypsies*, Oxford/New York: OUP, 2000.

tize and Roma/Romnja uncover the local dynamics in connection with the deportations on site. It is worth mentioning here, for instance, the regional study into the persecution of Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja in Cologne by Karola Fings and Frank Sparing.²⁹ In addition, names of deportees have been researched and published as part of commemorative initiatives and the creation of memorials over recent years for various places.³⁰ The publication of the main book (*Hauptbuch*) of the ‘Zigeunerlager’ (‘gypsy camp’) in Auschwitz-Birkenau, which documents the names of the deportees murdered there, is of particular importance.³¹ Additionally, the recently begun research project *Encyclopedia to Document National Socialist Genocide of the Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja in Europe*, based at the Antiziganism Research Unit at Heidelberg University, has taken on the task of presenting “the current international status of research in a comprehensive, empirically saturated overview” and bringing together “the widely dispersed, often difficult-to-access historical knowledge of genocide [on Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja] and its causes, structures, and course”,³² which also raises expectations of a detailed description of the various deportations.

Historical Outline of the Deportation of Jews and of Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja

Following years of social, economic, and legal exclusion of the Jewish population in Germany, which above all also aimed at forcing them to emigrate, the Nazi state deported around 17,000 Jews with Polish family background over the German-Polish border at the end of October 1938. This operation was implemented by the local police authorities and named ‘*Polenaktion*’ (‘Polish ac-

²⁹ Karola Fings and Frank Sparing: *Rassismus – Lager – Völkermord. Die nationalsozialistische Zigeunerverfolgung in Köln*, Cologne: Emons, 2005.

³⁰ See, for example, for Hamburg, the article by Kristina Vagt in this volume.

³¹ Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau (ed.): *Memorial Book. The Gypsies at Auschwitz-Birkenau / Księga pamięci Cyganie w obozie koncentracyjnym Auschwitz-Birkenau / Gedenkbuch der Sinti und Roma im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau*, 2 volumes, Munich et al.: K.G. Sauer, 1993. See also the contribution by Théophile Leroy in this volume.

³² Heidelberg University: “Workshop zur Konzeption Enzyklopädie zum nationalsozialistischen Völkermord an den Sinti und Roma”. Available online: <https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/de/newsroom/enzyklopaedie-zum-nationalsozialistischen-voelkermord-an-den-sinti-und-roma>.

Last accessed: 07.03.2022. Translation by the author.

tion').³³ Although it lacked the experienced bureaucracy of the subsequent deportations, it was, as stated by Sybil Milton, the first mass deportation, which required the coordination of the railway, police, diplomacy, and financial authorities.³⁴

Like the Jewish population, Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja – who, even during the Weimar Republic, were not legally equal citizens and had barely any opportunities to leave Germany after 1933³⁵ – were also persecuted and experienced further legal and social exclusion after the Nazis came to power. They also became the victims of raids. In July 1936, in the context of the upcoming Olympic Games, the Berlin police sent around 600 Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja to the newly established 'Zigeunerlager' in the suburb Marzahn.³⁶ Two years later "over 800 Sinti and Roma were living there in miserable conditions".³⁷ Other major cities also established 'Zigeunerlager' in the second half of the 1930s, which represented "a special type in the Nazi internment camp system".³⁸ In the context of the *Aktion 'Arbeitsscheu Reich'* (operation 'work-shy Reich'), many Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja, like Jews, were taken to Buchenwald, Dachau, and Sachsenhausen concentration camps in the first half of 1938. A good year later, further Roma/Romnja from Burgenland in incorporated Austria were imprisoned in concentration camps in the Reich during another operation. These operations were ordered by Reichsführer-SS and Chief of the German Police Heinrich Himmler and took place as part of what was known as 'polizeiliche Vorbeugehaft' ('preventive police custody').³⁹

At the time of the German invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939, around two thirds of the more than 500,000 Jews living in Germany in 1933 had emigrated. With the beginning of the war, the already severely restricted legal emigration options were significantly reduced further, as Germany was then at war with many states. At the same time, the number of Jews in the German-controlled territory had increased considerably due to the war, with over two million Jews liv-

33 See most recently Alina Bothe and Gertrud Pickhan: "Ausgewiesen am 28. Oktober 1938 aus Berlin. Die Geschichte der 'Polenaktion'. Eine Einführung", in idem. (eds.): *Ausgewiesen! Berlin, 28.10.1938. Die Geschichte der 'Polenaktion'*, Berlin: Metropol, 2018, 12–29.

34 Sibyl Milton: "The Expulsion of Polish Jews from Germany, October 1938 to July 1939. A Documentation", in *LBI Year Book XXIX*, 1984, 169–199, here 174.

35 Cf. Wolfgang Wippermann: *Wie die Zigeuner. Antisemitismus und Antiziganismus im Vergleich*, Berlin: Elefanten Press, 1997, 150.

36 Patricia Pientka: *Das Zwangslager für Sinti und Roma in Berlin-Marzahn. Alltag, Verfolgung und Deportation*, Berlin: Metropol, 2013.

37 Wippermann, *Zigeuner*, 153. Translation by the author.

38 Ibid. Translation by the author. Cf. Zimmermann, *Rassenutopie*, 93–100.

39 Cf. Fings and Sparing, *Rassismus*, 93–108.

ing in Poland alone. From the viewpoint of the Nazi regime, forced emigration no longer appeared to be a realistic prospect.⁴⁰ With this in mind, the RSHA drew up plans to concentrate the Jewish population in a ‘reservation’ outside the Reich, whereby the deaths of the people affected were considered acceptable. The ‘reservation’ was initially intended to be in the ‘*Generalgouvernement*’ in occupied Poland, later in Madagascar, which then was part of the French colonial empire, and finally in the occupied Soviet Union. SS-Hauptsturmführer Adolf Eichmann, then head of the Central Agency for Jewish Emigration in Vienna (Zentralstelle für jüdische Auswanderung), actually organized the first transports of Jews from Vienna, Mährisch-Ostrau, and Katowice to Nisko, south-west of Lublin in the ‘*Generalgouvernement*’, in October 1939. There, the deportees had to build an encampment on site. Even though this operation ultimately failed and the RSHA stopped the deportations there, transports resumed in early 1940.⁴¹ In February 1940, a transport took place from Stettin (Szczecin) to the ‘*Generalgouvernement*’ and, in October 1940, at the same time as the Madagascar plan was discussed, on the initiative of the local *Gauleiters* more than 6,500 Jews were taken from Baden and Palatinate in southwest Germany to Gurs internment camp in the unoccupied part of France at the foot of the Pyrenees.⁴² In February/March 1941, around 5,000 Jews from Vienna were transported to the ‘*Generalgouvernement*’.⁴³

