Teaching about Perpetrators:

A Case Study about a Deportation of German Jews from Düsseldorf to Riga
From left to right:
Statistics from Paul Salitter, by Category:

Gender, Age, Profession
Hilde Sherman (nee Zander)

Born in Mönchen-gladbach, Germany

Married Kurt Winter in order to be deported together with him

Dec. 11 - 14 Deported from Düsseldorf to Riga

Liberated in a workcamp near Kiel, Germany

May: Transferred to Sweden (Swedish Red Cross)

Emigrated to Bogota, Colombia

Published her memoirs in the German language (Zwischen Tag und Dunkel. Mädchenjahre im Ghetto, Ullsteinverlag)

Gave videotaped testimony in Yad Vashem

Emigrated to Israel

Died in Jerusalem

September
Hitler approves the mass expulsion of Jews from Germany (Regular Police responsible for securing deportation trains)

September
German Jews have to wear the yellow star

October
Riga ghetto sealed off

November
Beginning of mass execution of the inhabitants of the “big ghetto” (women, children, old, sick)

December
After the killing of 25,000-28,000 Jews, the “big ghetto” is filled with German Jews

1923

1941

1945

1984

1994

1995

2011
Paul Salitter

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>Born in East Prussia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Joined Nazi Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>1938/39</td>
<td>Worked for SD (Surveillance agency of the Nazi Party and SD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>Promoted to Captain, Responsible for securing Transport No. Da 38, with 1,007 Jews, from Düsseldorf to Riga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>Served as supervisory officer of the Ukrainian unit of Schutzmannschaft 101 in Starokonstantinov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>Promoted to major</td>
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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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1945</th>
<th>1946/47</th>
<th>1951</th>
<th>1966</th>
<th>1972</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Imprisoned by the Allies</td>
<td>Released because of good conduct</td>
<td>Sentence changed to Category IV: Followers</td>
<td>New investigation opened against Salitter by the German State Criminal Police Office (LKA), no juridical consequences</td>
<td>Died in Düsseldorf</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classified into Denazification Category III: Lesser Offenders</td>
<td>✓ Full pension</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Option to work as a policeman again (theoretically)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ As a former SD member, his request to rejoin the police was denied on the grounds of his age</td>
<td></td>
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Five categories of denazification:
- I Major Offenders
- II Offenders
- III Lesser Offenders
- IV Followers
- V Persons Exonerated

Average annual income in Germany (West)
- 1946: 1,778 Reichsmarks (= 148 RM per month)
- 1947: 1,833 Reichsmarks (= 152 RM per month)


“As 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.