

**American Society for Yad Vashem
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Without A Trace: The Obligation of Memory

TEACHING ABOUT PERPETRATORS

Irena Steinfeldt, *How Was It Humanly Possible? A Study of Perpetrators and Bystanders during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem International School for Holocaust Studies and Beth Shalom Holocaust Memorial Centre, 2002), pp. 97–105.

Lesson Plans

TRANSPORT

" Over 100 people were packed into our cattle car.... It is impossible to describe the tragic situation in our airless, closed car. Everyone tried to push his way to a small air opening. I found a crack in one of the floorboards into which I pushed my nose to get a little air. The stench in the cattle car was unbearable.... After some time, the train suddenly stopped. A guard entered the car. He had come to rob us. He took everything that had not been well hidden: money, watches, valuables.... Water! We pleaded with the railroad workers. We would pay them well. I paid 500 Zlotys and received a cup of water. As I began to drink, a woman, whose child had fainted, attacked me. She was determined to make me leave her a little water. I did leave a bit of water at the bottom of the cup, and watched the child drink. The situation in the cattle car was deteriorating. The car was sweltering in the sun. The men lay half-naked. Some of the women lay in their undergarments. People struggled to get some air, and some no longer moved.... The train reached the camp. Many lay inert on the cattle car floor. Some were no longer alive. "



From the testimony of Avraham Kaszepicki, deported from the Warsaw Ghetto to the Treblinka extermination camp in the summer of 1942.

Introduction



The deportation of the Jews of Hanau, Germany, to Theresienstadt, 30 May, 1942

The railway played a crucial role in the implementation of the “Final Solution”. The organization and co-ordination of transports was a complicated matter, especially in a wartime setting. With the growing shortage of supplies and the priority given to military transports, the allocation of trains for the deportation of the Jews was not always easily accomplished. It took the close co-operation of all agencies – the SS, the civilian officials of the German Railway, the Ministry of Transportation and, in some cases, the Foreign Office – to overcome the difficulties and allow the transports to run so efficiently that hundreds of thousands of Jews could be deported to their death.

The Nazis had a master plan for implementing their racial theory in such a manner as to facilitate a demographic reorganization of Europe. Germans and Poles were to be resettled. Jews were to be concentrated in the East, and later, after the decision to murder them was made, they were to be deported to killing centers.

In January 1942, representatives from a broad range of German ministries and military and civilian agencies were called to a meeting in a villa at Wannsee, on the outskirts of Berlin. Here they co-ordinated the enormous undertaking of murdering Europe’s Jews. Heydrich, chief of the Reich Security Main Office, said that Europe “was to be combed through from West to East in the course of the practical implementation of the Final Solution”. The officials at the meeting then proceeded to discuss the practical details.

In the spring and summer of 1942, the extermination facilities were completed, and the deportations to the extermination camps commenced. Nazi Germany employed modern technology and exploited Europe’s extensive transportation networks to deport millions of Jews from all over the continent to the East. Jews from Paris and Amsterdam, from Salonika and Warsaw, were rounded up, packed into box-wagons and shipped hundreds of miles across Europe, only for the large majority of them to be killed upon arrival at their destination.

The dehumanization, degradation and suffering inflicted upon the victims was tremendous. The Jews were shipped like cattle in sealed box-wagons. They suffered from freezing cold in winter and unbearable heat in summer. The wagons were tightly packed, their occupants locked inside with no sanitary facilities, no fresh air, no water, and only the food they had brought with them. Once they were on the train, they were deprived of any freedom of choice and control over their lives. They were not told where they were going, how long the journey would last, or what would happen once they reached their final destination. The trains were frequently sidetracked to allow other trains to pass. This meant that the deportees spent many days locked in the trains. On arrival, there were numerous corpses in the wagons.

The following section will examine the different people who were involved at various levels and to varying extents in the organization and implementation of the transports that carried the Jews to the extermination sites in the East. These people included the professional railroad staff, without whom no transport could get under way, the policemen who accompanied and guarded the transports, and the SS officers who planned and co-ordinated the deportations. Another large group consisted of the many people who saw the trains go by – the bystanders – who became witnesses to the plight of the Jews.



THE GUARD

The Transport of Jews from Düsseldorf to Riga, 11-17 December, 1941:

All transports were accompanied by a guard detail that was generally recruited from the police. In the deportations from Germany, the guard detail routinely included one officer and 15 men. Their task began with the loading of the train and ended when they handed the transport over to the person in charge at the final destination. Salitter was one of these officers. He was in charge of escorting a transport of 1,007 Jews that left Düsseldorf for Riga on 11 December, 1941. The Jews were assembled in the slaughterhouse yard in Düsseldorf. From here, they were taken to the railway station, where they boarded the train that took them to Riga. Salitter produced a detailed report of the entire trip with recommendations for his superiors. Aside from this document, we have no other information about him. This report is juxtaposed with the testimony of Hilde Sherman, a young Jewish woman who was deported with her husband and family on this particular transport.



The deportation of the Jews of Hanau, Germany, to Theresienstadt, 30 May, 1942

I. Preparing the Transport



Salitter's Report

The Jew transport planned for 11 December 1941 included 1,007 Jews. ... The transport was compiled of Jews of both sexes, of various ages – from babies to 65-year-olds....

On the way from the slaughterhouse yard [the designated assembly point] to the platform, a male Jew attempted to commit suicide by throwing himself in front of the streetcar. But he was caught by the streetcar's bumper and only slightly injured. He recovered during the trip, and realized that he could not avoid sharing the fate of the evacuees. An elderly Jewish woman walked away from the platform without anyone noticing – it was raining and it was very dark – entered a neighboring house, took off her clothes and sat on a toilet. A cleaning woman noticed her, however, and she too was led back to the transport.

Salitter makes no reference to the beating that Hilde Sherman mentions. As she reports it, she was beaten by "a high-ranking SS officer". This could conceivably have been Salitter himself. If not, it was certainly a colleague. What could the reasons be for this incident not making its way into Salitter's report?



Hilde Sherman's testimony



...According to the Gestapo's orders, we could take up to 50 Kg. of luggage and a bedroll 70 cm. long and 30 cm. wide with blankets etc. Of course, everyone tried to squeeze his best belongings into the suitcase, since no one knew how long they would have to last during this so-called 'resettlement'. ...And so we boarded the train on the 10th [of December 1941]. I said goodbye to my parents....

My husband's name was Kurt Winter. I was deported with his family. We arrived in Düsseldorf at dawn. We had to disembark and walk to the slaughterhouse yard, where we were gathered together. I remember that even at that point the older people were unable to carry their baggage and simply threw it on the street. I saw how the people [of the town] were watching. They did not go out on the street, they were watching from behind the windows. I saw how the curtains were moving. No one can claim that they did not see. Of course they saw us. We were over one thousand people.

We then arrived at the slaughterhouse yard [the assembly point] and stood there the entire night. Everything was deep in water. It was a terrible night. That was the beginning. It was the first time I was beaten. It was a high-ranking SS officer who stood at the entrance. There were steep stairs leading down into the yard and the people were not moving fast enough. So he pushed me and screamed: What are you waiting for, the streetcar? There will never again be a streetcar for you.... Shortly afterwards, we had to undress completely and our things were taken away...