The start of the war also meant radicalization of the persecution of Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja. Alongside the aforementioned plans to deport the Jewish population to the ‘*Generalgouvernement*’, the deportation of Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja to occupied Poland was also considered within the SS in the context of the ‘*völkische Flurbereinigung*’ (‘racial consolidation of land’) proclaimed by Hitler.⁴⁴ An attempt by the chief of the German Criminal Police, Arthur Nebe, to add Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja from Berlin to the Viennese transports of Jews to Nisko failed, however, due to the general cancellation of deportations to

40 Cf. Andrea Löw: “Introduction”, in idem. (ed.): *The Persecution and Murder of the European Jews by Nazi Germany, 1933–1945. Volume 3: German Reich und Protectorate September 1939–September 1941*, Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2020, 13–67, here 13.

41 Cf. Jonny Moser: *Nisko. Die ersten Judendeportationen*, Vienna: Edition Steinbauer, 2012.

42 Cf. Memorial and Education Site House of the Wannsee Conference: “Gurs 1940”. Available online: <https://www.gurs1940.de/en/>. Last accessed: 03.03.2022.

43 Dieter J. Hecht and Michaela Raggam-Blesch: “Der Weg in die Vernichtung begann mitten in der Stadt. Sammellager und Deportationen aus Wien 1941/42”, in idem. and Heidemarie Uhl (eds.): *Letzte Orte. Die Wiener Sammellager und die Deportationen 1941/42*, Vienna/Berlin: Mandelbaum, 2019, 21–75, here 24–27.

44 Zimmermann, *Rassenutopie*, 167.

Nisko.⁴⁵ With the ‘*Festsetzungserlass*’ (‘detainment decree’) on October 17, 1939, however, Himmler ordered a ban on Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja that forbid them to leave their places of residence. Thereafter, camps were set up, which were ultimately used to prepare deportations.⁴⁶ In May 1940, the criminal police finally deported around 2,500 Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja from Northern, Western, and Southwestern Germany to places in the ‘*Generalgouvernement*’. A shed at the port of Hamburg, the Hohenasperg prison near Stuttgart, and the trade fair center at Cologne-Deutz served as assembly camps; the latter was subsequently also used as an assembly camp for the deportation of Jews.⁴⁷ However, the German administration in the ‘*Generalgouvernement*’ was not prepared for this deportation. The majority of the deportees were ultimately left to their own devices; some managed to return to the Reich for the time being.⁴⁸ Both deportations – of Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja to the ‘*Generalgouvernement*’ and that of Jews between October 1939 and the beginning of 1941 – were locally limited actions. They were all characterized by a certain improvisation on the part of the perpetrators as the whereabouts of the deportees at their destinations were usually not precisely planned. They also cannot be considered ‘death transports’. However, without a doubt, they represented a radicalization in the policy against the persecuted groups who were, made possible by the war, forcibly deported across borders. The organizational experiences that the SS, the police, and the Reichsbahn, in particular, made during this time also formed the basis for the systematic transports that began later.

When the Germans invaded the Soviet Union in summer 1941, the Einsatzgruppen began to kill both the local Jewish population and local Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja.⁴⁹ At the same time, in view of the military successes of the

⁴⁵ Fings and Sparing, *Rassismus*, 195–196.

⁴⁶ This included the Lackenbach camp in the Austrian Burgenland set up in November 1940, which was subordinate to the criminal police department in Vienna and existed until the end of the war. Up to 4,000 Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja passed through this camp, in which the conditions were catastrophic. Lackenbach was the starting point for transports to both the Litzmannstadt ghetto in 1941 and also to Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1943. Cf. Susanne Urban: “‘Dort in der Hölle haben wir fünf Jahre verbracht’. Lackenbach – ein KZ für Roma und Sinti”, in Susanne Urban, Sascha Feuchert, and Markus Roth (eds.): *Stimmen der Überlebenden des ‘Zigeunerlager’ Lackenbach*, Göttingen: Wallstein, 2014, 15–23, here 17.

⁴⁷ Zimmermann, *Rassenutopie*, 172–175; Fings and Sparing, *Rassismus*, 195–236.

⁴⁸ See the article by Verena Meier in this volume and Zimmermann, *Rassenutopie*, 176–184.

⁴⁹ Cf. Bert Hoppe and Hildrun Glass: “Einleitung”, in idem. (eds.): *Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933–1945. Volume 7: Sowjetunion mit annektierten Gebieten I. Besetzte sowjetische Gebiete unter deutscher Militärverwaltung, Baltikum und Transnistrien*, Munich: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2011, 13–89, here 25–45;

German military, Hitler, anticipating victory, issued the order to begin deporting Jews directly instead of, as initially planned, waiting until the end of the war.⁵⁰ At the beginning, the focus lay on removing the Jewish population from major cities and thus creating facts. This initially concerned Jews from the ‘*Großdeutsches Reich*’, i.e., from the ‘*Altreich*’, ‘*Ostmark*’ (Austria), and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia as well as Luxemburg. The transports that followed marked the start of the systematic deportations. Systematic here means the comprehensive inclusion of all Jews – and those whom the Nazis considered to be Jewish – that they could find. At the same time, systematic means the establishment of an unparalleled Europe-wide ‘deportation machinery’, which was organized in a division of labor with the involvement of numerous institutions and individuals. The processes were constantly ‘refined, ending in the systematic killing of the deportees in gas chambers.

