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“Wheels and Cogs”

Why Viennese Policemen Guarded Deportation Transports, 1941–1943 Part 1

Abstract

Viennese policemen, part of the German *Schutzpolizei* (uniformed police) after March 1938, complied with orders to guard deportation transports of Austrian Roma and Jews between 1941 and 1943. Previous theories about German police have argued that they engaged in mass murder in Eastern Europe, especially in Poland, due to peer pressure, obedience to authority, ideological training in police schools, or the influence of ideological careerist junior officers. This study, based on the personnel files of sixty-five policemen, 98 per cent of whom were hired before the Nazis came to power, contests those theories. It proposes a four-stage, time-dependent hypothesis about why police obeyed orders. First, police hired after the First World War had absorbed anti-Jewish and anti-Roma views present in Habsburg society, the era in which they were born and raised. Second, during the late First Republic and Austro-fascist periods, the police gained greater authority, ignored civil rights, and were institutionally polarised into factions. Third, Austrian and German Nazis transformed the Viennese police between March 1938 and 1940, adopting policies and practices that acclimatised the police to see Roma and Jews as dangerous groups who had to be segregated and pauperised. In the fourth stage, during the Second World War, the police overcame cognitive dissonance about deporting people by justifying their actions to themselves – guard duty was part of their job as members of military police units, and the priority during the war was to protect Germans, not outsiders and foreigners. Due to the length of this study, it will be published in two halves. The first half will deal with the first three stages, prior to the decision to begin the main deportations in 1941. The second half, which will appear in the next issue of S:I.M.O.N., will explain how the police bureaucracy operated and who organised the police units as guards for deportation trains. It will analyse a post-war investigation in which some policemen claimed they had merely “acted under orders”, arguing that their answers were probably coordinated by senior police officials who wanted to reinstate them on the force. This section will also challenge the historical view that the police force was totally transformed after the Second World War, showing that many policemen who had served as deportation guards were rehired.

According to historian Jonny Moser’s computations, of the 206,000 persons defined as Jews under the Nuremberg Racial Laws and living in Austria in 1938 when the Nazis took power, only 5,816 survived in Austria by the end of the Nazi regime. Half of all Austrian Jews had emigrated by May 1939, after living through a hellish year in which party members and Hitler Youth physically attacked them, the police and fire departments stood by while the SA and SS burned their synagogues, party members and Gestapo arrested them and sent them to concentration camps, and party members and state-appointed administrators took over their businesses at fire-sale prices. Two-thirds emigrated by September 1939, when Nazi Germany invaded Poland. During the next phase of Nazi persecution, 48,953 Jews were deported

by the Gestapo and, guarded by regular Viennese police, taken by train to concentration and extermination camps. 46,791 of these were killed,¹ a loss which is still visible in Austrian culture, where current Jewish contributions to art, literature, science, business, and education, while not dead, are a fraction of what they once were.

Oskar Rosenfeld, a Jewish writer from Vienna who fled to Prague in 1938, was deported with 5,000 other Jews to the Łódź ghetto in the fall of 1941. He described the crushing impact of the deportations in his diary: “Families were destroyed, marriages smashed, friends torn apart, bonds that had been formed during a lifetime were broken, products of the mind were wiped out in a moment’s time.”² These observations could easily apply to Vienna, because the deportations from Prague were part of the same plan initiated by Heinrich Himmler, *Reichsführer-SS* (Reich leader of the SS) and chief of the German Police, to remove 20,000 Jews from Austria, the “Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia”, Luxembourg, and the “old Reich” cities of Berlin, Frankfurt am Main, Hamburg, Köln, and Düsseldorf to the Łódź ghetto.³

This order also specified the deportation to Łódź of 5,000 Roma and Sinti (“Gypsies”) from the Burgenland, the multi-ethnic region of western Hungary that the Allies transferred to Austria after the First World War. Two thousand of the deportees came from the Lackenbach camp, where Roma and Sinti were forced to work in forestry, agriculture, and a brick factory, subjected to miniscule rations and torture. The rest came from various villages in the Burgenland. All deportees died during five transports to the Łódź ghetto, died in the ghetto from typhus, or were gassed at Chełmno in 1941 and 1942.⁴ Rudolf Sarközi, born in the Lackenbach camp in 1944 and later the head of the Cultural Association of Austrian Roma, wrote that only eleven of his 159 relatives survived.⁵

- 1 Jonny Moser, “Österreich”, in *Dimension des Völkermords. Die Zahl der jüdischen Opfer des Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Wolfgang Benz, Quellen und Darstellungen zur Zeitgeschichte (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1996), 68–73. Dieter J. Hecht and Michaela Raggam-Blesch, citing figures from Moser and updated figures for Maly Trostinec compiled by Winfried Garscha, state that 45,527 people were deported from Vienna to ghettos, extermination camps, and murder sites in 1941 and 1942 (Dieter J. Hecht, Michaela Raggam-Blesch, and Heidemarie Uhl, eds., *Letzte Orte. Die Wiener Sammellager und die Deportationen 1941/42* (Vienna: Mandelbaum Verlag, 2019), 19). On the deportations from Vienna, see the essays in the aforementioned work, as well as Hans Safrian, *Eichmann’s Men*, trans. Ute Stargardt (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010 [German, 1993]), 14–71, 84–90; Doron Rabinovici, *Eichmann’s Jews: The Jewish Administration of Holocaust Vienna, 1938–1945*, trans. Nick Somers (Cambridge: Polity, 2011 [German, 2000]); Thomas Mang, “Gestapo-Leitstelle Wien, mein Name ist Huber”. *Wer trug die lokale Verantwortung für den Mord an den Juden Wiens?* (Münster: Lit, 2004); Wolfgang Curilla, *Der Judenmord in Polen und die Deutsche Ordnungspolizei 1939–1945* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2011), 208–209; Steffen Hänchen, *Das Transitghetto Izbica im System des Holocaust* (Berlin: Metropol Verlag, 2018), 362–367; Brigitte Ungar-Klein, *Schattenexistenz: Jüdische U-Boote in Wien, 1938–1945* (Vienna: Picus Verlag, 2019); Mark Lewis, “Continuity and Change in the Vienna Police Force, 1914–1945. Part 2 [1933–45]”, *S.I.M.O.N. – Shoah: Intervention. Methods. Documentation* 7, no. 1 (2020): 45–74. On various facets of the Austrian police under Nazism, see Barbara Stelzl-Marx, Andreas Kranebitter, and Gregor Holzinger, eds., *Exekutive der Gewalt. Die österreichische Polizei und der Nationalsozialismus* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2024). My article in that volume (“Die Wiener Polizei im Nationalsozialismus. Zwischen Instrumentalisierung und Eigenverantwortung”) relies on research presented here, which was completed before that volume.
- 2 Oskar Rosenfeld, *In the Beginning Was the Ghetto: Notebooks from Łódź*, trans. Brigitte M. Goldstein (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2002), 7.
- 3 Yad Vashem Archives (YVA), O.51, Nazi Documentation, File No. 88, Item No. 36855621, Folio 6, Chef der Ordnungspolizei, Schnellbrief, Evakuierungen von Juden aus dem Altreich und dem Protektorat, Kdo. g 2 (01) Nr.514/41 (g), <http://documents.yadvashem.org/index.html?language=en&search=global&strSearch=3685561&GridItemId=3685561>. For the context of the failed Madagascar plan, Hans Frank’s resistance to accept more Jews into the General Government, and the role of Adolf Eichmann’s office (Reichssicherheitshauptamt IV B 4) in preparing the deportations, see Hans Safrian, *Eichmann’s Men*, trans. Ute Stargardt (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010 [German, 1993]), 72–90.
- 4 Rudolf Sarközi, *Roma. Österreichische Volksgruppe. Von der Verfolgung bis zur Anerkennung* (Klagenfurt/Celovec: Drava, 2008), 92–101.
- 5 *Ibid.*, 95.

The Viennese Policemen – A Sociohistorical Approach

Who were the “wheels and the cogs”, the policemen who guarded the deportation trains to ghettos and camps? Before the Nazi takeover in March 1938, the Viennese uniformed police were called the *Sicherheitswache*, estimated at 7,800.⁶ The Nazis integrated this force into the German uniformed police (*Schutzpolizei*), evaluating policemen’s political backgrounds to weed out supporters of the previous Austro-fascist regime, removing Jews or those with Jewish ancestors (following the Nuremberg Laws), changing the police ranks to German titles and the salary structure to Reichsmarks, and gradually introducing elements of the German criminal code to harmonise Austria with the Reich.⁷ By November 1940, the Nazis expanded the Viennese force to 8,166 *Schutzpolizei*,⁸ partly because they added five new districts to Vienna in 1938.⁹ During the invasion of Poland, some regular Viennese police were transferred there to a special unit used to murder Polish and Jewish civilians,¹⁰ but most men who guarded transports had not served in occupied Europe. They only performed that duty from 1943 to 1945, after they had guarded deportation trains.

Reinhard Heydrich, the chief of the *Sicherheitspolizei* (Security Police), and Kurt Daluge, the chief of the *Ordnungspolizei* (Order Police), agreed in the fall of 1941 that the *Ordnungspolizei* would guard the transports, which is why regular Viennese police were used (see Table 1, page 7 and 8). They fulfilled this role in Vienna at least through 1943, based on assignment and financial records,¹¹ though there were also smaller transports from Vienna to Theresienstadt in 1944.¹² Unlike other German order police, these policemen were not new recruits infused with SS values, like the ones mustered into new police battalions in 1939 and 1940.¹³ Rather, they were middle-aged men who had trained and worked in Austrian institutions, years before the Nazis came to power. Most were not Nazis. Actually, there were so few party and SS members in the Viennese police that police officials and the Nazi Party’s district office for Vienna falsified personnel records after the Nazi takeover to make it appear that more policemen had been “Old Fighters” and “illegal” Nazi Party members.¹⁴

6 The estimate comes from Ulrike Wetz, “Geschichte der Wiener Polizei-Direktion vom Jahre 1945 bis zum Jahre 1955 mit Berücksichtigung der Zeit vor 1945”, PhD dissertation (University of Vienna, 1971), 199. However, she does not specify the source. The number is reasonable, since police official Anton Walitschek, who headed the police administration’s statistics department in the 1930s, stated there were 8,576 *Sicherheitswache* (including inspectors and regular policemen) in the budget for 1932, but not all of these positions were necessarily filled. Heinrich Dehmal et al., eds., *Der österreichische Bundes-Kriminalbeamte: Gedenkwerk anlässlich des 80jährigen Bestandes des Kriminalbeamtenkorps Österreichs* (Vienna: Verlag für Polizeiliche Fachliteratur, 1933), 177.

7 Lewis, “Continuity and Change in the Vienna Police Force”, 45–74.

8 Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Archiv der Republik, Reichsstatthalterei Wien [OeStA/AdR/RStH Wien], Ia S Pol 2200 180/42, 1941, K. 533, Bericht über die in der Zeit vom 4. bis 9.11.1940 auf Anordnung des Chefs der Ordnungspolizei vorgenommene Besichtigung der staatlichen Polizeikasse in Wien.

9 By adding the 22nd to 26th districts, the Nazis increased Vienna’s population by 212,000 in 1939. That was then the total population of the 22nd to 26th districts. Andreas Weigl, *Demographischer Wandel und Modernisierung in Wien* (Vienna: Pichler, 2000), 94.

10 This was Polizeigruppe I, whose actions were described by Klaus-Michael Mallmann, “... Mißgeburten, die nicht auf diese Welt gehören: Die deutsche Ordnungspolizei in Polen 1939–1941”, in *Genesis des Genozids: Polen 1939–41*, ed. Klaus-Michael Mallmann and Bogdan Musial, Veröffentlichungen der Forschungsstelle Ludwigsburg der Universität Stuttgart (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2004), 71–82.

11 See note 3.

12 Moser, Tabelle 3b, 82.

13 Edward B. Westermann, *Hitler’s Police Battalions: Enforcing Racial War in the East* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas, 2005), 83–91; Ian Rich, *Holocaust Perpetrators of the German Police Battalions: The Mass Murder of Jewish Civilians, 1940–1942* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020), 33–36.

14 Franz Weisz, “Umstellung der personalen Organisation der ehemaligen Österreichischen Polizei auf jene des Deutschen Reiches”, *Wiener Geschichtsblätter* 50 (1995): 79–95.