II. Boarding the Train



The deportation of the Jews of Bielefeld, Germany, 13 December, 1941

Salitter's Report

Departure of the transport was planned for 9:30. The Jews were therefore brought to the loading ramp ready to board at 4:00 a.m. However, the Reichsbahn [The German Railway] could not have the train ready so early, allegedly due to lack of personnel. Subsequently the loading of the Jews did not begin until 9:00 a.m. The loading of the Jews into cars was carried out in great haste, as the Reichsbahn insisted that the train must depart on time. It is therefore no surprise that some cars were overloaded (60-65 persons) while others had only 35-40 passengers. This caused problems throughout the entire trip to Riga, since individual Jews repeatedly attempted to get into the less crowded cars. As much as time permitted, I allowed them, in some cases, to make changes, as there were also mothers who had been separated from their children. ... The loading of the train ended at 10:15 and ... the train left the Düsseldorf-Derendorf station at about 10:30

Hilde Sherman's Testimony

The next morning at dawn we were forced to the ramp. The train had not arrived. It was bitterly cold. We stood there and stood there from 4 a.m. until 9 a.m. We were then called and the trip began on 11 December 1941.... Everything had been taken from us. One of the people asked one of the guards, an SS man, when the train was coming. They took out a club and beat him for so long that he remained there on the ground. He didn't get on the transport. That was our first dead. That was the beginning....



The deportation of Jews from Thrace, Macedonia, to Treblinka

III. The Train Moves



The deportation of the Jews of Lodz, Poland, to Auschwitz

Salitter's Report

I realized that the car reserved for the guards had not been placed in the middle, but was at the end of the train, i.e. it was car no. 21....

Due to a faulty heating system, the steam pressure did not reach the last cars of the train. Because of the cold, the guard squad's clothing did not dry. (It rained during the entire transport.) Thus, I had to deal with guards who could not stand duty because of illness....

The transport commander could not see the entire train from his position. Whenever the train stopped, the Jews tried to contact the people at the railway stations, to have their letters mailed or to ask for water. I consequently had to position two guards in one of the cars at the front...

Hilde Sherman's Testimony

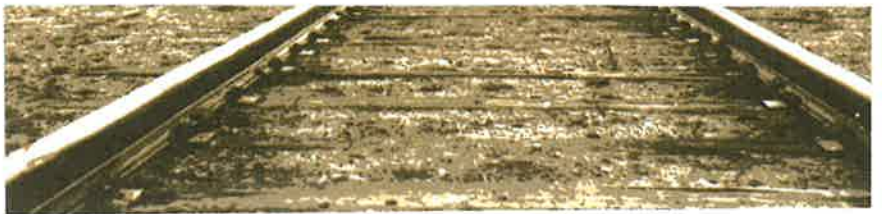
We were in a passenger car. This was before they started using cattle cars. We were so crowded that it was unbearably hot. In addition, there was heating, which was unnecessary. In the other car, where the children were, there was no heating at all. They almost froze....

IV. The Journey

Salitter's Report

At 11:10 [on 12 December] we reached Konitz. [Salitter wanted to rearrange the train so that the guards' car would be in the centre of the train]. This was agreed upon at first, but then the station-master declared that ... it would not be possible.... He told me that the train would have to leave right away. A rearrangement of the train would be impossible.... The conduct of the station-master seemed strange to me, and I informed him that I would take the matter up with his superiors. He responded that I would be unable to reach his superior. He had his orders. The train would have to leave, as there were two other trains en route. He suggested that I remove the Jews from the center car and put them in the guards' second-class car. Then I could move my guards to the empty car. I think someone from the upper echelons should see to it that this railway man is informed that members of the German police are to be treated differently than the Jews. I have the impression that this is a man who still speaks of 'those poor Jews' and to whom the term 'Jew' is totally unknown....

...At Tilsit: There ... the guards' car was put in the front of the train and they finally got some heating. The guards appreciated the warmth very much ... since their uniforms were soaked and they could finally dry them.... Normally, the train ride from this point to Riga would take 14 hours, but since there was only one track and our train was given only secondary priority, the trip was often delayed for long periods of time....



Hilde Sherman's Testimony

I remember we were suffering from terrible thirst. We had taken bread with us, but the thirst was terrible.

Everyone in the car was running a fever because of the terrible heat. We arrived at Insterburg, right at the border, in what had been Poland. There the train stopped. The doors were opened and we were allowed to get off and gather the snow for drinking. We could drink it when it melted....

I had not taken off my boots because I knew that I would not be able to get them back on my swollen feet. I was the only one who was not running a fever and could get off the train. So I put as much snow as possible into dishes and even handed it to the adjacent cars through the windows. At the end of the ramp I saw a mailbox. I prepared a postcard for my parents and wrote that once their time comes, they should take only warm clothes. The postcard actually reached them, as an acquaintance later told me. We traveled for three days and four nights through Lithuania. I was deeply impressed by the peasants' houses with their straw roofs. It was something we had not seen in Germany. They used wells. In Germany we had running water. The people were at the wells with felt boots and sheepskins. They looked so miserable. I thought: my God, these Lithuanians are all good Catholics, if this is what their life is like under German occupation, what will our fate be as Jews, as deportees....



In his report on the argument he had with the station-master, Salitter complains that the latter clearly does not know the meaning of the term "Jew" and its implications. What does this seem to indicate about Salitter's attitude towards the task he is performing, as opposed to the majority of the report, which is largely a dry, factual account?

V. Journey's End

Salitter's Report

...We arrived in Riga at 21:50. The train was kept at the station for one and a half hours.... The train stood there without heat. The temperature outside was minus 12 centigrade.... At 1:45 a.m., we relinquished responsibility for the train, and six Latvian guards were charged with watching it. Because it was past midnight, dark and the platform was covered with a thick layer of ice, it was decided to transfer the Jews to the Sarnel ghetto only on Sunday morning....

...Riga has a population of about 360,000. Among them were approximately 35,000 Jews. As in other places, the Jews were very prominent in business. After the entry of the German army, their shops were closed and confiscated. The Jews were closed in a ghetto surrounded by barbed wire. At this time, there are only 2,500 male Jews who are being used for labor. The remaining Jews were used elsewhere or shot by the Latvians.... The Latvians, as far as I can tell, are friendly to Germany and many of them speak German.... Their hatred is directed mainly towards the Jews. Therefore, from the moment of their liberation, they have played an important part in the elimination of these parasites. However they seem to find it strange, as I have heard from the railway workers, that Germany brings the Jews to Latvia, instead of eliminating them in their own country.

In describing the relations with the Latvians, Salitter refers to their attitude towards the Germans and their attitude towards the Jews. What does this tell us about his own motivations in performing his "duties"?

What are Salitter's motivations in deciding to leave the Jews in the train after their arrival in Riga?

What are the external factors that contribute to this decision? What are the implications of this decision for the Jews?