The first transports left, among other places, Vienna, Prague, Berlin, and Frankfurt am Main heading for the ghetto Litzmannstadt (Łódź) in the second half of October 1941. Five transports with around 5,000 Roma/Romnja were also organized from Austria to Litzmannstadt at the same time. The original plan was that the deportees taken there would later be transported to the occupied Soviet Union. In fact, the deported Jews were housed in the already overcrowded ghetto, where the Nazis had concentrated the local Jews right after the beginning of the war and were later murdered at Kulmhof (Chełmno) and other killing sites.⁵¹ The affected Roma/Romnja were housed in a separate area, the ‘small ghetto’, within the Litzmannstadt ghetto, where many died of typhoid fever; others were also taken to Kulmhof and killed there.⁵²

Minsk and Kovno (Kaunas) followed as destinations for deportations of Jews from the Reich in November 1941, with transports to Riga, places in the ‘*General-*

Martin Holler: “‘Killing Fields’. Der Völkermord an den Roma in Ost- und Südosteuropa am Beispiel der besetzten Sowjetunion und Jugoslawiens”, in Karola Fings and Sybille Steinbacher (ed.): *Sinti und Roma. Der nationalsozialistische Völkermord in historischer und gesellschaftspolitischer Perspektive*, Göttingen: Wallstein, 2021, 82–111, here 82–93.

50 Susanne Heim: “Einleitung”, in idem. (ed.): *Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933–1945. Volume 6: Deutsches Reich und Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren. Oktober 1941–März 1943*, Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2019, 13–83, here 17.

51 Ingo Loose: “Die Berliner Juden im Getto Litzmannstadt 1941–1944”, in Stiftung Topographie des Terrors (ed.): *Die Berliner Juden im Getto Litzmannstadt 1941–1944. Ein Gedenkbuch*, Berlin: Stiftung Topographie des Terrors, 2009, 44–62, here 48, 57–60.

52 Erika Thurner: *National Socialism and Gypsies in Austria*, Tuscaloosa/London: University of Alabama Press, 1998, 102–105.

gouvernement', and Raasiku in occupied Estonia following later on.⁵³ In the first few months, there was no plan to comprehensively murder the deportees at the destinations. Nevertheless, the Nazi regime gladly accepted the vast numbers of deaths resulting from the catastrophic conditions on the trains, in the ghettos, and in the camps at the destinations and the arbitrariness of the local SS-authorities and guards.

In the context of the failed offensive against Moscow and the entry of the USA into the war in December 1941, the decision was ultimately made to systematically murder all Jews living within the German sphere of power.⁵⁴ The deportations thus became a crucial instrument within this plan. At the Wannsee Conference on January 20, 1942, representatives of various state and party agencies discussed the details of the mass murder of European Jews. In the preserved minutes, a total of over 11 million, who were to be deported and murdered, are listed in 31 countries and regions.⁵⁵ The conference also looked at the questions of who was to be included among the people affected and which groups should be temporarily exempt. Among others, this concerned Jews living in 'mixed marriages'.⁵⁶

In February 1942, only a few weeks after the Wannsee Conference and unrelated to it, in a local action an estimated number of 2,000 Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja were brought from Königsberg to Białystok. There they were imprisoned in the city jail. Many of them died due to the catastrophic conditions. Some of the surviving detainees were later released on condition of sterilization. Others were further deported in the fall of 1942, first to a camp in the Reich Commissariat Ukraine and then to the Brest-Litovsk ghetto and finally to Auschwitz-Birkenau.⁵⁷

With regard to the deportation of the Jewish population from the Reich, which continued right after the Wannsee Conference, the deportees were systematically murdered at the destinations from spring 1942 onwards. Many of these transports had been taken to the Lublin District in the '*Generalgouvernement*'.

53 Cf. Alfred Gottwaldt and Diana Schulle: *Die "Judendeportationen" aus dem Deutschen Reich 1941–1945*, Wiesbaden: Marix, 2005, 84–259.

54 Cf. Peter Klein: "Die Wannsee-Konferenz als Echo auf die gefallene Entscheidung zur Ermordung der europäischen Juden", in Norbert Kampe and idem. (eds.): *Die Wannsee-Konferenz am 20. Januar 1942. Dokumente, Forschungsstand, Kontroversen*, Cologne/Weimar/Vienna: Böhlau, 2013, 182–201.

55 Protocol of the Wannsee conference, R1000857, page 1, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts, printed in Kampe and Klein, *Dokumente*, 40–54, here 45.

56 Ibid.

57 Zimmermann, *Rassenutopie*, 228–229.

After a short stay at a transit camp or ghetto there, the Jews were killed at Sobibor and Belzec death camps, which were set up as part of ‘*Aktion Reinhardt*’ (‘operation Reinhardt’). From October 1942, all transports ‘to the East’ headed to Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration and death camp. The deportees were either killed there upon arrival or were selected for slave labor. With the exception of a very small number who survived until liberation, most of the slave laborers perished due to the horrible conditions at work and in the camp.

Aside from a few exceptions, older people over 65 years of age had been exempted from the first transports ‘to the East’. In public, these transports were euphemistically justified by the claim that the deported Jews would be conscripted to perform hard labor. Thus, older people could not be included without undermining the argument that older people “did not represent a danger and they were not able to build any roads – many of them actually lived in old people’s homes”.⁵⁸ However, from June 1942, this group of people, as well as highly decorated war veterans and functionaries from the Jewish Communities, were also deported to the Theresienstadt ghetto. According to Nazi propaganda, they were to spend their old age there. In fact, many of them died due to the living conditions they experienced,⁵⁹ others were deported to death camps ‘in the East’, where they were murdered.

At the same time as the mass deportations from the Reich, which lasted until early 1943, the SS and the (occupation) authorities began to deport the respective Jewish populations from occupied countries and satellite states. Auschwitz-Birkenau initially served as the destination for transports primarily from Western Europe, later also as a central death camp for all other transports. Over 100,000 people from the occupied Netherlands were deported there as well as to Sobibor and Theresienstadt, among others, from July 1942, mostly via camp Westerbork.⁶⁰ Around 25,000 Jews were deported to Auschwitz from Belgium via the Dossin barracks at Mechelen, and more than 70,000 people reached Auschwitz from the occupied and unoccupied parts of France via the Drancy assembly camp in a suburb of Paris.⁶¹ Among the Jews deported from the West Eu-

⁵⁸ Hilberg, *Destruction*, volume 2, 450.