Table 1: Deportations with Known Policemen (Subset of all Deportations)

Departure Number from Vienna	Date	Destination	Number of Deportees**	Phase (Reich-wide perspective)
Not listed	04.11.1941	Łódz (Litzmannstadt)	Roma (1,000)	One of five Roma transports, part of 1 st wave, including 20 Jewish transports from important cities in the Reich (Germany and Austria), October–November 1941
11	23.11.1941?	Kovno	Jews (995)	2 nd wave, heading to Reichskommissariat Ostland, 32–33 transports, November 1941–February 1942
16	06.02.1942	Riga	Jews (997)	2 nd wave, November 1941–February 1942
17	09.04.1942	Izbica	Jews (998)	3 rd wave, 45,000 Jews from the Greater Reich (including Vienna and the Protectorate), sent to the eastern border of the General-Government and to the Warsaw ghetto, March–July 1942
18	27.04.1942	Włodawa	Jews (998)	3 rd wave, March–July 1942
19	06.05.1942	Minsk	Jews (994)	Minsk wave, 17 transports of Jews from the Greater German Reich (primarily from Vienna and Theresienstadt) to Minsk and Maly Trostinec, May–September 1942
Not listed	05.08.1942	Stettin	Not people? Supplies or material?	
20	12.05.1942	Izbica	Jews (1,001)	3 rd wave, March–July 1942
21	15.05.1942	Izbica	Jews (1,006)	3 rd wave, March–July 1942
22	20.05.1942	Minsk	Jews (986)	Minsk wave, May–September 1942
23	27.05.1942	Minsk	Jews (981)	Minsk wave, May–September 1942
25	05.06.1942	“Ostgebiet” (Izbica/Sobibor)	Jews (1,001)	3 rd wave, March–July 1942
27	14.06.1942	Sobibor (originally Izbica)	Jews (996)	3 rd wave, last transport from Vienna for this wave
30	10.07.1942	Theresienstadt	Jews (993)	Theresienstadt transports (incoming) in the summer of 1942, following the deportation of Jews from the Protectorate to this transit camp and then outgoing transports to eastern ghettos, camps, extermination centres
31	14.07.1942	Theresienstadt	Jews (988)	Theresienstadt transports, summer 1942
32	17.07.1942	Auschwitz	Jews (995)	First transport to Auschwitz from Vienna
34	28.07.1942	Theresienstadt	Jews (988)	Theresienstadt transports, summer 1942
35	13.08.1942	Theresienstadt	Jews (997)	Theresienstadt transports, summer 1942
36	17.08.1942	Minsk-Maly Trostinec	Jews (1,003)	Minsk wave, May–September 1942
37	20.08.1942	Theresienstadt	Jews (997)	Theresienstadt transports, summer 1942
39	31.08.1942	Maly Trostinec	Jews (967)	Minsk wave, May–September 1942

* Jonny Moser, “Österreich”, in *Dimension des Völkermords. Die Zahl Der Jüdischen Opfer des Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Wolfgang Benz (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1996), 76–86, Tables 1, 2, 3a, 3b, 4.

** The numbers of Jewish victims come from Moser’s calculations of those actually deported, except for the victims from Macedonia and Thrace, which come from the Yad Vashem database. That database lists the number of persons rounded up in each town and how many arrived at Treblinka. There is a range of minimum and maximum victims for Kavalla, Xanthe, Komotini, and Alexandroupolis, which is why the total figure is from 4043 to 4272.

Departure Number from Vienna	Date	Destination	Number of Deportees**	Phase (Reich-wide perspective)
40	10.09.1942	Theresienstadt	Jews (990)	Theresienstadt transports, Part II, August–October 1942. After transport on 8./9. October 1942 (the last of 13 large transports from Vienna), only 8,000 Jews were left, either in mixed marriages or regarded as “Geltungsjuden” under the law
42	14.09.1942	Ostgebiet (Minsk)	Jews (992)	Minsk wave, May–September 1942
42	24.09.1942	Theresienstadt	Jews (1,287)	Theresienstadt transports, Part II, August–October 1942
43	01.10.1942	Theresienstadt	Jews (1,290)	Theresienstadt transports, Part II, August–October 1942
44	05.10.1942	Minsk	Jews (544)	Minsk wave, May–September 1942
46a	05.01.1943	Theresienstadt	Jews (100)	Smaller transports to Theresienstadt, November 1942–June 1943
46b	08.01.1943	Theresienstadt	Jews (101)	Smaller transports to Theresienstadt, November 1942–June 1943
47c	11.01.1943	Theresienstadt	Jews (100)	Smaller transports to Theresienstadt, November 1942–June 1943
47a(A)	03.03.1943	Auschwitz	Jews (75)	Phase of deportations to Auschwitz, with an important change in the rules: Jews working in war-essential industries were now included
Not listed	25.03.1943	Malkinia (Treblinka)	Jews from Macedonia and Thrace (4,043–4,272 total)	Bulgarian police transferred Macedonian and Thracian Jews to Viennese police
Not listed	26.03.1943	Malkinia (Treblinka)	Jews from Macedonia and Thrace	Bulgarian police transferred Macedonian and Thracian Jews to Viennese police
Not listed	28.03.1943	Malkinia (Treblinka)	Jews from Macedonia and Thrace	Bulgarian police transferred Macedonian and Thracian Jews to Viennese police
47b(B)	31.03.1943	Auschwitz	Jews (85)	Auschwitz transport as above, including Jews working in war industries. Transport included 49 Romanian Jews
46f	30.03.1943	Theresienstadt	Jews (101) ('Zigeuner' is a mistake in the Schutzpolizei records)	Smaller transports to Theresienstadt, November 1942–June 1943
46g	01.04.1943	Theresienstadt	Jews (72)	Smaller transports to Theresienstadt, November 1942–June 1943
46i	24.06.1943	Theresienstadt	Jews (151)	Smaller transports to Theresienstadt, November 1942–June 1943

* Jonny Moser, “Österreich”, in *Dimension des Völkermords. Die Zahl Der Jüdischen Opfer des Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Wolfgang Benz (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1996), 76–86, Tables 1, 2, 3a, 3b, 4.

** The numbers of Jewish victims come from Moser’s calculations of those actually deported, except for the victims from Macedonia and Thrace, which come from the Yad Vashem database. That database lists the number of persons rounded up in each town and how many arrived at Treblinka. There is a range of minimum and maximum victims for Kavalla, Xanthe, Komotini, and Alexandroupolis, which is why the total figure is from 4043 to 4272.

The names of Viennese policemen who guarded transports are known, listed in Schutzpolizei rosters and financial records showing the travel advances for deportations to Riga, Minsk, Łódź, Theresienstadt, and Auschwitz.¹⁵ Yet their social and educational backgrounds, career paths, wartime activities, and post-war reinstatement have never been investigated due to the unavailability of personnel files.

This study presents this social history, explains the policemen's compliance with deportation orders, and analyses why most were allowed to keep their jobs after 1945. Rather than trying to fit their compliance into one model (social-psychological models of obedience to authority, ideological indoctrination, or generational leadership)¹⁶ or follow a historical path only based on the German police, this study argues that Austrian cultural, social, and political contexts must be considered.

Policemen passed through four historical phases, each time-dependent, that helped them comply with deportation orders and regard them as a necessary task. The first three will be described and analysed in the first section of this study, appearing in this issue of S:I.M.O.N.; the fourth stage will be covered in the second half, appearing in the next issue. In the first stage, policemen absorbed prejudicial ideas about Roma and Jews from the Habsburg era, both in regular culture and in police culture. Second, they worked in a police force that, after the First World War, was supposed to respect civil rights, but which grew more authoritarian after 1927 and fascist after 1934. Third, after March 1938, the policemen grew used to enforcing anti-Jewish and anti-Roma policies through their actual policing duties on the streets and in the stations, carrying out Nazi policies based on the ideas that these social groups were harmful and dangerous and needed to be isolated from the rest society. Fourth, the first phase of the war (1939–1941) meant that police were supposed to regulate and protect Austrian German society against minorities, foreigners from enemy countries, spies, and saboteurs. The police were put into military battalions in this period and given combat training; one of the first “special tasks” they were assigned was the guarding of deportation transports. They may have viewed this as a necessary war measure: while there was a consensus view in non-Jewish Austrian society in the interwar period that the Jewish community supposedly had too much power in law, business, and medicine, the Nazis, especially after the invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, propagandised the view that the Jews were enemy Bolsheviks, working to destroy society from within. But other wartime events – the impact of rationing and the arrival of Volksdeutsche from territories Germany had conquered – contributed to policemen's views that non-Germans had no place in Austria, while the needs of “Aryan” Germans had to be put first.

Historiography

Since the 1990s, historians have researched the role of Ordnungspolizei, including the Schutzpolizei, in the Holocaust. Christopher Browning's case study of Police Battalion 101 dealt with middle-aged, career policemen from Hamburg who com-

¹⁵ See note 3.

¹⁶ Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992); Jürgen Matthäus, “Die ‘Judenfrage’ als Schulungsthema von SS und Polizei. ‘Inneres Erlebnis’ und Handlungslegitimation”, in *Ausbildungsziel Judenmord? “Weltanschauliche Erziehung” von SS, Polizei und Waffen-SS im Rahmen der “Endlösung”*, ed. Konrad Kwiet Jürgen Matthäus, Jürgen Förster, and Richard Breitman (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch, 2003), 87–113; Michael Wildt, *An Uncompromising Generation: The Nazi Leadership of the Reich Security Main Office*, trans. Tom Lampert (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2009).

mitted multiple mass murders of Jewish civilians in occupied Poland. Browning argues that they consisted of three segments: policemen who willingly accepted the task and showed enthusiasm; those who participated but sought opportunities to take lesser duties (such as perimeter guard duty); and those who refused. The last was the smallest group. The first two groups were not coerced, since policemen who refused the mission were transferred, not punished or executed. They felt duty-bound to comply with their beloved commander, but he was a weak authority figure, tearfully explaining to them the difficult, extreme nature of the task they had to do (killing). Browning maintains that obedience to a weak commander may not have been enough; police complied to conform to their peers, not wishing to appear weak and unmanly nor ostracised in the foreign environment of Poland, where they wanted to stick together. Browning does not discount the role of the antisemitic propaganda to which all of German society had been exposed from 1933, which made it easier for the policemen to see the victims as racially inferior sub-humans. They accepted the perspective of their commanders – that this was a necessary task for Germany and “their race” – yet this was not sufficient to turn them into killers. Instead, they compensated for pangs of conscience by attempting to “act tough”. Even those who participated in killing actions then dropped out later could tell their colleagues that they were too weak to go on (i.e. “I was not man enough”), so they would not be totally shunned by their units.¹⁷ Browning did not place much stock in ideological indoctrination via police training for older officers, arguing that the worldview of the Hamburg policemen was already formed, based on the traditional morality of pre-Nazi society, though propaganda was used to encourage younger SS men to procreate.¹⁸

At its root, Browning’s theory relies on Stanley Milgram’s experiments, in which test subjects were willing to administer increasingly powerful electrical shocks to other individuals (played by actors whom they could not see, but whose cries of pain they could hear) when instructed by authority figures (individuals wearing white coats and acting like doctors or scientists).¹⁹ Browning modified the hypothesis of obedience to authority to include peer pressure and group conformity, but fundamentally he argues that the historical situation of the Nazi occupation, the historical ideas of German nationalism and racial hygiene, and the twin stereotypes of “the Jews as capitalist exploiters” and “the Jews as Bolshevik oppressors” were not relevant. Anyone under a rational system of command obedience, joined by peers in a group setting, could commit acts of mass murder.

Thomas Geldmacher, in his study of Viennese policemen who served in Schutzpolizei police stations in two towns in eastern Galicia, Drohobycz and Boryslaw, has a similar interpretation. He argues that the Viennese policemen who carried out deportations and mass murders in and nearby these two towns were middle-aged men who had limited education and came from a lower social class (small farmers, waiters, career soldiers) in the Lower Austrian region outside of Vienna.²⁰ He does not think that they were any more violent or antisemitic than anyone else in Austrian society. Instead, two forces influenced their behaviour: macro-level policies set by the district SS and police leader, Friedrich Katzmann, who was anxiously trying to achieve Himmler’s policy of clearing Galicia of all Jews by the end of 1942 (which he declared completed in 1943), and, on the individual level, material greed, because

¹⁷ Browning, *Ordinary Men*, 159–186.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 176–184.

¹⁹ Stanley Milgram, *Obedience to Authority* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974).

²⁰ Thomas Geldmacher, “Wir als Wiener waren ja bei der Bevölkerung beliebt”. *Österreichische Schutzpolizisten und die Judenvernichtung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944* (Vienna: Mandelbaum Verlag, 2002), 74–76.

there were wealthy Jews in these two towns, the heart of Galicia's oil drilling and refining industry.²¹ Many policemen confiscated Jews' winter coats, clothes, and jewellery and shipped the valuables back to Vienna for their own use.²² Although higher-level authorities gave them their orders, the extraordinary brutality that some policemen displayed during roundups, operations to find persons in hiding, and ghetto-clearing cannot be explained by obedience to orders or coercion.²³ Like the policemen in this study (who guarded deportation trains from Vienna), they claimed after the war that, if they had refused to comply with orders, they would have been severely punished.²⁴ However, some policemen enjoyed shooting Jews, boasted about the number of victims they personally shot, and took pleasure in taunting and harassing their victims. Geldmacher does not believe that these men possessed latent authoritarian tendencies that only came to life in an occupied zone, since there was little partisan activity there that might have threatened them.²⁵ Instead, he agrees with Milgram's results that when there is an authority, part of a "rational" command structure, 65 per cent of the subordinates will be willing to hurt other people if they are sufficiently distanced from the victims. Geldmacher also applies the results of Philip Zimbardo's Stanford Prison Experiment, in which persons who scored low on a psychological test for fascistic personality traits nevertheless proficiently fulfilled the role of guards in a simulated prison environment; one-third invented new forms of torture and humiliation to use against the prisoners. Additionally, Geldmacher agrees with James Waller's theory that a perpetrator first attempts to justify relatively small violations to himself in order to maintain a whole sense of self, but this becomes increasingly difficult as he commits more violations, so he gives up trying in order to avoid a moral reckoning. Ultimately, he engages in a pattern of committing atrocities to avoid self-humiliation and self-degradation, changing his attitudes about himself to fit his behaviour.²⁶

There are three problems with this interpretation. First, it does not consider that Austrian history and the history of the Viennese police are relevant to explaining the policemen's behaviour. Geldmacher claims "[t]here is no plausible reason to assume that the Vienna Sicherheitswache in the 1920s recruited mainly latent violent perpetrators".²⁷ This may be true, but key events impacting the Viennese police in the 1920s (such as the police shootings of working-class demonstrators at the *Justizpalast* [Palace of Justice] in 1927) and the 1930s (such as police involvement in the civil war against the Social Democratic paramilitary in 1934) changed the institution and its dynamic with the public. Police practice and standards during the late First Republic and the Austro-fascist regime used more violence in confrontations with organised labour; the government approved it and did not reign in or discipline the police to stop it. Actually, they purged police with social-democratic affiliations. Second, Geldmacher does not analyse the fact that policemen were not operating under the same rules and social conditions in Galicia that they faced in Vienna. The men operated with less direct supervision, without the presence of a critical German-language press (which existed before the Nazi period), and without the comments of their

21 Ibid., 13–14, 108–109, 117–126, 139–145.

22 Ibid., 91–93, 104–105, 142–143.

23 For some of the most extreme examples, see the clearing of a Jewish orphanage by the Boryslaw Schupo in August 1942, and "small operations" to murder Jews found in hiding places in 1943 (Ibid., 104, 120–121, 131–132).