Hilde Sherman's Testimony

At night, the train suddenly stopped. We had no idea where we were. At dawn we could see a sign saying Shirotawa. Where is Shirotawa? What is Shirotawa? It was terribly cold. Around 10 a.m. we heard dogs barking. SS troops arrived and circled the train. The doors were opened and the screaming began: Out, out, fast, fast. We had to get out, and the last people had to clean the cars with their hands. There were no tools. We had to stand in line on the ramp. A car arrived with two high-ranking SS officers. They got out of the car, and I remember that one of them started screaming: "Line up in fives and off with you to the ghetto." A man called Meyer, he was from Gort, a small village near Düsseldorf, had two children on his arm, two small boys, and asked: Sir, is it very far to the ghetto? Instead of an answer, the officer took out a stick ... and hit him in the face. He released a German shepherd, who attacked the man. The man fell to the ground, and the two children too. When he got up, his mouth was all bloody and his teeth broken. This was our first impression of Latvia, of Riga, of Shirotawa.... There was ice everywhere.... The ghetto was about 20-25 km. from Shirotawa. People threw away their bags. The Latvians were not only watching, they were looting. As soon as the train left, they stole everything that was on the ground. Then we went through a suburb and up a little hill. Then there was an iron gate. It opened and we were in the ghetto.

Source: Yad Vashem Archive 0.3/7337.

VI. Conclusions

Salitter's Report

(i) *The provisions [for the guards] were good and sufficient.*

(ii) *The fact that the men were supplied with two blankets, cooking utensils and field stoves, warm clothing, furs and warm boots, proved to be very useful and is to be recommended for future transports.*

(iii) *The pistols and ammunition provided were sufficient, since there is the danger of attacks by partisans in Lithuania and Latvia....*

(iv) *The two search lights served their purpose well....*

(v) *The assistance of the [German] Red Cross [to the German guards] is commendable...*

(vi) *In order to supply the Jews with water, it is essential that the Gestapo get in touch with the Reichsbahn and coordinate one hour stops every day at a railway station in the Reich. Because of the timetable, the Reichsbahn was reluctant to comply with the transport commander's wishes. The Jews are usually on the road for 14 hours or more before the transport leaves and have used up all the drinks they had taken with them. When they are not provided with water during the trip, they try, in spite of the prohibition, to leave the train at every possible spot or to ask others to get them water.*

(vii) *It is also essential that the Reichsbahn prepare the trains at least 3-4 hours ahead of departure, so that the loading of the Jews and their belongings can be conducted in an orderly fashion.*

(viii) *The Gestapo has to make sure that the Reichsbahn places the car for the guard detachment at the center of the train.... This is essential for the supervision of the transport.... During extreme cold, one should make sure that the train's heating functions.*

(ix) *The men in the guard squad gave me no reason to complain. With the exception of the fact that I had to prompt some of them to act more energetically against Jews who wanted to disobey my orders, they all behaved well and fulfilled their duty well. There were no incidents of disease or any other troubles.*

Signed: Salitter, Hauptmann of the Schupo

Source: Yad Vashem Archive 0.2/1145.



The deportation of the Jews of Hanau, Germany, to Theresienstadt, 30 May, 1942



What appear to be Salitter's reasons for recommending that the Jews be provided with water?

Some of the guards, Salitter reports, had to be prompted to act "more energetically". None disobeyed, however. What is implied regarding the range of responses among the guards?

Salitter reports that there were "no incidents of disease or any other troubles". What does "no trouble" seem to mean to him, when compared with Hilde Sherman's account?



The Riga Ghetto



The Fate of the Jews in Riga

The German army entered Riga on 1 July, 1941, and was welcomed by many segments of the Latvian population as a result of having liberated the latter from Soviet rule. Mass executions of Jews in Riga began immediately after this. Towards the end of October 1941, a ghetto, surrounded by fences, was established, and approximately 30,000 Latvian Jews were crowded into its small area. The first transport of Jews from Germany arrived in Riga on 30 November, 1941, to be followed in the coming months by another 24 transports with a total of over 25,000 Jews. One of these was guarded by Salitter and included Hilde Sherman. Thousands of Jews were murdered upon arrival, others were incarcerated in concentration camps in the area. Around 15,000 were placed in a separate ghetto that was set up next to the ghetto for the Latvian Jews. The Germans conducted periodic mass executions of Jews from both ghettos by shooting in the nearby Rumbuli forests until the final liquidation of both ghettos in December 1943. Among the Jews who perished in Riga was Hilde Sherman's husband and many other members of her family.

There are clearly differences between the two accounts.

- What elements are common to both accounts?
- What are the differences?
- What is included and what is omitted in each?
- What are the central concerns in each?
- For what purpose was each of the accounts written? How does the style of each of them reflect this difference?

In Salitter's text, what indications are there of his motivations:

- as a police officer doing his job?
- as an ideologically motivated perpetrator influenced by anti-Jewish feelings?

(Note his references to the Jews, the dispute he has with the station-master in Konitz and his last remark.)

■ *Salitter's report is a dry, factual account. At what points does he deviate from this dry, official style?*

■ *In addition to the victims and the perpetrators, what indications can be found in the text regarding the presence of others? How are they depicted in each account?*

YAD VASHEM

Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority


DAF-ED

דף-עד

A Page of Testimony



P.O.B. 84 Jerusalem, Israel

<p>חוק זכרון השואה והגבורה — יד ושם תשי"ג 1953 קובץ בספר מס' 2</p> <p>המפקיד של "יד ושם" הוא לאסוף אל המולדת את זכרם של כל אלה שבני העם היהודי שנפלו ומסרו את נפשם, נלחמו ומרדו באויב הנאצי ובעוזריו, ולהציב שם וזכר להם. לקהילות, לארגונים ולמוסדות שנחרבו במלל השתתף כותם לעם היהודי.</p> <p>(ספר החוקים מס' 132 י"ד 212א תשי"ג) (28.8.1953)</p>		<p>THE MARTYRS' AND HEROES' REMEMBRANCE LAW, 5713 — 1953 determines in Article No. 2 that</p> <p>The task of YAD VASHEM is to gather into the homeland material regarding all those members of the Jewish people who laid down their lives, who fought and rebelled against the Nazi enemy and his collaborators, and to perpetuate their memory and that of the communities, organizations, and institutions which were destroyed because they were Jewish.</p>	
	<p>Family name 1. שם המשפחה <i>Winter</i></p>		
	<p>First name (maiden name) 2. השם הפרטי <i>Kurt</i></p>		
	<p>Name of mother 4. שם האם <i>Henriette (הנייט)</i></p>	<p>Name of father 3. שם האב <i>Julius יוליוס</i></p>	
	<p>Place of birth 6. מקום וארץ הלידה <i>Düsseldorf, Germany</i></p>	<p>Date of birth 5. תאריך הלידה <i>14/10 1912</i></p>	
	<p>Residence before the war מקומות המגורים לפני המלחמה <i>Düsseldorf דוסלדורף</i></p>		
	<p>Residence during the war מקומות המגורים במלחמה <i>Ghetto Riga גטו ריגה</i></p>		
<p>Place and date of death מקום המות <i>Salaspils 27/4 1942</i></p>			
<p>Circumstances of death נסיבות המוות</p>			
<p>Name of wife שם משפחתה לפני הנשואים <i>Hilde</i></p>	<p>Maiden name שם האם <i>Zander</i></p>		
<p>Name of husband שם הבעל</p>			
<p>Children deceased under the age of 18 שמות הילדים עד גיל 18 שנפטרו</p>			
<p>I, the undersigned <i>Hilde Sherman</i> אני, הח"מ residing at הגרה ב (מתובת מלאה) relationship to deceased קרובה/ה מכרה של</p> <p>hereby declare that this testimony is correct to the best of my knowledge. מצהיר/ה בזה כי עדות זו נכונה לפי מיטב ידיעותי.</p>			
<p>Signature חתימה <i>Bogota</i></p>	<p>Place and date מקום ותאריך <i>10/12 1970</i></p>		
<p>Signature of Registration officer חתימת הפוקד <i>פוקד</i></p>			

The names of the Jews who perished during the Holocaust continue to be collected in the Hall of Names at Yad Vashem, Jerusalem. Hilde Sherman filled out 24 Pages of Testimony for members of her and her husband's family who were killed. Among them are her parents, her brother and sister, and a page for her husband, Kurt Winter, who died in the Salaspils camp in Latvia in 1942.