⁵⁹ Anna Hájková: “Mutmaßungen über deutsche Juden: Alte Menschen aus Deutschland im Theresienstädter Ghetto”, in Andrea Löw, Doris L. Bergen, and idem. (eds.): *Alltag im Holocaust: Jüdisches Leben im Großdeutschen Reich 1941–1945*, Munich: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2013, 179–198.

⁶⁰ See also the contribution by Daan de Leeuw in this volume.

⁶¹ Cf. Katja Happe, Barbara Lambauer, and Clemens Meier-Wolthausen: “Einleitung”, in idem. (eds.): *Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933–1945. Volume 12: West- und Nordeuropa Juni 1942–1945*, Berlin/Munich/Bos-

ropean countries were also many who had fled there from Germany in the years before. Jews were also deported to Auschwitz in a relatively small number from Norway.⁶²

Some of the Croatian Jews who had not already died in the camps within the German satellite state were also deported to Auschwitz in summer 1942.⁶³ Transports with a total of almost 58,000 people from Slovakia reached the ghettos in the Lublin District from as early as March 1942, and Auschwitz for the first time in April 1942. The Ostbahn (Eastern Railway) also transported the Jews who were still alive in the ‘*Generalgouvernement*’ ghettos to the ‘*Aktion Reinhardt*’ death camps Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka from March 1942, and later also to Auschwitz.⁶⁴

As a consequence of the Auschwitz decree published in December 1943, the criminal police deported 22,600 Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja from Germany and some German-occupied countries to Auschwitz-Birkenau. This also included, for instance, people from the Netherlands, who were deported to Auschwitz via Westerbork, which was primarily used as an assembly camp for the deportation of Jews.⁶⁵ The SS imprisoned the deportees in the ‘*Zigeunerlager*’, a separate area in Auschwitz-Birkenau. Those who did not die there as a result of the catastrophic conditions and who were not transported to Natzweiler for medical experiments, either to the Auschwitz I main camp as former members of the Wehrmacht, or to other concentration camps for forced labor were murdered in the gas chambers in the summer of 1944.⁶⁶

Roma/Romnja from Southeastern Europe were also included in deportations. In the ‘Independent State of Croatia’, several thousand people were thus taken to the Jasenovac concentration camp in early summer 1942, where they were murdered.⁶⁷ At the end of 1944, the Arrow Cross regime deported Roma/Romnja from Hungary to sub-camps of Buchenwald and Ravensbrück concentra-

ton: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2015, 7–83, here 31–83; Katja Happe, Michael Mayer, and Maja Peer: “Introduction”, in idem. (ed.): *The Persecution and Murder of the European Jews by Nazi Germany, 1933–1945. Volume 5: Western and Northern Europe 1940–June 1942*, Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2019.

⁶² Happe, Lambauer, and Meier-Wolthausen, *Einleitung*, 13–83.

⁶³ Ivo Goldstein and Slavko Goldstein: *The Holocaust in Croatia*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2016, 362–370.

⁶⁴ Cf. Stephan Lehnstaedt: *Der Kern des Holocaust. Belzec, Sobibór, Treblinka und die Aktion Reinhardt*, Munich: C.H. Beck, 2007, 63–76.

⁶⁵ Zimmermann, *Rassenutopie*, 314–315.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 339–344.

⁶⁷ Holler, *Killing Fields*, 102–103.

tion camps for forced labor.⁶⁸ In Romania, which was allied with Germany, the fascist military dictatorship under Ion Antonescu deported around 25,000 of the more than 200,000 Roma/Romnja who lived in the country to Transnistria, the area that formerly belonged to the Soviet Union in the east of the country, in summer and early fall 1942. Some of the Roma/Romnja had to use their own horse-drawn carts for transport, supervised by military and police. Many of them died on the journey due to the cold, malnutrition, and exhaustion.⁶⁹ Already in the fall of 1941, Transnistria had become the destination of deportations of Jews. About 150,000 were deported from Bukovina and Bessarabia by the Romanian authorities. In Transnistria the deportees were left to fend for themselves, many perished due to hunger, diseases, and debilitation, others were murdered there by German Einsatzgruppen, Romanian units, members of the ‘Volksdeutscher Selbstschutz’ and Ukrainian auxiliary policemen.⁷⁰

At the beginning of 1943, several tens of thousands of Greek Jews were deported from the port city of Saloniki, which had a large Jewish population. Other parts of Greece followed shortly afterwards.⁷¹ The last mass deportation concerned Hungary. From the middle of May 1944, over 400,000 people were deported from there, including Jews from the regions occupied by Hungary, particularly Bača, which was previously part of Yugoslavia. The people affected were mostly murdered in Auschwitz-Birkenau; some of them ended up in Germany as forced laborers.⁷²

On Perpetrators and Research Gaps

Despite the parallels between the deportation of the Jewish population on the one hand and of Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja on the other, and also despite specific synchronicities and overlaps, as in the case of the deportations to the Litzmannstadt ghetto in 1941 and the mass murder in Auschwitz-Birkenau,

⁶⁸ Zimmermann, *Rassenutopie*, 292.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 286–289. See also the contribution by Viorel Achim in this volume.

⁷⁰ Mariana Hausleitner, Souzana Hazan, and Barbara Hutzelmann: “Einführung”, in *idem.* (eds.): *Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933–1945. Volume 13: Slowakei, Rumänien und Bulgarien*, Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2018, 13–95, here 59–63.

⁷¹ Cf. Iason Chandrinou and Anna Maria Droumpouki: “The German Occupation and the Holocaust in Greece: A Survey”, in Giorgos Antoniou and A. Dirk Moses (eds.): *The Holocaust in Greece*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018, 15–35.