24 Ibid., 151–152.

25 Ibid., 146.

26 Ibid., 150–58.

27 Ibid., 154.

neighbours. They could do virtually whatever they wanted, as long as it did not threaten the regime or the main mission. Third, they often worked with Gestapo units which were ideological and violent. Some Gestapo members who participated in mass murders in Galicia, such as Felix Landau and Friedrich (Fritz) Dengg, had years of committed experience with the Nazi Party, had been trained by the German police in Berlin, and had deep-seated psychological problems. They were not ordinary men.

Unlike Browning and Geldmacher, other historians argue that police training imparted an explicit antisemitic worldview and that it impacted older officers. Richard Breitman, in a 2003 article on antisemitic indoctrination in the worldview of Himmler, argues that Himmler sought an educational system for the SA and SS even before 1933, wishing to “radicalise” them with the idea that a “world Jewish conspiracy” existed. Himmler wanted to win over the Weimar police to Nazism, but he was primarily interested in converting his immediate subordinates who ran the Gestapo. Actually, Reinhard Heydrich and Werner Best, the Gestapo’s leading lawyer and ideologue, took on the task of setting up the educational system to shape the police’s concept of “worldview enemies”. Himmler returned to the idea of police education after he got full control of the German police from Interior Minister Wilhelm Frick in 1936. Afterwards, the first “leadership school” for *Sicherheitspolizei* (Security Police) officers was established in 1937 in the Charlottenburg district of Berlin. Combining professional police training with ideological education, this school was primarily for the plain-clothes police (*Kriminalpolizei*), Gestapo officers, and *Sicherheitsdienst* (Security Service) officers seeking a higher rank, not for uniformed policemen on beat patrols. Yet the school developed short-form courses for older policemen in the plain-clothes police and part-time courses for applicants for lower Security Police ranks. They were trained at another police school in Fürstenberg in the Mecklenburg region.²⁸

In one of the most extensive studies of police training to date, Hans Christian Harten argues that SS police schools imparted the Nazi worldview to regular policemen in the *Ordnungspolizei* (which included the *Schutzpolizei*). He defines the SS police pedagogical foundation as a “unified theory” of racial hygiene, racial anthropology, racial psychology, heredity, and demography, “amalgamated with völkisch ideas”.²⁹ The SS had a special office responsible for this education. Between the summer of 1937 and the start of the Second World War, policemen heard seventy weekly lectures. Once the war began, there were daily and weekly educational sessions, taught by instructors who were SS officers and had led units in the field. Harten differentiates between the training of Police Battalions, formed in 1939 and 1940 and trained for combat, from the training for precinct police officers (*Revierpolizei*), who were supposed to fulfil an “educational function” for the public, countering false rumours, informing the public about the regime’s goals, and maintaining stability on the home front. Concerning the connection between ideological education and the commission of mass murder in occupied Europe, he contends that ideological education lib-

28 Richard Breitman, “Gegen Nummer eins’. Antisemitische Indoktrination in Himmlers Weltanschauung”, in *Ausbildungsziel Judenmord? “Weltanschauliche Erziehung” von SS, Polizei und Waffen-SS im Rahmen der “Endlösung”*, ed. Konrad Kwiet, Jürgen Matthäus, Jürgen Förster, and Richard Breitman (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch, 2003), 21–34.

29 Hans-Christian Harten, *Die weltanschauliche Schulung der Polizei in Nationalsozialismus* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh/Brill, 2018), 14. This runs contrary to the SS-Police educational system described by Jürgen Matthäus, who explained that Joachim Caesar, the chief of the *Ordnungspolizei* Schulungsamt, did not think that a comprehensive educational program was necessary. Instead, Caesar thought creating an overall practical attitude would be definitive. Matthäus, “Die ‘Judenfrage’ als Schulungsthema”, 40.

erated sadistic tendencies, eliminated empathy, justified the selection of the victim group as an adversary, and created a psychological mindset in which the perpetrator replaced doubt with decisiveness. Education provided the “self-knowledge” that the SS policemen used when making decisions in the occupied territories, dealing with “inferior races”.³⁰ Yet Harten does not examine whether the broader society’s approval for racial laws, the eviction of Jews from their homes (as a precursor to deportation), and long-standing ideas about Roma as “criminals” influenced the police to believe that they were serving the public interest. Further, Harten did not determine the extent to which SS police education was used in Austria after March 1938, and what impact it had on Austrian policemen who had been trained in the Austrian system.

Edward Westermann regards police education to be only one factor in the process of turning policemen (whom he stresses were civil servants) into murder squads. He contends that German police battalions in occupied Poland and Soviet Union had been socialised into an “organisational culture”, created by Himmler, Daluge, and Higher SS and Police Leaders, who shifted the role of police from protectors of society to “political soldiers” who would carry out mass murders to realise Nazi racial policy.³¹ The transformation was steered by the upper echelons of the police administration, who set recruitment standards, exposed trainees to Nazi propaganda, and ordered that they receive military training. Himmler and Daluge intended to reshape the German police institution to create a militarised police, based on the values of self-sacrifice and hierarchy, infused with the SS concepts of anti-Bolshevism, antisemitism, and “Aryan” racial superiority. In order to do this, they centralised the police in 1936 and then allowed Wehrmacht members to join the police directly (without an additional screening process) if they had two to five years of military service and belonged to the Nazi Party or an affiliated organisation. Training concentrated on crowd control but also military skills, such as the handling of weapons and reconnaissance.³² Once the invasion of Poland began, Daluge created Police Battalions, which were new units of new recruits, not existing career policemen. They received police training, learning how to conduct arrests and searches, but also paramilitary training. These men had to meet SS racial and fitness criteria. Westermann contends that these units represented a “fusion” of police with the SS, forming the backbone of the units that the Nazis deployed in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.³³ Policemen who wanted to advance into the officer ranks had to attend training camps, and if they were considered physically fit and possessed the correct Nazi orientation (in a basic sense) then they attended Higher SS training schools, where they were taught ultra-nationalist German history and racial theory.³⁴ When a police battalion prepared for a mission in the field (such as mass murder) they heard exhortatory speeches to bolster them; group recreational activities, such as singing and festivities, also created social cohesion.³⁵

The recruitment of these battalions occurred in 1939 and 1940, so the explanation applies to men who were new recruits. The social profile and socialisation process of these units does not fit the policemen who guarded transports in Vienna, because 75 per cent of the latter had already been in the police since the start of the First Republic (see Table 5, page 24), or they had transferred into the police from the Austrian

30 Harten, *Die weltanschauliche Schulung*, 13–26.

31 Westermann, *Hitler's Police Battalions*, 11–12, 63–64, 129, 135–136.

32 *Ibid.*, 73–76.

33 *Ibid.*, 83–87.

34 *Ibid.*, 103–106.

35 *Ibid.*, 118–120, 168.

Bundesheer (Federal Army) during the period of the Schuschnigg dictatorship, after the Austrian Nazis had attempted to overthrow the government in 1934. These men were eventually mustered into police battalions and given military training at the bases and barracks at Kagran or Schönbrunn, but little is known about this training and whether it had a strong ideological component. Furthermore, it is difficult to measure the impact that education and training had on persuading career policemen who had already been trained under other systems (either the Austrian police or military), as well as to separate the influence of ideological instruction from existing prejudices and beliefs.

Ian Rich analysed two police battalions that committed mass murders in Ukraine. One was comprised mainly of Austrians from Vienna, and the other primarily of Germans from Saxony; their members were recruited in 1939 and 1940 and trained in 1940. These were different than the battalions who guarded the transports from Vienna; the Viennese policemen who guarded the trains were career police officers (not recruits), and they were about ten years older on average than the battalions Rich discusses. Rich says very little about the Austrian background and identity of the Viennese unit, Police Battalion 314.³⁶ Instead, he argues that the junior officers (company commanders and adjutants) were vanguard pacesetters for the units during killing operations in Ukraine. He only identifies two officers from the Viennese unit and two officers from the Saxon unit, Battalion 304. He does not comment on the dynamics between German commanders and the Austrian rank-and-file. He notes that the first company commander of Battalion 314 was from Upper Silesia, and the deputy commander from Battalion 304 was from the Sudetenland, stating explicitly that the latter was drawn to *völkisch* ideology because he thought the Germans in the Sudetenland had been repressed.³⁷ I found a few rank-and-file career policemen who came from areas outside the pre-1918 Austrian crownlands and who may have similarly turned to pan-Germanism as a defensive mechanism (feeling that they had been an oppressed German minority in a Czech or Hungarian region), but this phenomenon was not widespread enough to qualify as an overall behavioural explanation. Rich's central argument is to take Michael Wildt's theory – that SS officers who set racial and resettlement policy came from the war-veteran generation, subscribed to the *völkisch* worldview, and operated with a cold, calculating rational mind-set – and apply it to younger officers from the "Hitler Youth" generation. He claims these young company commanders were the key figures who set up murder processes and showed their subordinates "how it should be done" by killing people.³⁸ This really does not work for the case of the Viennese deportations. Policemen who were transport leaders tended to be older, from the generation of First World War veterans. They had found their way to Nazism (via the SA and SS) in the Austrian context. They had not attended an SS leadership school before leading transports. Actually, some later attended these schools after leading transports, but this was a way to advance their careers and obtain a higher rank, as Harten describes.³⁹

A fundamental difference between this article and works that deal with the action of Police Battalions in Poland or the occupied Soviet Union is that this study concerns police compliance with deportation orders, rather than extended participation during months of mass murder in a foreign country. Loading and unloading deportation trains, as well as guarding people during the trip, could and did involve vio-

³⁶ Rich, *Holocaust Perpetrators*, 36–41.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 50–51.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 107–139.

³⁹ Harten, *Die weltanschauliche Schulung*, 191–194.

lence and cruelty, but the total amount of exposure for the policemen was far less than with planned mass murders, in which the policemen shot men, women, and children in routine actions. There are only a handful of post-deportation police reports from the Viennese transports,⁴⁰ but they do not mention violent roundups or large numbers of escapees who were shot. This is in contrast to a German police report from September 1942 about a massive train deportation of 8,000 Jews from Kołomyja in Galicia, where police hunted down and killed hundreds of persons who broke out of the tops of overpacked trains, en route to the extermination camp in Belzec.⁴¹ The Viennese reports do not mention conflicts with Reichsbahn personnel, unlike a German police report about a deportation train from Düsseldorf to Riga, in which the transport leader, Paul Salitter, complained profusely that train station masters would not alter the order of the train cars so that the police could have their own wagons (for security) at both ends of the train.⁴² The existing evidence from Viennese transports does not show that policemen or transport leaders experienced psychological stress. Additionally, the trips were short: the journey to Theresienstadt and back was two days, Auschwitz approximately four, and Minsk about twelve. The police returned to Vienna and resumed other duties, while police battalions deployed to Poland or Ukraine were on a long-term military deployment, serving as occupation police in countries whose languages and cultures they judged as inferior, primitive, and dirty, and where they hunted down partisans and murdered unarmed civilians accused of helping them. Ideologically, they were instructed to act as superior overlords when dealing with Poles and Jews (and were exhorted in their orders to apply the harshest violence), but were told to act with restraint with Ukrainians, even though these too were supposedly “racially inferior” people.⁴³ Furthermore, in Vienna, the public approval of the deportations, combined with official orders to guard the trains, made it easier. Therefore, the psychological and social reasons for participating in mass shootings may not have been the same as for guarding deportation transports; the latter may have been a very routine form of compliance.

Finally, there is the issue of whether the policemen knew the fate of the victims. This depends on the date of the transport and what the policemen knew about the nature of the destination (whether it was a ghetto, a concentration camp, or an extermination camp). Policemen guarding the trains taking Jews to the Łódź ghetto in October and November 1941, for example, may not have known that the German administration began executing them in stationary gas vans at Chełmno at the end of 1941 or that all unemployed persons in the ghetto “from the Altreich, Luxembourg, Vienna and Prague” were deported to Chełmno and murdered there in May 1942. Additionally, Germany authorities allowed Jews deported to Łódź to send postcards home at the end of 1941,⁴⁴ so perhaps Viennese policemen heard about

40 YVA 51/88/36855621, Folio 15, 95. Pol. Revier, Betrifft: Erfahrungsbericht über durchgeführten Judentransport, 4 May 1942; Folio 27, 95. Pol. Revier, Betr: Erfahrungsbericht über durchgeführten Evakuierungstransport (Juden), 16 May 1942; Folio 42, 152. Polizeirevier, Erfahrungsbericht, Betr: Transportkommando für den Judentransport Wien-Aspangbahnhof nach Sobibor am 14.6.1942, 20 June 1942.

41 Browning, *Ordinary Men*, 31–36.

42 Susanne Heim and Maria Wilke, eds., *Deutsches Reich und Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren. Oktober 1941–März 1943*, vol. 6, *Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933–45* (Munich: Oldenbourg Verlag, 2019), Doc. 59. “Der Polizeioffizier Paul Salitter berichtet am 26. Dezember 1941 über die Deportation von Juden aus dem Rheinland und die Unannehmlichkeiten für die Begleitmannschaft.”