Teaching about Perpetrators: A Case Study about a Deportation of German Jews from Düsseldorf to Riga

Grades: 9-12

Duration: 1-2 hours

Teacher's Guide

Suggested Pedagogical Guidelines for Teaching about Perpetrators *The following guidelines relate to the accompanying PDF presentation and provide didactical and/or methodological comments for each slide.*

SLIDE 1: INTRODUCTION

Placing Individual Actions in Their Historical Context

Neither the perpetrators nor the victims of National Socialism were born as such. People became perpetrators through a set of processes where political, social and personal factors interacted.

Now, more than 70 years after the collapse of the Nazi regime, in most cases the personal reasons that led people to become perpetrators can no longer be reconstructed. Data on the crimes can be derived from historical documentation. In contrast, the underlying personal motives that drove the perpetrators to act can often only be the focus of speculation, especially since many of the statements people made about themselves in this context are clearly bound up with an intention to deny one's own guilt or make it appear minimal.

When teaching about perpetrators, we should concentrate on those factors that can actually be deduced from the available documentation. The focus of pedagogical work should therefore highlight reconstructing and comprehending people's decisions, actions and omissions, based on the source materials available.

Furthermore, the context in which an individual chose to act is critical (1). In addition to personal motives, which can rarely be reliably reconstructed, the following factors shaped the context of actions by a person belonging to the National Socialist Volksgemeinschaft ("racial-nationalist community" of the German people)

- Nazi ideology and its inherent eliminatory antisemitism
- Nazi Germany as an authoritarian state
- Potential profit or benefit in carrying out an order
- The potential risk associated with insubordination
- Extent of knowledge about the fate of the persecuted people

These factors are not by any means intended to be an object of vague speculation and conjecture. Learners need a reliable and precise description of the historical reality in which people took action while accepting the fact that not every question always has a clear and unambiguous answer.

Compare What Can be Compared

Only after having reflected on individuals' choices in the context of the time, students can evaluate critically human action. By comparing the actions, omissions, and decisions of different people from a comparable context, learners understand that the overwhelming majority actors during the Nazi period sought to comply with the expectations of the National Socialist system and did so in order to achieve relative security and prosperity in their own lives. However, there was also a small number of people who did not make their decisions based on the norms of National Socialist ideology. These relatively few – many of them later honored by Yad Vashem as “Righteous Among the Nations” – made their decisions contrary to a fundamental shift in norms that, in the course of Nazi rule, paved the way for the genocide of European Jews.

That shift involved the norm of inequality, i.e., the ideological, social, and political common understanding that traditional moral principles remained valid for the community of those who belonged to the Volksgemeinschaft, but that certain specific groups (especially the Jews) had to be excluded.

The legal validation of the norm of inequality cleared the path that ultimately led to genocide – a mass murder that people tolerated, tacitly supported, or actively furthered. A society that was seemingly grounded on conservative values violated basic norms.

SLIDE 2-3: INTRODUCTION TO HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

View Slide 2 View Slide 3

The lesson unit commences by looking together at a historical photograph of a group of Jews immediately before deportation. The photo was taken by the Gestapo, and its actual purpose remains unclear.

Ask pupils to describe details in the photo and to link them to their prior knowledge. Pupils should learn the following points:

Visible marking of German Jews by the wearing of a yellow star became obligatory in September 1941. That same month, Hitler ordered the beginning of the systematic mass deportation of the Jewish Germans. Deportations were an integral part of the Nazi plan for the "Final Solution of the Jewish Question," meaning the genocide of European Jews.

Unlike in many European countries under Nazi occupation, the German Jews were not concentrated in ghettos, but rather in so-called Judenhäuser ("Jews' houses") and at

other collection points before they were deported. The photo shows Jews from Coesfeld, who were taken by the Gestapo from the Judenhaus on Kupfer Street early in the morning on December 10, 1941 and brought to the Castle Garden. Together with Jews from neighboring communities, they were then deported in a truck to the assembly point of Gertrudenhof in the city of Münster. From there, the deportation continued toward the Riga ghetto.

Before their deportation, the victims were informed in writing about the place and time of their transport. In addition, they were instructed to take along luggage (max. 50 kg) and food for the journey. They were not allowed to take any cash, stock, bonds, or valuables. Instead, the German authorities confiscated these before departure.

To conclude, pupils look at the tally sheet, which evidently was prepared either by Salitter or subordinates under his command. It lists the victims according to various categories. The purpose of this statistical data is unclear. However, it does illustrate that Salitter viewed the deportees as mere statistical elements, an attitude with no sense of empathy for the fate of these people.

SLIDE 4-5: INTRODUCTION TO BIOGRAPHICAL DATA AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

View Slide 4 View Slide 5

Making use of the PDF presentation, the instructor should familiarize pupils with the biographies of Hilde Sherman (née Zander) and Paul Salitter. In the slides, personal data appears under the time bar, information on the historical context above the time bar. This way it becomes clear that the lives of individuals never happen in an isolated bubble but are always interwoven with the surrounding context.

Salitter's biography is initially described only up to the war's end.

SLIDE 6: WORKING WITH SOURCES

View Slide 6

The pupils work their way into the sources. They can do this by self-study, working in groups or by reading aloud together. They can begin Assignments 1 and 2 while they read the source materials. This will serve as a basis for the following discussion.

Initially, the decisions, actions and omissions of Paul Salitter and other persons or groups (the cleaning woman, stationmaster, local population, Red Cross, Salitter's guard unit, etc.) mentioned in the reports are enumerated and embedded in their respective historical context of action (see Slide 5). The class can then discuss the question: how should the actions of the individuals mentioned, particular Salitter's, be evaluated and judged today? Various assessments of Salitter can be discussed, such as that he was a minor official whose main goal was to ensure that the train was on time – or alternatively, that he was a fanatical Nazi, who did not regard his victims as equal human beings, but rather as mere cargo. Frequently, at the end of this round of

discussion, there are doubts about what knowledge can be derived with certainty from the available sources.

SLIDE 7: ADDING POSTWAR SOURCES

View Slide 7

The Postwar Perspective

With the help of the PDF presentation, the instructor should describe the circumstances of Paul Salitter's short imprisonment by the Allies after the war's end, his written complaint dated January 16, 1947, and the main aspects of the postwar justice system as they related to him.

This lesson unit also includes an additional document: a letter that Paul Salitter wrote to the police administration in 1947. This letter documents a time of upheaval. Salitter had grasped that the Nazi Volksgemeinschaft, of which he was a member and to which he felt he belonged, had collapsed and that now he had to secure his position "in the new democracy." What is startling in Salitter's stance is the manner in which he implements this radical change: he evidently never reflects critically at any point in his life about the massive violation of norms in the Third Reich, namely the exclusion of specific groups from the concept of a society of equal members. He avoided subjecting the norms and ethical concepts – a value system superordinate to and shaping his decisions, actions and omissions – to any examination involving his own personal responsibility. His letter shows that his philosophy of life consisted in adopting superordinate norms without further questioning. Thus, he was able to readily place himself at the service of a series of different social orders as a loyal official, without any further consideration of the destructive effects that his actions within the Nazi state had on the excluded and persecuted groups in the society.