⁷² Cf. Gerlach and Aly, *Kapitel*.

both are to be viewed separately. This not only relates to the chronology of the persecution measures and therefore the deportations, but it is also expressed in the responsibilities on part of the perpetrators. Although all deportations were planned and organized within the system of terror of Reichsführer-SS and Chief of the German Police Heinrich Himmler and within the RSHA established in 1939, the Gestapo was in charge of the deportation of Jews and the Reichskriminalpolizeiamt (RKPA, Reich Criminal Police Office) for Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja. In the – relatively well-researched – RSHA sub-department IV B 4 ‘Jewish affairs and evacuation matters’ (*Judenangelegenheiten und Räumungsangelegenheiten*), Adolf Eichmann organized the transports of the Jews, but was also responsible for the mass transports of other groups, including Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja.⁷³ Within the RKPA, in relation to Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja, the ‘Reichszentrale zur Bekämpfung des Zigeunerunwesens’ (‘Reich Headquarters for the Gypsy Nuisance’) was the crucial agency for the issuing of instructions, monitoring, and “communication with foreign agencies”.⁷⁴ The Reichszentrale operated in close collaboration with the ‘Rassenhygienische und bevölkerungsbiologische Forschungsstelle’ (‘Racial Hygiene and Population Biology Research Unit’) at the Reichsgesundheitsamt (Reich Department of Health) under Robert Ritter.

The specific preparation and implementation on site was the responsibility of the respective regional and local agencies. In the ‘*Altreich*’, these were the Stapoleitstellen (state police headquarters) respectively the Stapostellen (state police stations) and the Kriminalpolizeileitstellen (criminal police headquarters) respectively the Kriminalpolizeistellen (criminal police stations); in the occupied countries the offices of the SS Security Police were usually responsible. Further, many actors and agencies in Germany and abroad were also involved in the deportations in one form or another, such as the Reichsbahn or the financial authorities, the Foreign Office, and the governments and local administrations of the states allied with or occupied by Germany. In some cases, Eichmann’s employees were directly on site to organize the deportations, whereby they were able to draw from their former experiences in other locations. The best-known example of this is Alois Brunner. Brunner initially organized the systematic deportations from Austria as head of the Central Agency for Jewish Emigration in Vienna between fall 1941 and 1942. He then went to Berlin before going to Saloniki in early 1943 and then to Paris; in 1944 he was in Bratislava. In all the men-

73 Cf. Hans Safrian: *Eichmann und seine Gehilfen*, Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch, 1995; Thurner, *National Socialism*, 102.

74 Zimmermann, *Rassenutopie*, 109. Translation by the author.

tioned places, he was in charge of organizing the deportation of Jews for which he was considered particularly brutal. He took with him his experiences in organizing assembly camps and transports, in the ‘selection’ and imprisonment of victims, and in the perfidious instrumentalization of the Jewish Communities.⁷⁵

If one looks closer at Brunner’s actions, the way the deportations were carried out in the individual locations, despite all their local differences, becomes apparent. We now know relatively precisely not only what the orders of the RSHA and the respective political backgrounds were, but also how the deportations were organized and, in part, what the conditions were like in the assembly camps. Through perpetrator research and local studies, we know a great deal about the biographical backgrounds of the perpetrators, their attitudes, and their behavior. Thus, we can create typologies and identify the functionality of various perpetrator groups in the mass murder and, in particular, also in the implementation of the deportations.⁷⁶

Despite the research situation described, which could only be touched on here, serious research gaps continue to exist. These include, for instance, the events and structures on site, such as individual assembly camps, as well as structural elements, such as a comparative analysis of the various camps and transports. In addition, certain groups of perpetrators have not yet been researched sufficiently, such as bailiffs involved in the seizure of assets. The behavior of the rest of the population, particularly neighbors who were witnesses of raids, also represents a research desideratum. The police system, particularly the interlinking of the various departments and units of the Gestapo, the criminal police, and the protection police, especially in larger cities in the ‘*Altreich*’, is not as well-researched as one might assume. Although the SS in the occupied and allied countries and its collaboration with the Wehrmacht and the local institutions is subject of a series of instructive individual investigations, in which the deportations and ghettos as destinations also play a role, research gaps nevertheless still exist here, too. Overall, it can be said that the research situation for individual countries, regions, and cities and within the stated areas of research differs significantly, and that comparative and comprehensive research approaches continue to represent exceptions. Additionally, a complete identification of, above all, the deported and murdered Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja and Jews is still pending.

⁷⁵ Safrian, Eichmann, 189–319.

⁷⁶ Gerhard Paul: “Von Psychopathen, Technokraten des Terrors und ‘ganz gewöhnlichen’ Deutschen”, in idem. (ed.): *Die Täter der Shoah. Fanatische Nationalsozialisten oder ganz normale Deutsche?*, Göttingen: Wallstein, 2002, 13–90.

Although numerous first-hand accounts or biographical studies exist, which focus attention on the perspectives of the deportees, a systematical investigation into the situation of the victims is lacking. Within this, in terms of an integrated history of the Shoah and the Porajmos, research should be conducted into the experiences, survival strategies, and also acts of resistance of the deportees before being deported, i.e. in the assembly camps, during transports, and at the destinations.⁷⁷ It can be assumed that the conditions sometimes differed significantly and there is no conformity in the experiences of the victims, even for a place like Berlin, because the conditions depended on the time the people were picked up and on the destination of the transports.⁷⁸ For instance, some cities in the Reich had permanent assembly camps that existed months or even years, while they were only created on a temporary basis in other places. The conditions in the assembly camps sometimes differed drastically, whereby the situation in the camps where the transports to Theresienstadt were prepared, usually was somewhat better for those affected than in the assembly camps for the ‘transports to the East’. The Jewish population was sometimes collected from apartments – quite often ‘Jews apartments’ (*Judenwohnungen*) in which several families or individuals had to live together –, homes, or even from labor camps. Furthermore, the conditions in the camps set up by the local administrations for Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja also differed from city to city. Ultimately, as Alfred Gottwaldt and Diana Schulle have written, no transport was the same “as any other with regard to date, departure station, scope, course, destination, and other surrounding circumstances, so that a differentiated consideration and also a detailed description avoiding assumptions are always required in every case”.⁷⁹ Part of an integrated history would also be to systematically consider the perpetrators on site and make structures and agencies involved the subject of comparison.

About this Publication

This publication addresses the deportations as a specific part of the Shoah and the Porajmos. Deportations – i.e. the transport carried out by means of state

⁷⁷ Cf. Tanja von Fransecky: *Flucht von Juden aus Deportationszügen in Frankreich, Belgien und den Niederlanden*, Berlin: Metropol, 2014.

⁷⁸ Cf. Cesarani, *Solution*.