43 Harten, *Die weltanschauliche Schulung*, 491.

44 Bertrand Perz, “Wiener Juden und Jüdinnen im Getto Litzmannstadt”, in *Post 41. Berichte aus dem Getto Litzmannstadt – Ein Gedenkbuch*, eds. Angelika Brechelmacher, Bertrand Perz, and Regina Wonisch (Vienna: Mandelbaum Verlag, 2015), 52–57.

these from Jewish residents, the Viennese authorities, or neighbourhood gossip. Still, no lists of which policemen guarded these transports have surfaced. A list of names of policemen only exists for one “Gypsy” transport to Łódź on 4 November 1941; I was able to locate personnel records for five of these men, but these records do not show whether they knew that the “Gypsy” camp at Łódź was separate from the Jewish one, or that the “Gypsies” were starved, decimated by a typhus epidemic, and then murdered in Chełmno in January 1942.⁴⁵

Some policemen in this study guarded a Jewish transport to Riga on 6 February 1942, and they might have known that the Jews were executed at the final destination, because Paul Salitter, a German Schutzpolizei leader from a different transport (Düsseldorf to Riga in December 1941) was fully informed that Jews in Riga were being murdered. In his post-deportation report, atypically filled with personal observations, he relates that his guard unit stayed overnight in Riga to wash their clothes and clean their weapons. He describes that the local Jewish population had been ghettoised and their property expropriated. He knew that the original Jewish population of 35,000 had been reduced to 2,500 male Jews, forced into labour battalions, while the rest had been shot “by Latvians” (actually, the executions, under Higher SS and Police Leader Friedrich Jeckeln, had been carried out by German police and SS members, with Latvian police guarding the cordon around the execution area, while a second execution was conducted by Latvian volunteers). Not only did Salitter know that Latvian Jews were being executed, but he also apparently knew that the overall plan was to execute incoming deportees. The Latvian population, he said, “had participated in the extermination of these parasites from the moment of liberation [from Soviet rule] until now [the German occupation]. From what I could gather, especially from Latvian railway personnel, it appears incomprehensible to them why Germany is bringing Jews to Latvia and didn’t exterminate them in its own country.”⁴⁶ If this transport leader knew, it is possible that the Viennese transport leader two months later knew.

Regarding a transport from Vienna to Auschwitz in July 1942, it is possible that the Viennese police knew that inmates in the camp were being murdered. Wolfgang Curilla shows in detail that Ordnungspolizei who deported Jews from western Europe to extermination camps knew this: they got the news from SS men whom they met in the camps; they saw large piles of clothes and shoes; they smelled the stench of burning bodies.⁴⁷ Policemen who guarded the Viennese transport to Sobibor in June 1942 may have known the fate of the victims because of the pervasive smell of decomposing bodies in the summer heat.⁴⁸

There is no evidence that the policemen experienced cognitive dissonance or had misgivings about guarding deportees. It appears instead that it was “all part of the job”. Therefore, theories used to explain the behaviour of policemen who committed mass murder, when they saw the victims face-to-face and shot for many hours each day, may not work for the phenomenon of carrying out deportations, in which violence had a different character (locking people into trains, beating them, shooting escapees, refusing to give them water). This is why this article presents a theory of phases based on the social composition of the police, the institutional changes under Nazism, and wartime policies.

45 Florian Freund, “Das Zigeunerlager im Getto Litzmannstadt”, in *Post* 41, 83–96.

46 Doc. 59, “Der Polizeioffizier Paul Salitter berichtet”, 242–243.

47 Wolfgang Curilla, *Die deutsche Ordnungspolizei im westlichen Europa 1940–1945* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh/Brill, 2020), 676–698.

48 Lewis, “Continuity and Change in the Vienna Police Force”, 71.

Sources

Previous historiography about the uniformed police in Vienna concentrated on how various types of Austrian governments used the police as an instrument of political power. No previous study of the Viennese police in the period from 1918 to 1945 has examined the institution from the ground level of the uniformed police officers rather than its policies and politics.⁴⁹ Previous researchers did not have access to the personnel files of policemen who were involved in the deportations. Although thousands of personnel records, including those from the Habsburg era, have been preserved, the researcher must request files by name, so it is not currently possible to randomly select a cross-section of all police recruited in a particular year or era. Instead, another method had to be found; in this case, the link among the group was to identify policemen who were assigned to guard deportation transports. Therefore, this is a type of prosopographical study, concentrating on the actions of a group within an institutional context, not a study of individual motives. The main source of names come from the Nazi Schutzpolizei command, which assigned them and paid them travel advances.⁵⁰ Using these names and others mentioned in other records (such as statements that policemen made to an examining commission [*Überprüfungskommission*] in 1946), I compiled 142 names, but personnel files or index cards (which also have basic data) could only be located in the *Archiv der Landespolizeidirektion Wien* (Archive of the Viennese Police Directorate) for eight-four of them. Sixty-five are included in this study, for they are the ones who, according to the evidence, either admitted to guarding transports or seem to be the same men who received advances and made the trips. Others were not included: for example, fifteen were assigned to a transport to Stettin in May 1942, but apparently this was not a transport that carried people.⁵¹

From the personnel files, I recorded the policemen's birthplaces, education, pre-1938 military records, employment prior to the police, family status, career paths, promotions, prewar activities, wartime deployments, processes of evaluation for reinstatement, any war crimes prosecutions, and other data. Sometimes the files included copies of Nazi Party records (Gau records) if police investigators were able to locate them. In the Viennese city and provincial archive (*Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv*), I looked for Gau records for the rest, since these could reveal whether the policemen had joined the party and when. I also checked to see if any policemen had a Volksgericht file (People's Court, Austria's post-war war crimes courts), which some did. Most personnel files contain a salary history (*chronologische Aktivitätsbezüge*) with entries and notes made prior to 1945 (i.e. not recopied into new personnel files after 1945, which is the case for some documents in these files). Sometimes these contain notes about assignments during the war years. Another valuable set of

49 Ulrike Wetz, "Geschichte der Wiener Polizei-Direktion vom Jahre 1945 bis zum Jahre 1955 mit Berücksichtigung der Zeit vor 1945", PhD dissertation (University of Vienna, 1971); Elisabeth Winkler, "Die Polizei als Instrument in der Etablierungsphase der austrofaschistischen Diktatur (1932–1934) mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Wiener Polizei", PhD dissertation (University of Vienna, 1983); Emmerich Tálos, *Das austrofaschistische Herrschaftssystem. Österreich 1933–1938* (Vienna: Vienna: Lit, 2013) 212–240.

50 YVA, O.51, Nazi Documentation, File No. 88, Item No. 36855621, <https://documents.yadvashem.org/index.html?language=en&search=global&strSearch=3685561&GridItemId=3685561>.

51 YVA, Folio 16, Res.Pol.Btl.z.b.V.Wien., 2 Kompanie, Nachweisung, 8. Mai 1942. This transport is not included in Alfred B. Gottwaldt and Diana Schulle, *Die "Judendeportationen" aus dem Deutschen Reich Von 1941–1945: Eine Kommentierte Chronologie* (Wiesbaden: Marix, 2005), or in the Yad Vashem Deportation Database (<https://deportation.yadvashem.org>). Five policemen on the Stettin transport were asked about whether they had guarded Jewish transports, but they all denied it. See Archiv der Landespolizeidirektion Wien (LPDW), Personalakten: C. IV, Josef, St.Nr.300/25 (188/56); G., Anton, St.Nr.102/1947; N., Oskar, St.Nr.398/28 (131/62); S., Leopold, St.Nr.337/28 (45/66); W., Rudolf (St.Nr.224/28 (86/60).

documents in the files includes the police's post-war investigation into the policeman's political background, in which an inspector talked to the policeman's neighbours and sometimes his superior officer and colleagues. In almost all cases, these were favourable (possibly indicating a post-war unwillingness by the general population to denounce a neighbour or a policeman whom they respected). There were also cases in which neighbours and family members tried to explain away the policeman's Nazi Party membership. Finally, most files contain a policeman's post-war autobiographical statement (part of his application for reinstatement) and sometimes his original autobiographical statement when he first applied to the police in a previous era. These documents are written to match the expectations of the policeman's superiors, so the post-war documents follow a set form: where the policeman was born, his level of education, when he joined the force, to which precinct he was assigned, any promotions he obtained, when he was mustered into a police battalion during the Second World War, and occasionally some general information about his duties if deployed abroad (clerical work, guard duty, anti-partisan missions). Those descriptions usually lack details and commentary, but the dates about assignment to police battalions and dates of foreign deployment helped confirm that the policeman was indeed in Vienna at the time when Schutzpolizei documents show he guarded a transport. For legal reasons, this paper identifies the policemen by their first name and last initial, unless they were found guilty (for other crimes) by a Volksgericht, or their names have already been published.

Background Characteristics

Who were the policemen? There are five important facets that give us clues about how they were socialised and how they wielded authority.

First, they were all men, because the Sicherheitswache, as an executive agency charged with maintaining peace and security, mirrored the patriarchal structure of Austrian society. Only men could become uniformed policemen in the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century.⁵² They had discretionary power over the enforcement of the law and the power to determine when the restoration of public order required their intervention. The male authority of the police was based on the patriarchal family (the man as *Hausvater*), and the values of this family structure were supported by police welfare institutions, which paid financial supplements to

52 However, there were women in the "Weibliche Kriminalpolizei" in Austria in the interwar period and during the Nazi period (Direktion III, Sonderdienststelle of the Kriminalpolizei), led by Eva Schoepfe. *Handbuch Reichsgau Wien*, vol. 63./64. (Vienna: Deutscher Verlag für Jugend und Volk, 1941), 677. The office was involved in social welfare policy related to women and children, such as by attending meetings and speeches concerning the Hitler Youth. "Die Wiener H.J. Tagung", *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, 16 October 1940, 6. Its officers were also supposed to be present during the interrogation of women accused of having an abortion (which was illegal in both the pre-Nazi era and the Nazi era), but I found that in actual investigations, they were not always present. Compare LPDW-A, K. 1938-47, KPL. I B 64/1040, 26 March 1940 with WStLA, 2.3.4, Landesgericht für Strafsachen, A12-Vr-Strafakten LGfSa Wien I, Vr 1759/40, gegen Dostal, Elfriede, et al, Strananzeige II B/2-1903/40, BlZl. 9. During the Weimar period, Berlin hired female police officers to work with male youth, believing that this social interaction would prevent homosexuality. Patrick Wakie, "Policing Homosexuality in Weimar Berlin", Master's thesis (College of Staten Island, City University of New York, 2018), 71-72. The Nazis decided in 1942 to allow women to work in the police administration, because male workers were drafted into the Wehrmacht to hold down occupied territory in eastern Europe. LPDW-A, Dienstanweisung, 3 March 1942, "Einstellung von weiblichen Hilfskräften". In 1946, Viennese Police President Ignaz Pamer rejected creating a female detective force (Kriminalpolizei) but announced the creation of female "welfare" police officers who would be trained to question children and female youth aged between fourteen and eighteen. "Wiener Polizei ist nazirein", *Wiener Kurier*, 16 January 1946, 3.

policemen who had children (whether born in or out of wedlock) and provided welfare payments to police widows, as well as to policemen whose wives died and still had children to support.⁵³ Out of the sixty-five policemen, nearly every female spouse was a housewife; it was rare for her to work outside the home, so it was understood here, too, that the policeman had economic authority as well as legal authority.⁵⁴ Furthermore, some post-war cases of reinstatement show that the police expected the man to control his sexual activity outside of marriage; police officials believed that when a policeman had too many affairs, he injured the moral reputation of the police.⁵⁵ The meaning of this in connection with deportations is that the policeman was socialised by his employer and by family tradition to perform his duty, to work within the parameters of police policy and orders, and, possibly, to harden himself against softness and sympathy. This did not mean that a policeman was brutal on his quotidian patrol; contemporary sociological studies have argued that police wield discretionary authority when deciding whether to enforce the law, and that maintaining the boundary between citizens and non-citizens, not law enforcement, is their primary function.⁵⁶ Instead, the system implicitly shaped the policeman's expectation that civilians would respond to his authority. This did not only come from the uniform or the power of the office, but from male authority, too.

Second, the policemen were from different parts of Austria and the former Habsburg monarchy (see Table 2, page 20). Generally, the police in 1938 were much more Austro-German than the force had been during Vienna's liberal period between the 1870s and the 1890s. After it was founded in 1868, the Sicherheitswache was multinational and multi-lingual, but over time, under Austro-German liberal political influence, the proportions began to shift towards more native German speakers, although the police admission requirement was that one knew German and was familiar with Vienna, not that one was a native speaker who was born there.⁵⁷ How-

53 The process could take years, however. Maria T. was married to the precinct inspector (*Polizei Rayonsinspektor*) Leopold T., who had disappeared in 1945. After she stopped receiving his pay in April and May 1945, she asked the police for financial help, since she had a daughter and no other financial means. Leopold T. was later declared dead after an Austrian veteran reported that he had died in a Soviet camp outside of Stalingrad. The police approved pension proceedings to begin in 1950. LPDW, Personalakt T., Leopold, St.Nr. 298/52. According to Schutzpolizei records, Leopold T. guarded three Jewish transports in 1943 (YVA Folios 96, 113–14, 124), but the post-war police seem not to have known this. Rudolf S. was widowed in 1932 and received supplemental pay because he had a seven-year-old son. LPDW, S., Rudolf, St.Nr.918/19 (119/49), Z.J. 123/0-1932, 22 March 1932, Aktenvermerk. He guarded a Jewish transport to Riga on 6 February 1942, which he admitted (*ibid.*, Ref. IV. Ueberprüfungskommission, Niederschrift, 16 September 1946) and two Jewish transports to Theresienstadt on 5 January 1943 and 30 March 1943. YVA, Folios 94, 110, 117; Gottwaldt, 348, 353.