As he wrote: "I promise that I will also serve the cause with my whole being in the new democracy, just as I did under the governments of Wilhelm II, Ebert, Hindenburg, and the Third Reich. I ask that you please employ me again in the police, albeit at the rank of chief inspector." (2)

Salitter's letter of complaint can be distributed as an additional source. The decisive extract is reproduced in the PDF presentation. It should serve as the point of departure for the following discussion. (See Teaching About the Perpetrators – Source 2)

SLIDE 8: EVALUATING HUMAN BEHAVIOR

View Slide 8

Now the question regarding a possible assessment of Salitter as an individual can be raised anew. The additional source allows us to establish that his central motivation evidently was to conform, in as optimal a way as possible, to the social and legal system of his environment. In his letter, he shifts responsibility to the respective system and offers to “serve the cause with my whole being,” and indeed beyond this system to equalize matters, employing his own concepts of value over time (“I have only done my duty”).

SLIDE 9: CONTRASTING PERPETRATORS' AND VICTIMS' PERSPECTIVES

View Slide 9

This workshop contrasts Paul Salitter's report with another source: the testimony given by the witness Hilde Sherman (née Zander), who was deported from her home on the train that Salitter oversaw, and who was the only member of her family to survive the Holocaust. This context relativizes the perpetrator's perspective as one of several perspectives and counters its seemingly inherent objective truth. The actual experience of the deportees, namely the life-threatening and intolerable situation of forcing people inside an overcrowded railroad car, becomes visible in this way.

Students should understand that documents written from the perspective of the perpetrators can in each case only provide the perpetrators' perspective, which was generally shaped by National Socialist ideology. This perspective must be supplemented in order to make the experience of the victims comprehensible.

SLIDE 10: SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE PRESENT

View Slide 10

History constitutes an unfinished process that can be illuminating for our understanding of the present. From a historical study of the Holocaust, particularly in the critical confrontation with the perpetrators, we can gain specific insights that are directly relevant for contemporary society:

1. Historical events are influenced by human decisions, actions and omissions. We can assume that the history of the Holocaust would have taken a different course if more individuals had made their decisions based on the norm of the fundamental equality of all human beings. (3)
2. Reflection on the options for action can often open people's eyes to the fact that the behavior of the majority society is not always the only option, and it is not always the best one. This also means that individuals have a high degree of responsibility for their own actions, decisions, and omissions.
3. Shifts in norms are often a matter of public debate in democratic societies. Learners should be encouraged to follow such debates attentively and, where possible, to participate in them.



Teaching about Perpetrators:

A Case Study about a Deportation of German Jews from Düsseldorf to Riga



Photo: Anton Walterbusch, courtesy Stadtarchiv Coesfeld

From left to right:

Jacob Cohen, Wilhelmine Cohen, Hermann Cohen, Ida Cohen, Paul David,
Emma Cohen, Dora Eichenwald, Gustav Cohen, Salomon Eichenwald, Erich
Isaak, Martha Freund, Richard Freund, Ludwig Cohen, Ella Nathan, Karl-Heinz
Freund, Kurt Eichenwald, Henriette Goldschmidt, Josef Nathan, Samuel
Goldschmidt

Handwritten signature

Statistik der Juden in...

Maximum: 416
Minimum: 584
Summe: 1000

Statistik der...

1-6 Jahre	40
7-10	44
11-14	118
15-18	100
19-22	105
23-26	100
27-30	100
31-34	100
35-38	100
39-42	100
43-46	100
47-50	100
51-54	100
55-58	100
59-62	100
63-66	100
67-70	100
71-74	100
75-78	100
79-82	100
83-86	100
87-90	100
91-94	100
95-98	100
99-102	100
103-106	100
107-110	100
111-114	100
115-118	100
119-122	100
123-126	100
127-130	100
131-134	100
135-138	100
139-142	100
143-146	100
147-150	100
151-154	100
155-158	100
159-162	100
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815-818	100
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823-826	100
827-830	100
831-834	100
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867-870	100
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883-886	100
887-890	100
891-894	100
895-898	100
899-902	100
903-906	100
907-910	100
911-914	100
915-918	100
919-922	100
923-926	100
927-930	100
931-934	100
935-938	100
939-942	100
943-946	100
947-950	100
951-954	100
955-958	100
959-962	100
963-966	100
967-970	100
971-974	100
975-978	100
979-982	100
983-986	100
987-990	100
991-994	100
995-998	100
999-1002	100

Statistik der...

0-10 Jahre	30
11-20	44
21-30	118
31-40	100
41-50	105
51-60	100
61-70	100
71-80	100
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91-100	100
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541-550	100
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581-590	100
591-600	100
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611-620	100
621-630	100
631-640	100
641-650	100
651-660	100
661-670	100
671-680	100
681-690	100
691-700	100
701-710	100
711-720	100
721-730	100
731-740	100
741-750	100
751-760	100
761-770	100
771-780	100
781-790	100
791-800	100
801-810	100
811-820	100
821-830	100
831-840	100
841-850	100
851-860	100
861-870	100
871-880	100
881-890	100
891-900	100
901-910	100
911-920	100
921-930	100
931-940	100
941-950	100
951-960	100
961-970	100
971-980	100
981-990	100
991-1000	100

Handwritten notes in German and Hebrew, including statistical data and commentary.

Statistics from Paul Salitter, by Category:
Gender, Age, Profession

Paul Salitter



Paul Salitter
Photo: Police Headquarter
Dusseldorf, unregistered

Context of Action in Nazi Germany

- ✓ **Police officers** had intensive ideological schooling to ensure that they internalized the racist ideology of National Socialism.
- ✓ Members of the **police force** generally wanted transport duty, which was considered an opportunity for advancement.
- ✓ It can be assumed that **police officers** who accompanied transports had clear basic knowledge (but not always in any detail) about the fate that awaited the deportees.
- ✓ **Police officers** and members of the armed forces fell under the jurisdiction of the Military Penal Code. §92 (penalties for "insubordination") theoretically made deviations from National Socialist ideology a punishable crime.
- ✓ For **civil servants**, any contact with Jews or any manner of "friendly behavior toward Jews" was prohibited and could lead to punishment.
- ✓ For **civilians**, "rescuing Jews" was not officially a punishable offense before 1941. Friendly actions toward Jews could be penalized by three months' imprisonment "for educational reasons" only from October 24, 1941.



Salitter (left) in Starokonstantinov (Ukraine),
1942
Photo: Landesarchiv Northrhine-Westfalia,
States Archive Münster

1898 1937 1938/39 1941 1942 1944

Born in East Prussia

Joined Nazi Party

Worked for SD (Surveillance agency of the Nazi Party and SD)

Promoted to Captain Responsible for securing Transport No. Da 38, with 1,007 Jews, from Düsseldorf to Riga

Served as supervisory officer of the Ukrainian unit of *Schutzmannschaft* 101 in Starokonstantinov Helped build the police cordon in at least one mass execution

Promoted to major

Reading the Sources:

Paul Salitter's Report vs. Hilde Sherman's Testimony

Assignments:

- List the decisions/actions of Paul Salitter during the National Socialist period. Use the available sources and the biographical information on Paul Salitter for this task.
- Discuss possible options for action.
- List the decisions/actions of other persons mentioned in the reports by Paul Salitter and Hilde Sherman. Discuss possible options for action.

