
Teaching about Perpetrators:

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



Photo: Anton Walterbusch, courtesy Stadtarchiv Coesfeld

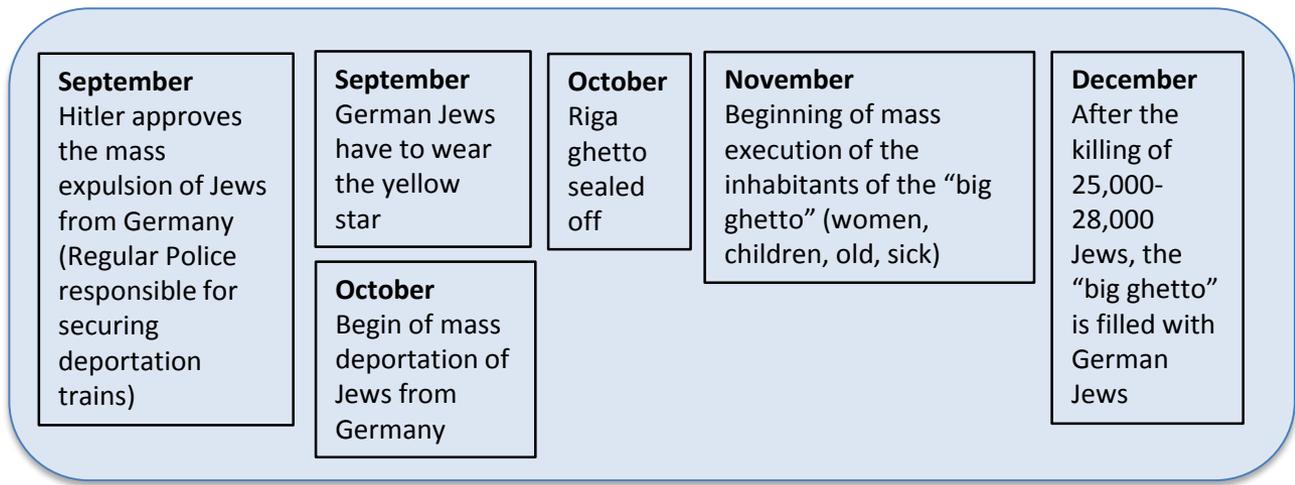
From left to right:

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

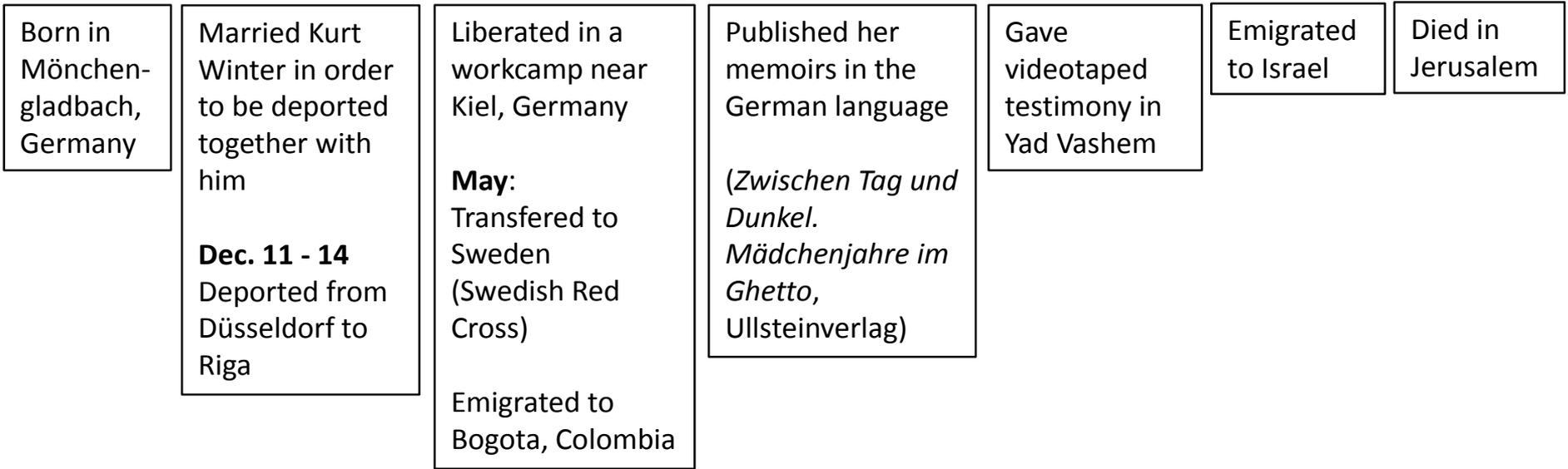
Hilde Sherman (nee Zander)



Hilde Sherman in Stockholm, 1945
Courtesy: Sherman Family



1923 1941 1945 1984 1994 1995 2011



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

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)

Source: Wikipedia

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 Zivilinternierung 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 getan habe. Ich verspreche, auch in der neuen Demokratie meine ganze Persönlichkeit in den Dienst der Sache zu stellen, genau so, wie ich es unter den Regierungen Wilhelm II, Ebert, Hindenburg und im dritten Reich getan habe, und bitte, mich wieder in der Schutzpolizei-wenn auch im Dienstrang eines ~~Polizeioberinspektors~~ 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.