54 The records do not always list a woman's profession. Sometimes they list "Haushalt" (household) and, in rare cases, a profession outside the home. For example, Karolina E. was a seamstress before she married Josef W. in 1927. LPDW, Personalakt W., Josef, St.Nr.857/20 (105/61), Trauungs-Schein [Abschrift]. According to Schutzpolizei records, he guarded one of the transports of Greek Jews in 1943. YVA, Folios 113–114. Margarethe K. was a seller in a *Trafik*, a tobacco and newspaper shop. LPDW, Personalakt Z., Severin, St.Nr.37/31 (371/1968), Eheschein, 12 October 1938. She married Severin Z., a policeman who joined the Nazi Party in March 1938. *Ibid.*, Erhebungsbericht, 3 July 1946. His data was not included in this study because he was assigned to the transport to Stettin that probably carried goods, not people, on 8 May 1942.

55 Oskar A., who served as a policeman from 1921 to 1945, was rejected for reinstatement because of his "moral behaviour" and failure to pay child support for an out-of-wedlock child. While married, he had an affair with a Viennese woman (with whom he had the child), divorced his wife, and then had a relationship with a Polish woman while stationed in Krakow during the war. He then married the Polish woman and lived with her in Vienna after the war, but continued his relationship with the second woman, who denounced him to the police. This was the reason why he was not reinstated, not the fact that he had joined the Nazi Party in 1942. See LPDW, Personalakt A., Oskar, St.Nr. 69/21 (587/48), Generalinspektorat der Sicherheitswache, Erhebungsbericht, 6 September 1948, and Protokoll der Sitzung der internen Kommission des Generalinspektorates, 19 March 1949.

56 P.A.J. Waddington, *Policing Citizens: Authority and Rights* (London: UCL Press, 1999), 28–33.

57 See the draft organisational statute, §4.4, *Protokolle der öffentlichen Sitzungen des Gemeinderathes der k.k. Reichshaupt- und Residenzstadt Wien* (Vienna: Wallishausser, 1868), Vol. 2, 1893. Between 1876–1892, the per-

Table 2: Birthplace of Policemen

Birthplace	Number	Percentage
Lower Austria	39	60.00%
Vienna	10	15.38%
Moravia	4*	6.15%
Styria	4	3.08%
Bohemia	2	1.54%
Silesia	2**	6.15%
Upper Austria	2	3.08%
Hungary	1***	1.54%
Salzburg	1	3.08%
Total	65	100.00%
Pre-1918 Habsburg lands (not included in post-1918 Austria)	9	13.85%

* Two born in Moravia were educated elsewhere.

** One was educated in Dittershof (Czech name: Dětřichov), in the district of Freiwaldau, which was in the Sudetenland and later became part of the Third Reich. Another was educated in Wagstadt, Silesia.

*** He moved to Vienna at age 3, so he was educated there.

ever, the idea that the interwar police in Vienna were all “Mistelbachers”, the nickname for conservative police from this district in Lower Austria, where the Christian Social government recruited in the 1920s and 1930s, is not completely true.⁵⁸ Based on my sample of policemen who guarded transports, sixty per cent were indeed from rural, conservative Lower Austria, having been agricultural labourers or tradesmen’s helpers (such as in carpentry, masonry, or baking) before they joined the police. Their early years were spent in small villages and towns, not the capital, and their early socialisation with authority may have come primarily through the patriarchal family and possibly priests and teachers. Most had between two and eight years of primary school education (*Volksschule*) (see Table 3, page 21). A significant percentage (almost 31 per cent) attended a trade school and had intended to become tradesmen had other circumstances, such as the First World War or the post-war economic contraction, not intervened. A second group (15 per cent) was born in Vienna, so they knew Vienna’s stark class differences and each district’s nationalities, dialects, businesses, and entertainments. The Vienna group’s level of education was higher – almost all attended two or three years of *Bürgerschule* (middle school) after *Volksschule*. Some had additional education at a trade school and had worked in the early

centage of policemen born in Vienna declined from 17 per cent to 10, while the percentage of those born in Lower Austria increased from about 15 to 18 per cent, but those born in Bohemia and Moravia remained roughly the same (around 25 and 20 per cent, respectively). The percentages of policemen from Upper Austria, Styria, and Carinthia increased. German as the mother tongue slightly increased from 82 per cent to 86 per cent. “Bohemian and Moravian” as mother tongues decreased from about 13.5 per cent to 12 per cent; native Polish and Hungarian speakers also declined. Regarding multilingualism, the percentage of police officers who knew Bohemian/Moravian in addition to German was quite high in 1876 (over 30 per cent), more than the percentage of policemen born in those areas. Although this decreased to about 28 per cent by 1892, this was still a very multi-lingual force. In addition to the bilingual German/Czech speakers, around 5 per cent of the force in 1876 knew Italian and German, and 5 per cent knew Hungarian and German. However, the percentage of police who knew Italian and Hungarian fell to 2.5 per cent (each) by 1892. The raw data comes from *Die Polizeiverwaltung Wiens im Jahre ...*, ed. by the Präsidium der k.k. Polizei-Direktion (Vienna, Alfred Hölder), for the years 1876, 1880, 1884, 1888, and 1892. The computations are my own.

58 Geldmacher argues that the Viennese policemen who committed massacres in occupied Galicia were completely normal Austrians who came from rural backgrounds influenced by the Christian Social Party and did not possess latent violent tendencies. Geldmacher, “*Wir als Wiener waren ja bei der Bevölkerung beliebt*”, 14, 154.

Table 3: Highest Level of Education before Police School and Training

Highest Level of Education	Number	Percentage
Volksschule (Primary school) (2–8 years)	26	40.00%
Bürgerschule (Middle school) (1–3 years)	7	10.77%
Gewerbliche Fortbildungsschule, Fachschule, or Handelsschule (Trade school or business school) (1–3 years)	20	30.77%
Gymnasium (High school) (4 years)	1	1.54%
Unknown	11	16.92%
Total	65	100.00%

* Only one went to Handelsschule (business school).

1920s in metalsmithing, carpentry, gas/water installation, printing, or haircutting. Typically, if the young man could not get an apprenticeship during the 1920s or was laid off a few times, he joined the army or the police, seeking stable employment. A third interesting group (about 14 per cent) was born in Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, and Hungary when these lands had been part of the Dual Monarchy.⁵⁹ Some spoke another language, such as Czech or Hungarian, in addition to German; a few Germanised their names during the Nazi period, probably because they wanted to signal to the rest of society that they were true Germans.⁶⁰ Most of the subgroup from outside Austria did not join the Nazi Party; one who probably did, based on his rank and the fact that he led five transports, was Johann Peter II, born in Hüttel, Bohemia, in 1894.⁶¹ The others, however, may have been völkisch nationalists; this possibly parallels Gary Cohen's hypothesis that pre-First World War German speakers from Prague, who were part of the lower social class, beneath the propertied German burghers, turned in the völkisch direction because it promised an alternative route to social power.⁶² Others may have moved in a German nationalist direction due to so-

59 It was only possible to determine where five out of this group of nine were educated: two in Silesia, one in Lower Austria, and two in Vienna.

60 Rudolf S. (1900–1949, born in Wagstadt, Silesia) spoke German and Czech. LPDW, Personalakt, S., Rudolf, St.Nr.918/19 (119/49), Haupt-Grundbuchblatt (His military record, 918/19, states "deutsch, böhmisch" under "Spricht" and "Schreibt". In 1942, he changed his name from a Czech name to a German one. Ibid., Kommando der Schutzpolizei, 2b 3601/Dlu/42, 22 July 1942. He never joined the Nazi Party, and he claimed that he had belonged to the Social Democratic Party starting in 1920. As noted above, he guarded three transports. Another related case is Josef T. (1907–1978), who changed his name from a Slavic one (perhaps Czech or Slovak) and spoke Hungarian, though he was born in Vienna. LPDW, Personalakt T., Josef, St.Nr.542/36 [300/52], Grundblatt, "besondere Kenntnisse"; "Mein Lebenslauf", 5 January 1946. His biography indicates he believed in German nationalism, converted to Nazism, possessed leadership qualities (in the eyes of the authorities), and was willing to adapt to different political systems. It is not surprising that he became a transport leader for a deportation to Theresienstadt on 10 July 1942. YVA, Folio 49. He was better educated than most of his peers (in gas and water installation), had been a platoon leader in the Bundesheer from 1930 to 1935, and then joined the police. He entered the Nazi Party in October 1940, attended the SS officer training school at Fürstenfeldbruck, and became an SS Obersturmführer in December 1941. Personalakt, "Mein Lebenslauf", and Polizeidirektion Wien, Abteilung I, I-1148/598/48 res, Aktenvermerk, 7 March 1949. Although a post-war police Überprüfungs-kommission said he only obtained his SS rank as a police-equivalent rank, the State Police had strong objections to his reinstatement because he was promoted to Hauptsturmführer (Captain) in 1945. Personalakt, Polizeidirektion Wien, Abteilung I to Generalinspektor der Bundessicherheitswache Täubler, I-1148/598/48 res, 7 March 1949. He also took over the apartment of a Jewish woman who emigrated to Cuba. Personalakt, Erhebungsbericht, 7 October 1946. This was atypical among uniformed policemen and more common among police detectives and inspectors (*Kriminalbeamte*); it indicates he materially benefited from the system.

61 LPDW, Personalakt Peter II, Johann, St.Nr. 276/45 /231/1918), Kommando der Schutzpolizei, 2 F-3530/26.6, 27 June 1944. See his report about the transport of 549 men, women, and children to Minsk on 5 October 1942 in YVA, Folio 90, 90. Pol.Review, 6260, Erhebungsbericht über durchgeführten Judentransport, 19 October 1942.

62 Gary B. Cohen, *The Politics of Ethnic Survival: Germans in Prague, 1861–1914* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2006).

cial and military conflicts with Slavs. For example, Maximilian B., born in Bautsch (Budišov), Moravia, in 1893 joined the police in 1919. After serving in the First World War (he was taken prisoner by the Russians and said he was shot in the foot three times), he served in a people's militia (the *Volkswehr*) in his hometown after it was "occupied" by the Czechs, he stated.⁶³

Third, they were all Catholic (with one declaring himself to be Old Catholic);⁶⁴ even those who left the church at the urging of the Nazi Party had been Catholic before that point (some returned to the church after the Nazi defeat).⁶⁵ In a few cases, it was possible to determine when a policeman went to a Catholic school, but on the individual level, it is not possible to determine how religious a policeman was or how this exactly influenced the performance of his duties (versus other pressures, such as the desire to keep the job or the belief that one had to follow orders). Cultural and economic changes affecting the modernisation of Central Europe, however, may have affected them via their parents, and their reactions to hyper-modernisation may have blended with Catholic attitudes that rejected Judaism as a foreign, non-Austrian religion. All the policemen were born between 1889 and 1912 and their parents, who were farmers, handcraft artisans, and sometimes lower-level civil servants, were influenced by the social and economic forces affecting the Catholic lower-middle class in the last quarter of the nineteenth century: the secularisation of society, the spread of capitalism, and the Marxist response to it – forces "that Catholics identified with Jews".⁶⁶

Additionally, since only 15 per cent of the policemen were from Vienna, the rest, who came from Lower Austria and parts of the former Dual Monarchy, had only settled in Vienna after the First World War. The war period, in addition to enormous physical deprivation, had sparked cultural conflicts among assimilated Viennese Jews, Galician Jewish refugees, and Christian society. Christians accused Jewish businesspeople of being profiteers and Jewish refugees of being vectors of disease.⁶⁷ These problems persisted in the 1920s, as proposals to expel Jewish refugees, stop Jewish immigration, and establish Jewish enrolment quotas at universities were part of the Christian Social Party's cultural and political discourse in that decade.⁶⁸ This created a mindset consisting of prejudices ("Jews are not real Austrians") and a belief that this population was a problem ("How should we solve 'the Jewish question'?). That mindset alone, however, cannot explain full compliance with deportation orders. As we will see, this required a period of socialisation in the police, a work routine involving command and respect for authority, the routinisation of persecutory actions, and,

63 LPDW, Personalakt B., Maximilian, St.Nr.602/19 (208/54), Sicherheitswache-Abteilung-Favoriten, Lebenslauf, 13 September 1945, and Eidesstattliche-Erklärung, 7 June 1946.

64 LPDW, Karteikarte, Anton K., and Personalakt, K., Anton, St.Nr.120/1946. The limited information shows that he was a policeman from Salzburg who transferred to Vienna in 1939. According to Schutzpolizei records, he guarded a Jewish transport to Malkinia on 25 March 1943. YVA, Folio 113-4.

65 One way that the post-war General Inspectorate evaluated whether a policeman might have been a Nazi was to examine whether he had written that he was a deist (*gottgläubig*), instead of Catholic, on his post-war readmission form.

66 Bruce F. Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution: A History of Austrian Anti-Semitism* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 38.

67 Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution*, 69–70; Marsha L. Rozenblit, *Reconstructing a National Identity: The Jews of Habsburg Austria during World War I* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 79; Thomas Albrich, "Vom Antijudaismus zum Antisemitismus in Österreich. Von den Anfängen bis Ende der 1920er Jahre", in *Antisemitismus in Österreich 1933–1938*, eds. Gertrude Enderle-Burcel and Ilse Reiter-Zatloukal (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2018), 46–49; Mark Lewis, "The Failed Quest for Total Surveillance: The Internal Security Service in Austria-Hungary during World War I", in *World War I in Central and Eastern Europe: Politics, Conflict and Military Experience*, eds. Judith Devlin, Maria Falina, and John Paul Newman (London: I.B. Tauris, 2018), 19–41.