For Discussion:

- Try to evaluate Salitter's decisions/actions during the time of National Socialism.

Paul Salitter after 1945

<p>Five categories of denazification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I Major Offenders II Offenders III Lesser Offenders IV Followers V Persons Exonerated 	<p>Average annual income in Germany (West)</p> <p>1946: 1,778 Reichsmarks (= 148 RM per month) 1947: 1,833 Reichsmarks (= 152 RM per month)</p> <p><small>Source: Wikipedia</small></p>
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1945

1946/47

1951

1966

1972

Imprisoned by the Allies

Released because of good conduct

Classified into Denazification Category III: Lesser Offenders

- ✓ 150 RM pension
- ✓ Not allowed to work as a policeman again

Sentence changed to Category IV: Followers

- ✓ Full pension
- ✓ Option to work as a policeman again (theoretically)
- ✓ As a former SD member, his request to rejoin the police was denied on the grounds of his age

New investigation opened against Salitter by the German State Criminal Police Office (LKA), no juridical consequences

Died in Düsseldorf

Betrifft: Wiederverwendung im Dienst der Schutzpolizei

Am 9.12.1946 bin ich aus der Zivildinternierung entlassen worden. In meiner Wohnung fand ich den Bescheid vor, nach dem ich auf Anordnung der Militärregierung mit dem 19.10.1946 aus dem Amt entlassen bin. Dieser Bescheid trifft mich ausserordentlich hart, da ich aus Ostpreussen stamme, seit 1919 im Polizeidienst stehe und seit dieser Zeit nur meine Pflicht gethan habe. Ich verspreche, auch in der neuen Demokratie meine ganze Persnlichkeit in den Dienst der Sache zu stellen. Genau so, wie ich es unter der Regierung Mihelwalski, Ebert, Hindenburg und im dritten Reich getan habe, und bitte, mich wieder in der Schutzpolizei-wann auch im Dienststrang eines Oberinspektors - verwenden zu wollen.

"...I promise that I will also serve the cause with my whole being in the new democracy, just as I did under the governments of Wilhelm II, Ebert, Hindenburg and the Third Reich. I ask that you please employ me again in the police, albeit at the rank of chief inspector. (...)"

Source: Villa ten Hompel (Münster) / Police Headquarter Dusseldorf

For Discussion:

- Think about Salitter's letter of 16 January 1947. Discuss whether, and to what extent, this document changes your view of Salitter as a person.

Contrasting Victims' and Perpetrators' Perspectives



"(...) The next morning at dawn we were forced to the ramp. The train had not arrived. It was bitterly cold. We stood there and stood there from 4 a.m. until 9 a.m. We were then called and the trip began on 11 December 1941... Everything had been taken from us. (...)."



"(...) Departure of the transport was planned for 9:30. The Jews were therefore brought to the loading ramp ready to board at 4:00 a.m. However, the *Reichsbahn* [the German Railway] could not have the train ready so early, allegedly due to lack of personnel. Subsequently, the loading of the Jews did not begin until 9:00 a.m. The loading of the Jews into cars was carried out in great haste (...)."

For Discussion:

- Describe what knowledge can be derived from comparing the two sources (Sherman and Salitter).

History as an Ongoing Process: Teaching and Learning History Bears a Message for Today

- Individual choices matter. You can make a difference!
- Awareness of options for taking action: the behavior of the majority society is not always the only option, and not always the best one.
- Individuals are held responsible for their own choices.
- Be sensitive towards shifting norms.

LESSON PLAN

The Sources

This lesson plan contrasts the report of the German police officer Paul Salitter with the testimony of Hilde Sherman (née Zander), a young Jewish woman who was deported with her husband and his family in the same transport that Salitter oversaw.

Paul Salitter's Report in the Context of Other Deportation Reports

Few of the deportation reports and war diaries have been preserved. Toward the end of the war, the archive of the Ordnungspolizei (regular police) in Prague, where most of these documents were stored, was intentionally destroyed. In addition, the headquarters of the Ordnungspolizei in Berlin was destroyed in an Allied air raid. Presumably, most transports were mentioned in the corresponding war diaries solely in the form of short reports. Detailed accounts, like that of Paul Salitter, were most likely written when the transport leaders wanted to file a complaint to their superiors, had suggestions for improvements or wished to call attention to themselves.

The Ordnungspolizei in Nazi Germany consisted of some 2.8 million men. To date, the historian Christoph Spieker has been able to document 47 cases in which police officers engaged in resistance or in rescue attempts for Jews. The percentage of those who resisted and helped Jews is thus but a tiny fraction.

Paul Salitter wrote the following report after he returned from Riga.

Hilde Sherman's Memoirs

Hilde Sherman was a young Jewish woman who was deported with her husband and his family in the same transport that Salitter oversaw. Her husband and many other members of her family were among the Jews who died in Riga. She registered 26 names at Yad Vashem's Hall of Names, where the names of Jews who were murdered in the Holocaust are gathered. The following text is an excerpt from Holocaust survivor Hilde Sherman's testimony at Yad Vashem in 1994.

(See Teaching About the Perpetrators – Source 1)

Paul Salitter's application to be reinstated in the German police force, submitted on January 16, 1947, Düsseldorf

Paul Salitter was classified by the Allies as a "Lesser Offender" (Level III in the denazification categories). As a result, he was discharged from the police and given a monthly pension of 150 Reichsmarks. In the following letter written in 1947, Salitter appealed his categorization to the Düsseldorf Police Administration and applied to be reinstated in the police.

(See Teaching About the Perpetrators – Source 2)

Historical Background Antisemitism was a major component of Nazi ideology. The eliminatory, anti-Jewish policy that the Nazis conducted was gradual and developed

over time. It began as soon as the Nazis came to power in Germany. The policy escalated gradually and was implemented later in every territory that Germany occupied.

In June 1941, Germany invaded the Soviet Union. The war was perceived as a battle against Bolshevism, which was supposedly disseminated by Jews. This was probably one of the reasons why the attack on the Soviet Union was also the beginning of the new and most extreme phase of the anti-Jewish policy - the systematic extermination of Jews. In the beginning, the murder was committed by four Einsatzgruppen (Mobile Killing Squads) - units of the security police that were ordered to follow the advancing army. Assisted by reserve battalions of the German police, units of the German army and members of the local population, the Einsatzgruppen gathered Jews and Communists, led them out of the towns and villages, and shot them. Some 90% of the victims in these shootings were Jewish civilians. Entire communities, including women and children, were destroyed.

Over time, policies and practices of murder were developed, and the murder spread to Poland and to the rest of Europe. Nevertheless, Germany conducted the killing process in the eastern parts of Europe. Jews had to be deported from all over Europe to extermination sites in the east, where most were killed within hours after they arrived. A vast system of transportation was necessary in order to implement these deportations.