⁷⁹ Gottwaldt and Schulle, *Judendeportationen*, 15. Translation by the author.

coercion,⁸⁰ which usually took place by train – were a central structural element of the Nazi persecution and of extermination policies as well as a prerequisite for the mass murder of millions. However, as Birte Kundrus and Beate Meyer have written in the special edition of *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Nationalsozialismus* on the deportations of Jews from Germany, the Nazi deportations are “difficult to reduce to a single concept both historically and legally”.⁸¹ According to Meyer and Kundrus, it would be a mistake to equate them with ‘death transports’ because, as explained above, they only gradually developed into these later on.⁸² Nevertheless, it is difficult to show a strict separation as the transports were carried out by the same actors and within the same structures; and the conditions for the affected victims at the places of departure were also often the same. In addition, even those deported between fall 1941 and spring 1942 ended up in the Nazi machinery of murder and, in some cases, were killed before the systematic mass murder of the deported Jews from the ‘*Altreich*’ had even begun. Against this backdrop, the articles in this volume relate to aspects of all transports after the beginning of the systematic deportations of the Jewish population in October 1941. They also include the transports of Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja into the ‘*Generalgouvernement*’ in 1940, which were not ‘death transports’ but often preceded the murder of the deportees far away from their former places of residence. The deportations of Roma/Romnja to Transnistria in 1942 are also addressed in this publication. Here, too, those affected were left to fend for themselves, but a large proportion perished as a direct result of the deportation. However, the contributions do not focus on incarceration in concentration camps, such as in connection with the pogroms of November 1938 or in the first few years after the Nazis came to power as part of ‘*Schutzhaft*’ (‘protective custody’) or ‘*Vorbeugehaft*’ (‘preventive custody’) within *Aktion ‘Arbeitsscheu Reich*’.⁸³

The deportations of Jews and of Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja were not the only mass transports of people during the Nazi period. The German authorities

80 For the contemporary definition, see Joseph Heimberger: “Deportation”, in Alexander Elster and Heinrich Lingemann (eds.): *Handwörterbuch der Kriminologie und der anderen strafrechtlichen Hilfswissenschaften*, volume 1, Berlin/Leipzig 1933, 217–227.

81 Birte Kundrus and Beate Meyer: “Editorial”, in idem. (eds.): *Die Deportation der Juden aus Deutschland. Pläne – Praxis – Reaktionen 1938–1945*, Göttingen: Wallstein, 2004, 11–20, here 12. Translation by the author.

82 Ibid.

83 However, Verena Meier also looks at the operation in her article, which concerns the ‘prevention department’ within the criminal police, in order to present in detail the organizational changes within the criminal police leading to the deportations in 1943.

also used special trains (*Sonderzüge*) for the *‘Umsiedlung’* (‘resettlement’) of *‘Volksdeutsche’* (‘ethnic Germans’) and for the transport of Wehrmacht soldiers. Millions of forced laborers and prisoners of war were also transported with the Reichsbahn. Although there were direct links such as to the logistics of the Reichsbahn, these transports, with one exception, which is connected to the deportations of the Jewish population,⁸⁴ are not the subject of this publication. What was known as the *Krankentransporte* (transport of sick people), which transported people classified as ‘disabled’ to their deaths, also cannot be looked at here.

The focus of the volume lies on presenting and discussing sources that relate to the deportations, as well as discussing research questions. These generally concern regional or local historical developments that highlight the structure of the deportations and the deportation system: What was the organization of the transports like? Which agencies were involved and what was the division of labor e.g. within the police? How did the deportees react? What route through the camp system was taken by the deportees who were not killed at the place of arrival? How did the Gestapo make use of the infrastructure of the persecutees, such as by using buildings and the labor of employees of the Jewish Communities? These are just a few of the questions investigated in the contributions that follow.

The contributions, which adopt very different methodologies, concern not only very different locations and countries in Nazi-occupied Europe, but also focus on very different periods, and thus show both the temporal and the geographic dimension of the deportations and mass murder.

At the same time, the articles show the abundance of different sources that are accessible and how they can be used for research in a qualitative and quantitative regard. Alongside preserved documents of the perpetrators, the sources also comprise, for example, documents originated from the victims, such as petitions from the Theresienstadt ghetto and from Transnistria,⁸⁵ and sources from the post-war period, for instance interviews survivors gave shortly after they returned to their countries of origin.⁸⁶ The preservation but also the cataloging of the holdings are very differently developed. While, for example, the documents from the Litzmannstadt ghetto – which is the subject of no less than two contributions – have largely been preserved, and contain, among other things, the

⁸⁴ See the contribution by Alexandra Pulvermacher in this volume.

⁸⁵ See the contributions by Tomáš Fedorovič and Viorel Achim in this volume. On this topic in general, see also Thomas Pegelow Kaplan and Wolf Gruner: *Resisting Persecution. Jews and their Petitions during the Holocaust*, New York/Oxford: Berghahn, 2020.

⁸⁶ See the contributions by Johannes Meerwald in this volume.

bank records of the ghetto, the deportation documents for most local Gestapo and criminal police offices on the deportations in the ‘*Altreich*’ do not exist anymore. The transport lists for the deportation of Jews from the Reich are an exception here, as they have not only largely been preserved in the Arolsen Archives but have also been partly extensively indexed and can thus be quantitatively evaluated via metadata.

In view of the complexity of the historical subject, it seems obvious that the articles published here can only cover small geographic and thematic areas, and the selection, which is based on the presentation during the conference, does not express any content-related emphasis and is far from having any claim to comprehensiveness. Nevertheless, they are intended to contribute towards an integrated history of the deportations in the Nazi era.

The first contributions of the volume are devoted to archival sources, online portals, and methodological approaches. Following this introduction, *Henning Borggräfe* outlines a general model of the sources on deportations in a fundamental text. He presents various relevant source categories using eight contexts, from the preparation of a transport to the remembrance of the deportations after the end of the war. Moreover, he shows how spatial concentration processes within Berlin for the Jewish population in the years and months leading up to the deportations can be presented by linking metadata from the transport lists of the deportation of the Jewish population to other sources. The article exemplifies the digital possibilities of how sources can be quantitatively evaluated by cataloging and processing large amounts of data. The transport lists have been preserved in the Arolsen Archives and form part of the relevant holdings stored there regarding the deportations both of Jews and of Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja. These also include documents from the concentration camps as well as post-war compilations and correspondence files from the International Tracing Service, the predecessor institution of the Arolsen Archives.