68 Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution*, 157–159.

under the Nazis, the idea that the “racially valuable” Germans would benefit by excluding and deporting people defined as criminals, beggars, or parasites.⁶⁹

A fourth characteristic was that about 60 per cent had been soldiers before they joined the police. Among the veterans, there were two subgroups: men who were soldiers in the First World War and men who were in the post-1918 Austrian army, the Bundesheer. Yet one should note who within these subgroups joined the Nazi Party and who did not (see Table 4). The results counter the view that there was always a high percentage of First World War and *Freikorps* veterans in the German and Austrian police that made them naturally predisposed to the militarisation of the police under Nazism.⁷⁰ Although about 38 per cent were First World War veterans (virtually all had been on the Russian or Italian fronts), the numbers of Nazi Party members and non-members are about equal (counting the applicants, too). The notion that intense, bloody conflict and a feeling of comradeship with one’s unit left a vacuum that these men needed to fill by joining an ultra-nationalist movement based on the *Führerprinzip* does not apply to all of them. Furthermore, one is sceptical that fighting in the war gave them an authoritarian personality; in fact, most were subordinates in infantry or *Feldjäger* regiments. Any expectations they developed that their orders and instructions should be followed came from their police training and their experiences on patrol years later. Their experience as policemen, rather than their war-front experience, was therefore more important in how they wielded authority. I do not deny that these men probably doubted the efficacy of Austria’s First Republic and held anti-communist views, which Westermann argues were key characteristics of police in the Weimar Republic who had military backgrounds.⁷¹

Table 4: Military Service and Nazi Party Membership

Military Service	Number	Not Nazi Party Members	Nazi Party Members	Nazi Party Applicants	Unknown (lack of data or ambiguous case)
k.u.k. Army (First World War)	25 (38.46%)	10	8	2	5*
Post-1918 Bundesheer	14 (21.54%)	10	2	1	1
None	26 (40.00%)	15	7	1	3**
Total	65 (100%)	35 (53.85%)	17 (26.15%)	4 (6.15%)	9 (13.85%)

* Includes Peter II, who probably was, based on his rank and the fact he led five transports. However, his personnel file contains no records about party membership, and no Nazi Party membership record (Gauakt) could be located for him.

** Includes a policeman who guarded three transports and was chosen as the Hauptwachtmeister (main staff sergeant) for one trip. This selection was made by a transport leader who was a Nazi. Police officials received an anonymous complaint after the Second World War that the policeman had been a Nazi, but they could not verify it.

⁶⁹ Browder explains that Gestapo officials, who did not have a “natural predisposition” to violence, overcame internal resistance to using violence against other people through the social processes of authorisation, routinisation, and dehumanisation. Browder, *Hitler’s Enforcers: The Gestapo and the SS Security Service in the Nazi Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 33–34. Browder’s theory deals with plainclothes policemen in the German Kriminalpolizei, but the processes of authorisation and routinisation also apply to the Viennese Sicherheitswache. The influence of Nazi propaganda and police decrees on how the policemen viewed Jewish Austrians will be discussed later in this article.

⁷⁰ Westermann states that, in 1931, over half the Prussian police came from the military. Westermann, *Hitler’s Police Battalions*, 64.

⁷¹ Westermann, *Hitler’s Police Battalions*, 25–29.

However, as I will discuss below, they developed these views in the interwar period, so not necessarily because of their experiences in the infantry.

As mentioned, a second group had been in the military before joining the police: Bundesheer soldiers, comprising about 22 per cent (see Table 4). Importantly, all except one had transferred into the police from 1934 to 1936, when the Austro-fascist government suspended the constitution and gravely restricted civil liberties. They had not been trained during the First Republic, when there was a stronger emphasis in the regulations on civil rights and duty to follow the law. They were generally only in the police force two to three years before the Nazis took power; sometimes one year of that was spent at the police school. Therefore, they did not have experience with patrols prior to 1932, when bloody clashes between the Republican *Schutzbund* (the socialist paramilitary organisation) and the Nazis were less common. They probably did not know their assigned neighbourhoods as well; they probably had less experience distinguishing situations that required intervention through force from those that could be resolved through other means. Furthermore, they joined during a highly politicised period, after the Nazis had undertaken a terrorist bombing campaign in 1933 and after the Nazis had attempted to overthrow the government in July 1934; during this time, the main right-wing parties in Austria were trying to fashion a fascist-corporatist system. Still, one cannot go too far and assume that this sub-group explains some “natural” authoritarian tendency, because *three quarters* of the policemen who guarded deportation trains had been hired during the democratic First Republic and fell outside of this group of former Bundesheer soldiers (see Table 5). Therefore, one must seek explanations in how the police institution changed its tasks and use of authority in later periods.

Fifth, the idea that these policemen agreed to guard deportation trains because they were ideologically committed Nazis is not borne out by the data (see Table 6). Half the policemen who guarded transports (thirty-five men; 53 per cent) were not Nazis. Only 26 per cent (seventeen men) were definitely Nazi Party members, based

Table 5: Period of Joining Police

Period	Number	Percentage
1914 (Joined in January, but was in the k.u.k. military from 1 August 1914–17 August 1917, then resumed police career)	1	1.54%
First Republic (November 1918–1933). Actual sample ranged from 3 November 1918–1 April 1930	49	75.38%
Austro-fascism (1934–1938). Actual sample ranged from 12 July 1934–1 January 1936	13	20.00%
Nazi period. Actual sample included membership in 1940 and 1941	2	3.08%
Total	65	100.00%

Table 6: Nazi Party Membership

Type	Number	Percentage
Not NSDAP members	35	53.85%
NSDAP members	17	26.15%
Unknown, due to lack of data or ambiguities in case	9	13.85%
Applicants	2	3.08%
Applicants later rejected	2	3.08%
Total	65	100.00%

on personnel documents, Gau records, and post-war police investigations.⁷² Adding Johann Peter II, the transport leader of five transports, as a highly probable case, the total would still only be approximately 28 per cent.⁷³ Because most were not highly ideological, other factors – including their cultural values (outside of politics), their training, the transformations of the police institution, and the general history of the period – were relevant to their compliance.

Four Stages Leading to Compliance

Their compliance can be explained by a four-stage model. The first stage was the cultural and political influence of the late Habsburg period on post-1918 society. The Christian Social Party under Mayor Karl Lueger adopted political and economic antisemitism in its platform, and this became part of the cultural currency in Vienna, where there were persistent discussions about the supposed over-representation of Jews in professions, business, and education.⁷⁴ Future policemen who were youths in Vienna and Lower Austria between 1890 and 1914 were exposed to this and the religious antisemitism of the Catholic Church. During the First World War, parliamentary representatives and newspapers communicated negative images of Austrian and foreign Jews: some were accused of black-market currency trading,⁷⁵ while others were blamed for supposedly controlling the centralised food and grain wholesalers (*Zentralen*),⁷⁶ which the government had actually established to distribute food more fairly and prevent price-gouging. The police, who regularly reported the attitudes of the Christian Viennese population during the war (but whose officials may have also mixed in their own opinions), stated that Christians blamed Jews for hoarding bread-ration coupons, controlling retail milk businesses, and buying up sugar supplies.⁷⁷ The police also blamed Jewish refugees from Galicia for criminal activity such as illegal gambling.⁷⁸ Although future policemen who were drafted into the First World War were outside of Austria during the war, when they returned, society heatedly discussed expelling Galician Jewish refugees and debated who should be entitled to citizenship in the First Republic.⁷⁹

How much contact did these policemen have with the Jewish public when on duty? Of the policemen in this study, only two were assigned to Leopoldstadt, the district with the highest concentration of Jews: Josef H. became an ardent Nazi and led three deportation transports in 1942,⁸⁰ while Adam A., born in the

72 These figures are fairly close to Reserve Police Battalion 101 (25 per cent NSDAP membership), and the age of the Vienna police participating in deportations (average 42.5 years) was close to that unit (39 years in 1942). The numbers are also close to Curilla's estimates for Reserve Police Battalions 65 and 67 (22 per cent). See Rich, *Holocaust Perpetrators*, 37–38.

73 There were also four cases of men who applied in 1938–1940, when the Nazis were in power, but did not become members. They are not included in this calculation.

74 Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution*, 41–44, 82–88.

75 For an example in Krakow, reported in Vienna, see "Rosenzweig und Gerstner, die Rubelkäufer von Oswiecim", *Reichspost*, 12 April 1916, 8.

76 Remarks of Reichsrat representative Wilhelm Maixner (Deutsche Agrarpartei, Bohemia), 13 Anträge über die Versorgungsfrage, *Reichspost*, 24 November 1917, 5.

77 LPDW, Stimmungsberichte aus der Kriegszeit II., 1915, Stimmungsberichte: die Woche vom 11.–21. Oktober 1915, 6; 9 December 1915, Milchnot, 2–3; 9 March 1916, Flüchtlinge, 10–11.

78 See the reference to twenty-three cases of allegedly illegal domino games in Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Allgemeines Verwaltungsarchiv, Ministerium des Innern [OeStA/AVA/MdI], Allgem., K. 2089, 20, Protokoll Nr. 22276/18, Sicherheitsbericht für das Jahr 1915, 31 July 1916, Section 11 (Glückspiele).

79 Rozenblit, *Reconstructing a National Identity*, 134–137, 152–161.

80 Josef H. was stationed in Leopoldstadt from 1922 to 1936, after which he was transferred to Floridsdorf in 1936. He joined the Nazi Party in December 1932 and during the illegal period was a Blockwart for the Gerst-

same Lower Austrian district as Josef H. (Gänserndorf), never joined the Nazi Party. Although he was awarded twelve schillings in 1928 for arresting someone who broke into a synagogue,⁸¹ he guarded a Jewish transport to Auschwitz in 1943.⁸² Rather than daily contact with Jewish Austrians, the issue here is that negative messages and images about the social and economic position of Jews from the Habsburg Empire were regenerated after 1918. In the general society, Jews tended to work as industrial labourers, small-scale merchants, business entrepreneurs, and free professionals. The men who became uniformed policemen came from a lower class – they had been agricultural labourers or tradesmen’s assistants before they became policemen. A career in the police offered economic stability and higher status. Yet they lived in small apartments, and their parents often lived in rural areas, so the divide between their social reality and aspirations versus those of the liberal Jewish middle class, connected to business, modernist art and music, and universities, was considerable. This did not necessarily translate into Nazi Party membership (as mentioned above, at least half did not join), but culturally they belonged to a world of tradition, patriarchy, and respect for conservative forms of authority.

The Habsburg era also bequeathed negative images of the Roma (“Gypsies”). Police practices against them, such as expulsion from one district to another and mandatory fingerprinting, continued after 1918. From 1904 to 1907, Bohemian, Moravian, and Silesian parliamentary representatives complained that their districts were being “overrun” by a “Gypsy plague”, claiming that several hundred Roma families had “invaded” their homeland, ruined their potato crops, refused to work, engaged in theft, and refused to send their children to school.⁸³ In 1904, local authorities in the western Bohemian district of Taus (Domažlice, today in Czechia) began fingerprinting all Roma, keeping track of them in a “Zigeunerbuch” (a “Gypsy” registry), and expelling them from the district.⁸⁴ A 1907 interpellation in the Austrian parliament wanted the interior minister to address why the local police in a Moravian district were allegedly too weak to expel two hundred Roma, despite a legal order to do

hof 2 group, the Nazi Party branch in Vienna especially for policemen. He also recruited other policemen in his station house in the 21st district to join the Nazi Party. LPDW, Personalakt H., Josef, St.Nr.742-22 (612/50), Auszugs. Abschrift des Gau-Aktes Nr. 94.271, aufl. BMfI. Abt. II; Lebenslauf, 29 December 1949; Erhebungsbericht, 27 January 1950. He led two transports to Theresienstadt (13 August 1942 and 10 September 1942) and one to Maly Trostinec on 31 August 1942. See the marching orders designating him as the transport leader in his Personalakt, Or.Nr. 9, 10, 12.

81 He was stationed in the 2nd district (Leopoldstadt) from 1922, after he finished his training, until he was assigned to Polizei Wach-Battalion 17 in September 1942. LPDW, Personalakt A., Adam, St.Nr.745/22 (189/61), Mein Lebenslauf, 15 June 1945. For the commendation for arresting the burglar, see the Anerkennungen for 1928 in his Standesausweis. A post-war background investigation (Erhebungsbericht, 27 January 1946) showed that he changed apartments, from the 20th district to the 2nd district, in 1943, and that he had not lived in the 2nd district since 1938, as he had claimed in his Grundblatt. The records do not note whether this was a “Jewish apartment”, as some post-war background reports do, so he may have acquired the apartment legitimately. His family had a good reputation in both places and he was not known to be a Nazi.

82 YVA, Folio 119, Nachweisung, Polizei-Wachbataillon I im Ido-Bereich Wien I. Komp., Wien-Kagran, 29 March 1943. Although this document states that Rev. Ltn. Franz R. and Hauptwachtmeister Adam A. were each advanced 35 RM for a Jewish transport to “Auspitz” on 30 March 1943, the Vermerk with the same date (29 March 1943, Folio 120) notes the 70 RM advance for a transport to Auschwitz, and Folio 121, Vermerk, 7 July 1943, notes that Franz R. submitted costs of 91.90 RM after the trip was completed. The Yad Vashem database lists this as a transport to Auschwitz, containing 82 to 85 people (“Transport 47b”, accessed 2 August 2021, <https://deportation.yadvashem.org/index.html?language=en&itemId=7085848&ind=3>), as does Moser, 86, Tabelle 4, who counted 85 victims.

83 Interpellation des Abgeordneten Loula und Genossen an Ihre Exzellenzen die Herren Minister des Innern, Minister für Kultus und Unterricht und Minister für Landesverteidigung, *Stenographische Protokolle über die Sitzungen des Hauses der Abgeordneten des österreichischen Reichsrates im Jahre 1905*. XVII Session. XXX. Band, 301. Sitzung der XVII. Session am 8. Februar 1905, 26899-26900.