The railway played a crucial role in the implementation of the "Final Solution." Organizing and coordinating transports was complicated, especially during wartime. With the growing shortage of supplies and the priority given to military transports, it was not always easy to find trains for the deportation of the Jews. It took the close cooperation of all agencies- the SS, the civilian officials of the German Railway, the Ministry of Transportation and in some cases the Foreign Office - to overcome the difficulties and allow the transports to run efficiently enough to deport millions of Jews to their deaths.

Deportations from Germany

Jews from Germany were among the first to be deported from central and western Europe to the east. In smaller numbers, German Jews were deported as early as February 1940, before the mass killings began. The systematic mass deportations began in October 1941 and eventually led to the elimination of German Jews, who were deported mainly to the ghettos of Lodz and Warsaw in Poland, and to Riga, Kaunas and Minsk in the former Soviet territories. In those Soviet areas, mass murder was already taking place. Many of the German Jews who were deported to these places were murdered upon arrival. In the ghettos, many died from hunger and disease. The others were murdered in nearby killing sites or later in extermination camps in Poland. In 1942 and 1943, tens of thousands of German Jews were deported directly to extermination camps.

Groups of guards, who were usually recruited from the police, accompanied every transport of Jews. In the deportations from Germany, the guard detail routinely included

one officer and 15 men. Their task began when they boarded the train and ended when they handed over the transport to the person in charge at the destination. Paul Salitter was one of these officers. He was in charge of escorting a transport of 1,007 Jews that left Düsseldorf for Riga on 11 December 1941. The Germans assembled the Jews at the slaughterhouse yard in Düsseldorf and took them to the railway station, where they boarded the train that took them to Riga.

Notes

1. In this connection, see the concept of 'frame of reference' as developed by Welzer and Neitzel, in: Sönke Neitzel and Harald Welzer: *Soldiers. German POWs on Fighting, Killing, and Dying*, New York: Random House, 2013.

2. Source: Historical Site Villa ten Hompel (Münster) / Düsseldorf Police HQ, Supplementary Documentation, ED 0011, File: Paul Salitter.

3. See Jan T. Gross' introductory remark to his book *Neighbors*, where he is exploring the July 1941 massacre committed against Polish Jews by their non-Jewish neighbors in the village of Jedwabne in Nazi-occupied Poland:

"[...] Each episode of mass killing had its own situational dynamics. This is not a trivial point, for it means [...] that in each episode many specific individual decisions were made by different actors present on the scene, who decisively influenced outcomes. And, thus, it is at least conceivable that a number of those actors could have made different choices, with the result that many more European Jews could have survived the war." (Gross, Jan Tomasz: *Neighbors. The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne*, Poland, Princeton 2001, S. 12).

<https://www.yadvashem.org/education/educational-materials/lesson-plans/salitter.html>

Teaching About Perpetrators – Source 1

Report by Paul Salitter and

Memoirs of the Survivor Hilde Sherman, née Zander (abridged)

Salitter's Report	Hilde Sherman's Testimony
I. Preparing the Transport	
<p>The Jew transport planned for 11 December 1941 included 1,007 Jews ... The transport was compiled of Jews of both sexes, of various ages – from babies to 65-year-olds... On the way from the slaughterhouse yard [the designated assembly point] to the platform, a male Jew attempted to commit suicide by throwing himself in front of the streetcar. But he was caught by the streetcar's bumper and only slightly injured. He recovered during the trip, and realized that he could not avoid sharing the fate of the evacuees. An elderly Jewish woman walked away from the platform without anyone noticing – it was raining and it was very dark – entered a neighboring house, took off her clothes and sat on a toilet. However a cleaning woman noticed her and she too was led back to the transport.</p>	<p>...According to the Gestapo's orders, we could take up to 50 Kg. of luggage and a bedroll 70 cm. long and 30 cm. wide with blankets etc. Of course, everyone tried to squeeze his best belongings into the suitcase, as no one knew how long they would have to last during this so-called 'resettlement'. ...And so we boarded the train on the 10th [of December 1941]. I said goodbye to my parents....</p> <p>My husband's name was Kurt Winter. I was deported with his family. We arrived at Dusseldorf at dawn. We had to disembark and walk to the slaughterhouse yard, where we were gathered together. I remember that even at that point the older people were unable to carry their baggage and simply threw it on the street. I saw how the people [of the town] were watching. They did not go out on the street, they were watching from behind the windows. I saw how the curtains were moving. No one can claim that they did not see. Of course they saw us. We were over one thousand people.</p> <p>We then arrived at the slaughterhouse yard [the assembly point] and stood there the entire night. Everything was deep in water. It was a terrible night. That was the beginning. It was the first time I was beaten. It was a high-ranking SS officer who stood at the entrance. There were steep stairs leading down into the yard and the people were not moving fast enough. So he pushed me and screamed: What are you waiting for, the streetcar? There will never again be a streetcar for you.... Shortly afterwards, we had to undress completely and our things were taken away....</p>
II. Boarding the Train	
<p>Departure of the transport was planned for 9:30. The Jews were therefore brought to the loading ramp ready to board at 4:00 a.m. However, the Reichsbahn [The German Railway] could not have the train ready so early, allegedly due to lack of personnel. Subsequently the loading of the Jews did not begin until 9:00 a.m. The loading of the Jews into cars was carried out in great haste, as the</p>	<p>The next morning at dawn we were forced to the ramp. The train had not arrived. It was bitterly cold. We stood there and stood there from 4 a.m. until 9 a.m. We were then called and the trip began on 11 December 1941.... Everything had been taken from us. One of the people asked one of the guards, an SS man, when the train was coming. They took out a club and beat him for so long that he remained there on the ground. He didn't get on the</p>

<p>Reichsbahn insisted that the train must depart on time. It is therefore no surprise that some cars were overloaded (60-65 persons) while others had only 35-40 passengers. This caused problems throughout the entire trip to Riga, since individual Jews repeatedly attempted to get into the less crowded cars. As much as time permitted, I allowed them, in some cases, to make changes, as there were also mothers who had been separated from their children.</p> <p>...The loading of the train ended at 10:15 and the train left the Dusseldorf-Derendorf station at about 10:30....</p>	<p>transport. That was our first dead. That was the beginning...</p>
<h3>III. The Journey</h3>	
<p>I realized that the car reserved for the guards had not been put in the middle, but was at the end of the train, i.e. it was car no. 21... Due to a faulty heating system, the steam pressure did not reach the last cars of the train. Because of the cold, the guard squad's clothing did not dry. (It rained during the entire transport). Thus, I had to deal with guards who could not stand duty because of illness...</p> <p>The commander of the transport could not see the whole train from his position. Whenever the train stopped, the Jews tried to contact the people at the railway stations, to have their letters mailed or to ask for water. As a result I had to put two guards in one of the cars at the front...</p>	<p>We were in a passenger car. This was before they started using cattle cars. We were so crowded that it was unbearably hot. In addition there was heating, which was unnecessary. In the other car, where the children were, there was no heating at all. They almost froze....</p>
<p>At 11:10 [on 12 December] Konitz was reached. [Salitter wanted to rearrange the train so that the guards' car would be in the center of the train]. This was agreed upon at first, but then the station master declared that... it would not be possible...he told me that the train would have to leave right away. A rearrangement of the train would be impossible...The conduct of the stationmaster seemed strange to me, and I informed him that I would take the matter up with his superiors. He responded that I would be unable to reach his superior. He had his orders. The train would have to leave, as there were two other trains en route. He suggested that I remove the Jews from the center car and put them in the guards' second-class car. Then I could move my guards to the empty car. I think someone</p>	<p>I remember we were suffering from terrible thirst. We had taken bread with us, but the thirst was terrible. Everyone in the car was running a fever because of the terrible heat. We arrived at Insterburg, right at the border, in what had been Poland. There the train stopped. The doors were opened and we were allowed to get off and gather the snow for drinking. We could drink it when it melted....</p> <p>I had not taken off my boots because I knew that I would not be able to get them back on my swollen feet. I was the only one who was not running a fever and could get off the train. So I put as much snow as possible into dishes and even handed it to the adjacent cars through the windows. At the end of the ramp I saw a mailbox. I prepared a postcard for my parents and wrote that once their time comes, they should take only warm clothes. The postcard actually reached them, as an acquaintance later told me</p> <p>We traveled for three days and four nights through Lithuania. I was deeply impressed by the houses of the</p>