Many of the contributions printed in this volume refer (in part) to these sources. In their article, *Christian Groh* and *Kim Dresel* offer a systematic overview of these holdings and discuss recent projects in digitizing, indexing, and cataloging material. The majority of the holdings of the Arolsen Archives can now be viewed online and are part of a growing number of resources relating to the deportations on the Internet. In the contribution “Potentials of Databases for Research and Culture of Remembrance Using the Deportation of Jews under the Nazi Regime as an Example”, *Max Strnad* investigates various relevant portals and shows how their potential can be better exploited in the future, if information is clearly identifiable and, above all, better interlinked. Alongside the online collection of the Arolsen Archives, Strnad refers to Yad Vashem’s *Transports to Extinction: Holocaust (Shoah) Deportation Database*, the *Statistik und Deportation der jüdischen*

Bevölkerung aus dem Deutschen Reich website, and the *Biografisches Gedenkbuch der Münchner Juden 1933–1945*. Besides larger institutions and online resources, documents on the deportations have also been preserved scattered in numerous smaller archives, including private collections. In her article, *Susanne Kill* uses the personal archive of Alfred Gottwaldt to discuss the importance of private archives for research; she also investigates the function of the Reichsbahn and the state of research in this regard. Railway historian Alfred Gottwaldt, who passed away in 2015, was one of the most knowledgeable experts on the history of the deportations of Jews from Germany and of the Reichsbahn in the Nazi era, which organized and carried out the transports throughout Europe. His extensive collection can be viewed in the archive of the Deutsche Bahn Stiftung. Archives and databases are important sources not only for historians but also for family members looking for biographical information about persecuted and murdered relatives, who were often deported before they were killed. From this perspective, *Aya Zarfati*, in her text “Interaction, Confusion and Potential: On the Clash between Archives (on Nazi History) and Family Research”, discusses using, above all, relevant databases. She sketches ways in which they and archives in general could better address family members and their needs and make information and insights for biographical research easier available, accessible, and comprehensible.

Two articles are dedicated to preserved visual sources of the deportations of the Jewish population from the German Reich, which represent an independent type of source. *Christoph Kreutzmüller* offers an overview of preserved photographs and contextualizes them in the pictorial tradition in Germany. In her sociological contribution, *Elisabeth Pönisch* analyzes the events before, during, and after the deportation as a social process. The basis is not only photographs, but also film material, narrative passages, and artefacts.

The subsequent articles concern “Racial Registrations, Forced Housing, and Local Deportation Dynamics”. *Verena Meier* uses the deportation of Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja from Magdeburg to illustrate the organizational structure within the criminal police while also showing how this changed between *Aktion ‘Arbeitsscheu Reich’* in June 1938 and the deportation to Auschwitz-Birkenau in March 1943 and how the police were able to rely on existing structures. The basis for the study is provided by various sources, including prisoner books from the police prison in Magdeburg. *Théophile Leroy* also looks at the persecution and deportation of Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja over a prolonged period of time (between 1940 and 1944), namely in Alsace, which was annexed by Germany. Local criminal police records, among other documents, are his main sources. Leroy highlights how the escalating persecution and genocidal policies targeting Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja were implemented. He is able to show

that the Strasbourg deportation of March 1943 was the result of specific racial identification operations. The local dynamics are also the subject of the article by *Joachim Schröder*. He focuses on the example of Düsseldorf and, on the basis of files from the Gestapo and other local actors, addresses the subject of ‘*Judenhäuser*’ (‘Jews houses’), which has so far been largely overlooked within research. The admissions to a ‘*Judenhaus*’, which began in 1939, preceded the deportations and were the expression of the increasing concentration of the Jewish population within cities in the German Reich on the eve of the deportations. In the early 1940s, Jewish old people’s homes were also places where many Jewish people lived as a result of persecution. Following the contribution by Henning Borggräfe on the Berlin transport lists, *Akim Jah* shows, using the example of the Jewish Old People’s Home in Berlin’s Gerlachstraße, how Jewish institutions were misused as assembly camps by the Gestapo. He evaluated transport lists in order to trace the destruction of the old people’s home and the deportation of its residents during 1942 and show the use of the buildings first as a temporary and then as a permanent assembly camp for the transports to Theresienstadt. Unlike in Berlin, where this was only the case from the beginning of 1943, in Vienna the mass transports of Jews were largely concluded in October 1942. *Michaela Raggam-Blesch* focuses on the fate of ‘protected’ groups during the last years of the war in Vienna. Like in Berlin and other places in the Reich, smaller groups remained or were initially protected from being deported following the conclusion of the mass deportations, particularly members of mixed families with a non-Jewish spouse or parent. How they were ultimately deported from Vienna’s Nordbahnhof in the years 1943 to 1944 is outlined by Raggam-Blesch using various, above all local sources with different provenances. *Dóra Pataricza* presents and analyzes the fates of the Jewish deportees and returnees in May/June 1944 in the transborder region around Hungarian Szeged, which also includes the Serbian region of Bačka, which was occupied by Hungary. She also outlines an international project, which uses all relevant sources from various archives around the world to identify the names of around 10,500 Jews who were deported from Szeged and to develop a database for them.

Several contributions are dedicated to the persecution routes following deportation in various contexts. *Kristina Vagt* outlines the transports of Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja from Northern Germany to the ‘*Generalgouvernement*’ in 1940. Those affected were taken to Belzec forced labor camp and later left to fend for themselves. Vagt investigates the further persecution of the deportees based, among other sources, on compensation records and documents from the Arolsen Archives. The article was created in the context of research into the names of deportees for the planned documentation center on the site of the former Hannoverscher Bahnhof in Hamburg, from which the deportation transports