84 OeStA/AVA/MdI, Allgem. K. 2088, Protokoll Nr. 44343 ex 1913, typewritten draft report, no. 28963/13.

so.⁸⁵ As Marius Weigl found, police expulsions of Roma from southern Bohemia led to their migration to Lower Austria, causing police to increase their arrests and expulsions there.⁸⁶

In 1911, the Police Directorate in Vienna praised the introduction of fingerprinting and expulsion in Taus, which “proves itself to be exemplary for a larger action and makes clear the value of dactyloscopy (fingerprinting) for an effective struggle against the Gypsy plague”.⁸⁷ It noted that the governor’s office in Prague wanted to work with the gendarmerie to fingerprint all the detained “Gypsies”. Already by this point, penitentiaries, courts, and police were fingerprinting convicts, “habitual criminals”, and criminals with “specialties”, in accordance with a ministerial decree from 1911. In 1913, a group of ministers and several Viennese police officials met to set the policy for who should be fingerprinted and which agencies should be responsible. They decided that “the Gypsies ... regardless of delinquency and age” would be fingerprinted.⁸⁸ Thus, members of this group were marked and recorded as vagrants and habitual criminals, influencing police treatment of them in later eras. Additionally, policemen who came from rural districts where Roma travelled might have also held these prejudices.

The second stage was the reduction and destruction of civil liberties. During the First Republic, police received two years of training, including courses on legal regulations and practical training, like foot, traffic, and streetcar patrols. They also took a preliminary exam (*Vorprüfung*) which covered the rules about arrests and house searches, and a second exam (*Überprüfung*) that evaluated their knowledge of criminal law and police service rules.⁸⁹ Police were supposed to respect civil rights (*Bürgerrecht*), but labour conflicts and police attitudes about crime control weakened this. Two infamous events, often cited to show the police’s militaristic, violent bearing towards socialists and trade unions, were the police shooting of working-class demonstrators at the Justizpalast in July 1927,⁹⁰ and the February 1934 “Bürgerkrieg”, when workers took over parts of working-class Vienna to protest the government’s ban of the Social Democratic Party. The Republican Schutzbund attacked the police in certain working-class districts in Vienna, and when the police were too weak to repress the uprising, the government called in the military, which shelled apartment blocks and ultimately arrested and dissolved the Schutzbund.⁹¹ Actually, only two policemen in this study participated in the first event,⁹² and only five participated in

85 Interpellation der Abgeordneten Teltchik, Goll, Schilder und Genossen an Sein Excellenz den Herrn Minister des Innern, betreffend die Zigeunerplage, XVII Session. 49. Sitzung der XVIII. Session am 16. Dezember 1907, *Anhang zu den Stenographischen Protokollen des Hauses der Abgeordneten des österreichischen Reichsrates im Jahre 1907*, 5933.

86 Marius Weigl, “Armutspolitik, Antiziganismus und Wohlfahrt in Cisleithanien zwischen 1900 und 1914”, in *Poverty, Charity and Social Welfare in Central Europe in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, eds. Milan Hlavacka, Olga Fejtová, Václava Horcáková, and Veronika Knotková (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017), 389–408.

87 OeStA/AVA/MdI, Allgem. K. 2088, Protokoll Nr. 44343 ex 1913, typewritten draft report, Nr. 28963/13.

88 OeStA/AVA/MdI, Allgem. K. 2088, Protokoll Nr. 44343 ex 1913, z. Zl. 28.932/ex 1913, Protokoll über die am Freitag den 28. Februar 1913, 1/2 11 Uhr in Angelegenheit der Einführung der Daktyloskopie im Erkennungsamt der k.k. Polizeidirektion Wien abgehaltenen Besprechung, 3–4.

89 Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv (WStLA), 2.5.1.8 A1-23, Kriminalbeamtenreferat, Wiedermann, Franz, Ausbildungsnachweis, 1922. Wiedermann did not guard a deportation transport, but his file shows the types of exam subject areas and evaluations that a Sicherheitsmann during the First Republic received. He later attended officer school and became a Kriminalbeamte.

90 Bundesministerium für Justiz und Ludwig Boltzmann-Institut für Geschichte und Gesellschaft, eds., *80 Jahre Justizpalastbrand. Recht und gesellschaftliche Konflikte. Symposium Justiz und Zeitgeschichte 11. und 12. Juli 2007 in Wien* (Innsbruck: Studien-Verlag, 2008); Winfried R. Garscha and Barry McLoughlin, *Wien 1927. Menetekel für die Republik* (Berlin [German Democratic Republic]: Globus, 1987).

91 Lewis, “Continuity and Change in the Vienna Police Force”, 47–51.

92 Josef E. and Anton H. IV were commended and given monetary awards for their role. LPDW, Personalakt E., Josef, St.Nr.437/21 (139/55), OrNr. 4; Personalakt H. IV, Anton, St.Nr.857/20 (94/57), OrNr. 4. Josef E. was in

the civil war.⁹³ Nevertheless, there are indicators that prior legal norms from the First Republic and even from the Habsburg era (which had numerous instances of army intervention to suppress civil unrest) were disintegrating. During the frequent labour strikes and economic crisis of the 1920s and 1930s in Vienna, right-wing police came to hate the left, which also hated them. When people on the street challenged police authority, the police charged them with “Vergehen des Auflaufes”, the misdemeanour of instigating people in a crowd to oppose the commands of an official.⁹⁴ Starting in 1933 and 1934, the Austro-fascist government cancelled most civil liberties; the police gained more authority to conduct house searches, make arrests, and punish persons. The government prohibited all opposition parties – communist, socialist, and Nazi. It also detained and prosecuted persons who were “dangerous to the state”.⁹⁵ The police had their own administrative punishment system (*Polizeistrafrecht*), separate from criminal courts, to impose jail time and fines, and after 1933 the government passed decrees that enhanced double jeopardy (double punishment for the same offense) and imposed preventative detention in a penal camp for individuals whom the government believed would threaten public peace in the future.⁹⁶ Policemen worked in an environment in which maintaining regime policies through force was more important than individual rights. Additionally, as mentioned above, 22 per cent (fourteen policemen) had been in the Austrian Bundesheer prior to their joining the police; thirteen of these had joined the police between 1934 and 1936, so they were trained in an era that stressed obedience to the *Bundesstaat*, not the republic and its laws. Additionally, nine policemen (14 per cent) had joined the Nazi Party between 1929 and 1932, before it was illegal (see Table 7, page 29). They all had different personal histories. Only one was suspended from the police in 1934 for Nazi activity;⁹⁷ others were supposedly upstanding or reserved in their public behaviour,

the First Reserve Police Company, South, which was approved to guard a Jewish transport, probably on 9 April 1942 to Izbica under Johann Peter II. YVA, Folio 12, 1.Res.Pol.Komp.Süd, Verzeichnis, 23 March 1942; Folio 13, I.2501, 1. Vermerk, 23 April 1942. Anton H. IV guarded a Jewish transport to Theresienstadt on 30 March 1943. Although YVA Folio 117 (advancing funds to four policemen) states the transport of 30 March 1943 was a “Zinguener” [sic] transport, the Schutzpolizei order states it was one of three Jewish transports. YVA, Folio 110, Kommando der Schutzpolizei, Ia 6260/43, Betr: Gestellung von Begleitkommandos, 29 March 1943. Another reason why this was probably a Jewish transport is that one of the assigned policemen, Anton H. IV, admitted in 1946 that he guarded a Jewish transport to Theresienstadt, consisting of only one wagon attached to a regular train. LPDW, Personalakt H. IV, Anton, St.Nr.857/20 (94/57), PD-Wien, Generalinspektorat der Sicherheitswache, Referat IV Ueberprüfungskommission, Niederschrift, 9 Sept. 1946. Although he stated the date was 1942, he probably got the date wrong. This is not ruled out by his service record, since he admitted that he remained in Vienna in a “special use battalion” until 4 November 1943 before being transferred to The Hague. *Ibid.*, Lebenslauf, 25 May 1946.

93 The policemen who received medals for their service to the Austrian state or received monetary rewards for their actions in the February revolt were Maximilian B. (LPDW, Personalakt B. Maximilian, St.Nr.602/19 (208/54), Standesausweis, Anmerkung, doc. 1/1 3); Anton B. (LPDW, Personalakt B., Anton, St.Nr.135/21 (301/51), doc. 3/1); Anton H. IV (see note 92); Alois J. I. (LPDW, Personalakt J. I., Alois, St.Nr.217/23, Standesausweis doc. 4). The payments of 20 Schillings to Anton B. and Alois J. were also for their special service to counter the Nazis’ attempted putsch in 1934. The files do not explain their exact roles in these events. Albin K., who was in the Austrian Bundesheer in 1934, was awarded the Bronze Medal for service to the Austrian state that year. LPDW, Personalakt K., Albin, St.Nr.848/36 (148/61), Grundbuchblattnummer 79 272 (Abschrift), Standesveränderungen.

94 See the case of Johann Kaufmann, a Jewish driver who approached a crowd of social democratic demonstrators who had surrounded a policeman in the Alsergrund district and yelled that they should “clobber the thug.” He was found guilty of challenging the authority of a public official and was sentenced one week police arrest and two years probation. WStLA, Landesgericht für Strafsachen, A11, Vr-Strafakten 2832/33, OrNr. 14.

95 Tólos, *Das austrofaschistische Herrschaftssystem*, 269–293.

96 Charles A. Gulick, Jr., “Administrative and Judicial Processes as Instruments of Clerical Fascism in Austria”, *California Law Review* 32, no. 2 (1944): 164–174.

97 See the entry “suspendiert wegen NSDAP” in LPDW, Karteikarte R., Franz, St.Nr. 177/23. See also Personalakt R., Franz, St.Nr.177/1923(952/45), Chronologische Übersicht der Aktivitätsbezüge. When the Nazis took over Austria in March 1938, Ernst Kaltenbrunner ordered the rehiring of all policemen who had been dismissed

Table 7: Periods when Policemen Joined the Nazi Party

Joined before Party was illegal (before 19 June 1933)	9*	13.85%
Joined during the illegal period (Verbotszeit, 19 June 1933–12 February 1938)	4**	6.15%
Joined after Nazis seized power (March 1938)	4	6.15%
Total Nazi Party members	17	26.15%
Applicants without membership		
Applicants in 1938 (after March)	2	3.08%
Applicants in 1939	1	1.54%
Applicants in 1940	1	1.54%

* Four exited the party when it became illegal, but then rejoined after the Nazis seized power.

** Includes one whose Gaukartei states he was a Nazi, even though a Volksgericht ruled he was not an “illegal.”

according to their neighbours who made these statements after 1945.⁹⁸ Nevertheless, their party detested democracy and civil rights.

In the third stage, policemen compliantly accepted the Nazi takeover, enforced the state’s policies to detain and imprison Jews and Roma, and were integrated into the regime apparatus. Although there were pan-German nationalists and Nazis within the police, this has been documented more for the non-uniformed police and detectives (*Kriminalbeamte*).⁹⁹ Only thirteen of the sixty-five policemen in this study had joined the party before March 1938. The fundamental question was the adaptation of non-Nazis. In March 1938, with the “Anschluß”, local Austrian Nazis, with the backing of the Germans, took over the government. Although Himmler immediately implemented a plan to take over the police, it does not appear that there were massive purges.¹⁰⁰ A large percentage of the Sicherheitswache were not Nazis and were needed by the new Nazi authorities to keep the system running. They were allowed to stay in the force if the Gau personnel office decided they were “nationally oriented” or had been “politically indifferent” during the Austro-fascist regime.¹⁰¹ They were adaptable, willing to continue to work for the new Nazi state, and aware of its polices. This was

for Nazi involvement, so he was rehired. Ibid., Zkl. 1081 ssd and Zkl. 12079. He guarded a Jewish transport to Auschwitz on 30 March 1943; see note 82.

98 Josef T. (1903–1965; a different policeman from Josef T. [1907–1978], see note 60), joined the Nazi Party in July 1932, exited in 1933 when the government prohibited the party, then rejoined in 1941. LPDW, Personalakt T., Josef, St.Nr. 52/26 (226/63), Abschrift des Gau-Aktes Nr. 227.932. According to Schutzpolizei records, he guarded the transport to Auschwitz on 30 March 1943 and a transport to Theresianstadt on 24 June 1943. YVA, Folio 124. After the war, his neighbours in the 16th district said that he had a good reputation and that his family was very reserved. Personalakt T., Bericht, Polizei-Direktion Wien, Bez.-Pol.-Kommissariat 16, O-Zl.: Präs.317-48, 13 October 1948. Anton H. (1907–95; distinct from Anton H. IV), actually joined the Nazi Party in 1931, despite his claims that he merely applied in 1938. He had numerous neighbours, friends, and colleagues attest to his character. Some claimed that he was an “idealist” for the Nazi Party; others said he was an opponent. Some claimed that he decided to apply to help his wife, whose brother was a French military intelligence officer, and his mother-in-law, whom, he said, had been imprisoned by the Nazis and had her bakery confiscated after being denounced for hoarding flour. Although he was required to register on the post-war list of “minor incriminated persons” (*Minderbelastete*), he was reinstated in the police in 1950 on the grounds that nothing “politically disadvantageous” had emerged. LPDW, Personalakt H., Anton St.Nr.68/30 (343/64), docs. 4, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 15, 16, 29, 31, 36, 38. The state police never learned that he had guarded a Jewish transport to Izbica on 12 May 1942. YVA, Folio 23. The police raised questions about what he had done in the Netherlands, where he had been deployed from April 1943, but was unable to investigate it further. He claimed that he was a radio operator for the Wasserschutzpolizei in Amsterdam, though he had had a six-month training course in intelligence before that (Lebenslauf, doc. 4) and wore a black uniform while there (doc. 31, Zl.Pr.Kr-I-Lm-773/48, Bericht, 18 October 1948).