from the upper echelons should see to it that this railway man is informed that members of the German police are to be treated differently than the Jews. I have the impression that this is a man who still speaks of 'those poor Jews' and for whom the term 'Jew' is totally unknown....

...At Tilsit: There...the car of the guards was put in the front of the train and they finally got some heating. The guards appreciated the warmth very much ...as their uniforms were soaked and they could finally dry them....

peasants with their straw roofs. It was something we had not seen in Germany. They used wells. In Germany we had running water. The people were at the wells with felt boots and sheepskins. They looked so miserable. I thought: my God, these Lithuanians are all good Catholics, if this is what their life is like under German occupation, what will our fate as Jews, as deportees be...

IV. Journey's End

...We arrived in Riga at 21:50. The train was kept at the station for one and a half hours.... The train stood there without heat. The temperature outside was minus 12 centigrade.... At 1:45 a.m., we relinquished responsibility for the train over and six Latvian guards were charged with watching it. Because it was past midnight, dark and the platform was covered with a thick layer of ice, it was decided to transfer the Jews to the Sarnel ghetto only on Sunday morning....

...Riga has a population of about 360,000. Among them were approximately 35,000 Jews. As in other places, the Jews were very prominent in business. After the entry of the German army, their shops were closed and confiscated. The Jews were closed in a ghetto surrounded by barbed wire. At this time, there are only 2,500 male Jews who are being used for labor. The remaining Jews were used elsewhere or shot by the Latvians....The Latvians, as far as I can tell, are friendly to Germany and many of them speak German....Their hatred is directed mainly towards the Jews. Therefore, from the moment of their liberation, they have played an important part in the elimination of these parasites. However they seem to find it strange, as I have heard from the railway workers, that Germany brings the Jews to Latvia, instead of eliminating them in their own country.

At night, the train suddenly stopped. We had no idea where we were. At dawn we could see a sign saying Shirotawa. Where is Shirotawa? What is Shirotawa? It was terribly cold. Around 10 a.m. we heard dogs barking. SS troops arrived and circled the train. The doors were opened and the screaming began: Out, out, fast, fast. We had to get out, and the last people had to clean the cars with their hands. There were no tools. We had to stand in line on the ramp. A car arrived with two high-ranking SS officers. They got out of the car, and I remember that one of them started screaming: Line up in fives and off with you to the ghetto. A man called Meyer, he was from Gort, a small village near Dusseldorf, had two children on his arm, two small boys, and asked: Sir, is it very far to the ghetto? Instead of an answer, the officer took out a stick...and hit him in the face. He released a German shepherd, who attacked the man. The man fell to the ground, and the two children too. When he got up, his mouth was all bloody and his teeth broken. This was our first impression of Latvia, of Riga, of Shirotawa.... There was ice everywhere.... The ghetto was about 20-25 km. from Shirotawa. People threw away their bags. The Latvians were not only watching, they were looting. As soon as the train left, they stole everything that was on the ground. Then we went through a suburb and up a little hill. Then there was an iron gate. It opened and we were in the ghetto.

Source:
Yad Vashem Archive 0.3/7337.

Conclusions:

- a) The provisions [for the guards] were good and sufficient.
- b)

- c) the pistols and ammunition provided were sufficient....
- d) the two search lights served their purpose well....
- e) the assistance of the [German] Red Cross [to the German guards] is commendable...
- f) In order to supply the Jews with water, it is essential that the Gestapo get in touch with the Reichsbahn and coordinate one hour stops every day at a railway station in the Reich. Because of the time table, the Reichsbahn was reluctant to comply with the transport commander's wishes. The Jews are usually on the road for 14 hours or more before the transport leaves and have used up all the drinks they had taken with them. When they are not provided with water during the trip, they try, in spite of the prohibition, to leave the train at every possible spot or ask others to get them water.
- g) It is also essential that the Reichsbahn prepare the trains at least 3-4 hours ahead of departure, so that the loading of the Jews and their belongings can be conducted in an orderly fashion.
- h) The Gestapo has to make sure that the Reichsbahn place the car for the guard detachment at the center of the train.... This is essential for the supervision of the transport....
- i) The men in the guard squad gave me no reason to complain. With the exception of the fact that I had to prompt some of them to act more energetically against Jews who wanted to disobey my orders, they all behaved well and fulfilled their duty well. There were no incidents of disease or any other troubles.

Signed: Salitter, Hauptmann of the Schupo

Source:
Yad Vashem Archive O.2/1145.

Teaching About Perpetrators – Source 2

Paul Salitter's application to be reinstated in the German police force, submitted on January 16, 1947, Düsseldorf

Major of the Police, inactive
Paul Salitter

Düsseldorf, 16 January 1947
Kalkumer St. 40
Tel. 19705 Poggel

In handwriting: The questionnaire was sent to the committee on 22 January 1947

Stamp: Received 20 January 1947

Stamp: Head of the Police Düsseldorf, received 21 January 1947

To the
Lord Mayor
- Police Administration –

Düsseldorf

Re.: Re-utilization in the employment of the police

On 9 December 1946, I was released from civil detention. In my apartment, I found the ruling that by order of the Military Government I had been dismissed from my office on 19 October 1946. This ruling strikes me extraordinarily hard because I originate from East Prussia, have been in the employment of the police since 1919 and since then have only been carrying out my duty. I promise that also in the new democracy I shall put into service my whole being, as I did under the governments of Wilhelm II, Ebert, Hindenburg, as well as in the Third Reich. I ask that you please employ me again in the police, albeit at the rank of chief inspector.

All the old Düsseldorf police officers will be able to confirm that I fulfilled my official duties in Düsseldorf diligently and impartially, especially the following officers:

Police Head Inspector	May	Police Command
“	Gerke	“
“	Inspector Schulz	“
“	“ Schröter	“
“	“ Ingmann	“
“	Sergeant Schröder	“
“	“ Moll	“
“	“ Wackernagel	“
“	“ Böhle	“
“	“ Welwers	“
“	“ Schumacher, Section Command Center.	

When I was released from the detention camp, I was categorized in group III of the Denazification Law only for the time being. However, I was instructed that I must have myself categorized in a definitive way in my hometown Düsseldorf. For this purpose, I am attaching the completed required questionnaire.

1 attachment

Signature:

Paul Salitter

Major of the Police, inactive

Source:

GO Villa ten Hompel (Münster) / Headquarters of the Police Düsseldorf, Supplement Documentation, ED 0011, personal file of Paul Salitter