departed. *Alfred Eckert* looks into the persecution routes of those deported from Nuremberg to Riga in November 1941. He outlines how the deportees were initially imprisoned in various camps in the Riga region and later deported to the Stutthof concentration camp, among other places. In the process, he shows how the deportees gradually died or were killed and discusses the chances of survival by statistically analyzing the social ties of the deportees. The author was able to access unusually good source documents during his investigation, as both the Gestapo files from Würzburg, a field office of the Nuremberg Gestapo, and historic photos from there have been preserved. *Daan de Leeuw* also looks into the trajectories through the concentration camp system as he focuses on a group of Jewish deportees who were initially deported from Westerbork to Sobibor in March 1943. Drawing upon wartime and post-war documents in the Arolsen Archives and survivor testimonies, he reconstructs and visualizes the pathways of the deportees through geographic information system (GIS) and cartographic tools. The subject of the article by *Alexandra Patrikiou* is the history of an individual Jewish deportee, Errikos Botton, who was deported from Athens in August 1944 and managed to escape from the train. Using Botton's typescript memoir and two Oral History interviews, Patrikiou outlines the deportation and escape, and thus addresses the self-assertion of the deportees, a topic to which little attention has been paid within historiography for a long time. The text by *Johannes Meerwald* is also based on post-war sources. In his contribution, Meerwald evaluates interview protocols from the National Committee for Attending Deportees (DEGOB), which held interviews with Hungarian survivors of the Holocaust right after their return. Using the example of the deportations to the Dachau concentration camp complex, he discusses the extent to which the protocols can contribute to a deeper understanding of persecution routes and shows what qualitative information the interviews contain about the deportations.

The last five articles concern the situation in ghettos and other deportation destinations. *Ingo Loose* focuses on the research situation regarding the Litzmannstadt ghetto as a deportation destination for transports from the German Reich in fall 1941 and reflects on the available historical knowledge and existing knowledge gaps. He also discusses the uneven reception and evaluation of the preserved sources, i.e. archival findings as well as survivors' testimonies. *Anna Veronica Pobbe* also concerns herself with the ghetto in Litzmannstadt. She uses the preserved bank records from the ghetto account to present an unusual source on deportations and explains what these can reveal about the functioning of the ghetto. In this way, she shows what money went to companies in the city and the surrounding area that were involved in the deportations. The Theresienstadt ghetto held particular importance among the destinations for the deportation of Jews. It was a transit camp for Czech Jews as well as the des-

tinuation for ‘*Alterstransporte*’ (‘transports of the elderly’) from the Reich, among other things. A large proportion of the ghetto inhabitants were actually deported from Theresienstadt to the death camps. How those enlisted for two transports to Auschwitz-Birkenau in September 1943 attempted to be deferred from further transports is shown by *Tomáš Fedorovič* who analyzes preserved petitions. The article by *Viorel Achim* also concerns petitions. When Romanian Roma/Romnja were deported to Transnistria in summer 1942, many of them wrote petitions to the authorities. Hundreds of these petitions have been preserved in various archives. They offer an insight into the situation of those affected by this deportation, during which, as stated above, many people died. Achim discusses the sources with their specificity and potential and he uses them as a basis to investigate the living conditions of the deportees. The combination of the deportation of Jews from Berlin and the transporting of Polish forced laborers from the Zamość region at the turn of the year 1942/1943 is presented in detail by *Alexandra Pulvermacher*. As part of the ‘Germanization’ of the region in the Lublin District, Poles were transported to Auschwitz and also taken to Berlin as forced laborers, the latter to replace Jewish forced laborers, who were to be deported to Auschwitz at the same time. The contribution, which is based on a Polish-German source edition, highlights not only the planning-related context of both transports, but also of the Holocaust and the ‘Germanization’, which were both part of the Nazi population policy.

In the articles, it is not always possible to avoid the language of the perpetrators and their designations for groups who have a specific history of persecution. This includes, for instance, the terms ‘nomads’ and ‘sedentary’ Roma/Romnja. The same is also true for words that were used euphemistically at the time or were intended to be pejorative, such as ‘*Osttransport*’, ‘*Judenhäuser*’, ‘Gypsy villages’ or ‘Gypsy mayor’, and – in the reproduction of quotations – the term ‘Gypsy’. The terms Jew and Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja are also generally used in the texts for those people who were persecuted as such, regardless of their self-image.

All the quotations in German or other languages have been translated into English; they can be viewed in the stated original when required. For location names, the names commonly used at this time in the respective national language have been used, with the exception of the names of ghettos and camps set up by the Germans in the occupied countries, for which the German term from that time is used.

As mentioned above, the publication is based on a conference of the same name, which the Arolsen Archives organized in November 2020.⁸⁷ This event was preceded by two conferences which we could refer to and from which we were able to obtain ideas during our preparations: The conference organized by the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies *Deportations of the Jewish Population in Territories under Nazi Control. Comparative Perspectives on the Organisation of the Path to Annihilation* in Vienna in June 2019 took a systematic look at the deportations of the Jewish population with a transnational perspective that went beyond local research questions.⁸⁸ The event *Documenting and Exhibiting Persecution and Deportations in Europe from 1938 to 1945*, which was held under the leadership of Neuengamme Concentration Camp Memorial in Hamburg in February 2020, was devoted to the question of how the deportations of Jews and of Sinti/Sintize and Roma/Romnja can be the subject of exhibitions.⁸⁹ We see this publication explicitly as a supplement to these two events and thank the colleagues of the implementing institutions for stimulating discussions. The editors would also like to thank all the authors for their contributions and all of the archives for making the documents available. Sincere thanks also go to the colleagues at the Arolsen Archives, who have contributed to the success of both the conference and the publication with their great commitment in the background: Anette Döhring, Kerstin Hofmann, Christa Seidenstücker, Margit Vogt, and especially Christine Gräser, Christian Höschler, and Christiane Weber.

87 See Jakob Müller and Alina Bothe: “Tagungsbericht: Deportationen im Nationalsozialismus – Quellen und Forschung, 02.11.2020 – 04.11.2020 digital (Potsdam)”. Available online: www.hsozkult.de/conferencereport/id/tagungsberichte-8923. Last accessed: 11.03.2022.

88 See the conference proceeding: Michaela Raggam-Blesch, Peter Black, and Marianne Windsperger (eds.): *Deportations of the Jewish Population in Territories under Nazi Control*, Vienna: NAP, 2022 (forthcoming).

89 See the conference proceeding: Oliver von Wrochem (ed.): *Deportationen dokumentieren und ausstellen. Neue Konzepte der Visualisierung von Shoah und Porajmos*, Berlin: Metropol, 2022.