99 Ibid., 383.

100 Gerhard Botz, Nationalsozialismus in Wien. Machtübernahme, Herrschaftssicherung, Radikalisierung, 1938/39, 72–78. Botz believes that a large percentage of the police was already infiltrated by the Nazis, but this is not what the data for the lower-level shows.

101 Lewis, “Continuity and Change in the Vienna Police Force”, 60–61.

five years after the Nazis had come to power in Germany and had already eliminated all political opposition, removed Jews from the civil service, and instituted racial laws designed to exclude and pauperise Jews, so the regime's policies were known in Austria. The Viennese police also had extensive dealings with the Viennese SA and SS in the period before 1938, including extensive street violence and terrorist bombings in 1932 and 1933,¹⁰² and the assassination of the chancellor in 1934, so their methods and goals were no mystery. The compliance of the non-Nazis is suggested by the fact that only four claimed they were disciplined for their anti-Nazi views from 1938 to 1940. However, in two cases, the policemen may have had ulterior motives after 1945 for mentioning that the Nazis transferred them as punishment.¹⁰³

In the first year of the Nazi regime in Austria, the Viennese police did not intervene to help people who were intimidated and attacked by party members, the SA, and antisemitic members of the population. The police also failed to protect people from illegal evictions. Immediately in March 1938, SA members received "permission" from their local offices to take over apartments owned by Jews (including former non-Jews who had converted to Judaism). SA members summoned Jews and converts to their offices and forced them to sign transfer documents, threatening them with violence or warning them that if they did not comply, their spouses would be sent to the Dachau concentration camp (two thousand people in Austria were arrested on Gestapo orders in May 1938 and sent to Dachau).¹⁰⁴ These SA members also forced the Jewish residents to sell their furniture for a pittance, and threatened non-Jewish furniture movers and house superintendents who stood in their way.¹⁰⁵ As for the victims, either they did not call the police because they knew the police

102 The degree to which the uniformed police suppressed the Nazis or assisted them can be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, but overall the force was ineffective against them. After the municipal elections of 1932, the police intervened to protect Nazis during their street clashes with Social Democrats. However, they killed two Nazis (and a passerby) in a shootout between Nazis and Social Democrats on 16 October 1932, "Bloody Sunday", in the Simmering district. The police were also ordered to conduct house searches for weapons and explosives, and they shut down SA meeting places in the summer of 1933, when the Nazis began terrorist bombings in Austria. Yet Viennese detectives (separate from the policemen covered in this study) did not make important connections in their investigations of Nazis bomb attacks, and some of them were Nazis themselves and therefore protected the SS members behind the attacks. See Rothländer, *Die Anfänge der Wiener SS*, 115–120, 218–221, 281–288, 333, 375, 383–395.

103 Franz N., who, according to an assignment list, guarded a deportation of Roma in November 1941 (DÖW 10 501-c), stated that he was transferred to a different station in December 1938 due to his anti-Nazi activity. LPDW, Personalakt N., Franz, St.Nr.286/21 (479/52), Lebenslauf, 16 August 1945. Josef P., who appears on this same list for the same Roma transport (DÖW 10 501-c) and admitted to guarding a Jewish transport to Kovno in February 1942 (LPDW, Personalakt P., Josef, St.Nr.797/36 (160/65), Ref.IV. Ueberprüfungskommission, Niederschrift, 10 September 1946), stated that he and his brother, who was also a policeman, were transferred from the 4th to the 5th district in 1939 (*ibid.*, Lebenslauf, 26 May 1946). Leopold D., who, according to Schutzpolizei records, guarded four Jewish transports in 1942 (YVA Folios 23, 30, 39–41, 67–68), claimed that he had been transferred to a different district because he had arrested a Nazi leader; however, he stated this in the context of trying to explain away his wife's membership in the Nazi Party (LPDW, Personalakt D., Leopold, 9/61, St.Nr. 235/23, Niederschrift, 4 November 1947). Josef E. claimed in his post-war autobiography that he was transferred from the mounted unit to foot patrol because he refused to go to Kattowitz/Katowice, Poland, in 1940, but this was in the context of trying to explain why he had claimed during the Nazi period (falsely, he said) that he was a Blockhelfer (LPDW, Personalakt E., Josef, St.Nr.437/21 (139/55), docs. 16–17 (red), "Mein Lebenslauf", undated). He was accused by another policeman of having joined the Nazi Party, but he denied this, and the police administration believed his statements (*ibid.*, Thallmaier, Aktenvermerk, 13 May 1947). A Gau document showed that he had refused to pay party dues during the "illegal period" and was not interested in Nazism (*ibid.*, Abschrift des Gau-Aktes Nr. 121.679). All these policemen were seeking reinstatement.

104 Rabinovici, *Eichmann's Jews*, 45.

105 See the case of Anton Novotny, an SA member who served nineteen months in prison in 1946 and 1947 for being a Nazi during the illegal period and for forcing a Jewish woman, Olga Reiss, to give up her apartment and sell him her furniture for 100 RM in 1938. His sentence was later expunged in 1957. WStLA, A1-Vr-Strafakten, Landesgericht für Strafsachen Wien (Volksgericht), Vg 1 Vr 5191/46, Strafsache gegen Novotny Anton, Or.Nr. 32.

would not help them (the police could be overruled by the SA and the party, which held more power), or the police were complicit. There were other cases in which Jews were arrested, held in jail for months without any formal charges, then finally released if they agreed to emigrate by a set deadline. Even though many arrests were originally carried out by party or SA members, and not by the police, the police were still involved.¹⁰⁶ They processed the arrestees in the police jail at Rossauerlände; they kept track of Jews who had to report to police daily until Jews obtained paperwork to emigrate by deadlines set by the Gestapo.¹⁰⁷ Some of these documents, such as certificates attesting good conduct, were issued by the police.

Furthermore, according to the report of Josef Löwenherz, the head of the Jewish Community in Vienna (*Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien*, IKG), the community was informed (presumably by the Gestapo) on 30 October 1938 that all stateless and Polish citizens had to leave in twenty-four hours.¹⁰⁸ Since there were not enough Gestapo officers to comb through all the districts at this time, the regular police probably assisted. Furthermore, all through this period – from the Nazi takeover, the period before and after the November pogroms of 1938, and in September 1939, after Britain declared war on Germany, and Jews in Palestine enlisted to fight for the British – Jews were beaten and their apartments plundered of their possessions.¹⁰⁹ Although the Gestapo was the state's main tool to seize property (thereby trying to end “wild Aryanisation” by Nazi Party and SA members),¹¹⁰ the regular police collaborated. For example, after the Viennese city administration passed a new law in April 1939, legally evicting most Jews from their houses and apartments, the Nazi police president, Otto Steinhäusl, stated in a July order that because some Jews refused to take in Jewish tenants expelled from “Aryan houses” (as they were required to do), the police were now authorised to enforce these regulations.¹¹¹ We do not know precisely how many of the policemen in this study could have been involved in these actions – only four policemen in this study worked in the 1st, 2nd, and 4th districts in November 1938,¹¹² when 1,950 apartments were cleared of Jews.¹¹³ Still, every policeman understood that the exclusion and expulsion of this minority was state policy. The same was true of the Roma, who lost citizenship in the Reich in 1938. They were confined to camps in Reichsgau Wien and were required to show ID cards when travelling to work. In the Burgenland, a section of the Roma population was confined to concentration camps in 1939, and officials in the Reich Security Main Office worked out plans to deport all “Gypsies”, including

106 Matthäus notes that in Germany between the seizure of power and the November pogroms, police were the first authorities to apply anti-Jewish measures, urged on by party radicals and SA who were constantly trying to push the envelope. Thus, it was not only police training that mattered: the actual boundaries of what was permissible were stretched by praxis. Matthäus, “Die ‘Judenfrage’ als Schulungsthema”, 42.

107 LPDW, Normalien 1938, Überwachung der Auswanderung der Juden, B.f.O. 334, 15 July 1938.

108 WStLA, Vg 12 Vr 1223/47, Strafsache gegen Ebner, Karl, I. Band, Löwenherz report, back of p. 2.

109 After Gestapo officials ordered all stateless Jews to be arrested on 10 September 1939, Löwenherz remonstrated that Jews in Austria were loyal, yet they were being beaten on the street (Löwenherz report, back of p. 8 and 9). The residents of 70,000 apartments were evicted from 1938 to 1942. Rabinovici, *Eichmann's Jews*, 97–99.

110 Gestapo deputy Karl Ebner admitted in a post-war interrogation that he obtained Berlin's approval to auction off Jewish property seized during the November pogrom, and he also explained how his bureau (Ref. II/D) seized Jewish and Catholic Church property. Strafsache gegen Ebner, Vg 12 Vr 1223/47, Vernehmung, Or.Nr. 8, 26–29 July 1947, 31o, 31r, 31t.

111 LPDW, Normalien 1939, Zusammenziehung der Juden in Judenhäusern, II 5220 – 39, 4 July 1939.

112 Adam A. worked in the 2nd from 1925 to 1942 (LPDW, Personalakt A., Adam, St.Nr.745/22 (189/61)); Alois A. worked in the 4th from 1926 to 1941 (Personalakt A., Alois, St.Nr.55/26 (82/64)); Othmar K. worked in the 1st from 1927 to 1941 (Personalakt K., Othmar St.Nr.73/25 (137/63)); and Josef P., who transferred from the army to the police in 1935, worked in the 4th from 1937 to 1939 (Personalakt P., Josef, St.Nr.797/36 (160/65)).

113 Rabinovici, *Eichmann's Jews*, 58.

“German-blooded” persons defined as “asocial”, to a central concentration camp so that municipalities would not have to make welfare payments to them.¹¹⁴ In August 1940, Leo Gotzmann, the second Nazi police president after the death of Steinhäusl in June, announced in a radio address that all Roma (“Zigeuner”) in Vienna were not allowed to leave their dwellings, unless they had a fixed workplace and certificate to prove it. Roma camps were to be fenced in, and district police were to patrol streets to enforce the order.¹¹⁵ This was done to prepare for the deportation of the Roma.

In this third stage, police were also integrated into the regime and its ideology. In August 1938, former Sicherheitswachmänner were required to fill out an extensive Nazi police questionnaire about their previous political and religious affiliations, with special focus on whether they had belonged to the Nazi Party or its branches during the illegal period and had been punished or disciplined. The questionnaire also asked whether the policemen knew about any circumstances that might cast doubt on his or his wife’s “Aryan” origins.¹¹⁶ Policemen’s baptismal records were checked to ensure that none of their grandparents were Jewish; in some personnel files, the Nazi stamps are still present on these documents.¹¹⁷ They were given new ranks, based on the German Schutzpolizei hierarchy, and their salaries were recomputed for the German police salary system.¹¹⁸ They were required to swear an oath of loyalty to Hitler, replacing the authoritarian oath of the Austro-fascist period (which had replaced the Republican oath before that).¹¹⁹ Policemen, like all municipal employees, were required to contribute to the Winter Relief Organisation (to help the “Aryan” poor) and participate in the *NS-Volkswohlfahrt* (National Socialist People’s Welfare Organisation), standing in front of businesses or going door to door to collect money and clothing for the poor. Police were expressly prohibited from buying goods from Jewish stores; violating this rule was grounds for termination.¹²⁰ Some policemen attended a large exhibition in Vienna, *Bolschewismus ohne Maske* (Bolshevism Unmasked), which the Nazi Party propaganda office installed in the Nordwestbahnhof after the November pogroms, from December 1938 to February 1939.¹²¹ In addition to associating communism with the myth of a Jewish world conspiracy, the exhibit contained a photomontage of policemen battling socialists during the 1934 Bürgerkrieg, underlining the idea that policemen were warrior-heroes. This was the impression of a police major, Alois Sperlich, who visited the exhibit. While there, he recognised a photo of a fellow police officer named Viktor Friedrich, who had been killed in a battle with the Schutzbund in Floridsdorf during the socialists’ revolt. Friedrich was actually a Nazi who was involved in planning the Nazis’

114 Freund, “Das Zigeunerlager im Getto Litzmannstadt”, 75–80.

115 LPDW, Normalien 1940, Funkspruch, 30/8/40 um 11.20.

116 LPDW, Personalakt A., Oskar, St.Nr. 69/21 (587/48), “Bitte um meine vollständige Rehabilitierung”, 11 December 1955, Abschrift von den Fragebögen.

117 A copy of policeman Jakob S.’s birth certificate from 1940 was stamped and certified by the Nazi administration in 1940, indicating that the copy was only valid to prove “Aryan origin”. LPDW, Personalakt S., Jakob, St.Nr.610/36 (386/74), Geburts- und Taufschein. His Gauakt from 1938 states that he was not in the party, but that he read the Nazi press, was in favour of the Nazi Party before the “upheaval” (the Nazi takeover), and did not buy from Jews.

118 LPDW, Personalakt D., Ottokar, St.Nr.16/24 (46/47), Unterlagen für die Überleitung der Polizeibeamten des Landes-Österreich in das Reichsbesoldungsrecht.

119 WStLA, 2.5.1.8, A1-6, Kriminalbeamtenreferat, Geltner, Anton, Dienstzeit, 16 March 1938.

120 LPDW, Normalien 1938, Neue Freie Presse vom 13. Juli 1938 (Abschrift), Gründe zur fristlosen Entlassung.

121 WStLA, Bestand Magistratsabteilung 104, A8- Feuer- und Sicherheitspolizei: Theater, Lokale: 33- Nordwestbahnhofhalle 1938, 1939, Schachtel A8/28, 3529-31 (Folder: Bolschewismus ohne Maske. Exhibition 1938–1939).

July putsch, carried out after he died.¹²² Daniel Schmidt, in his study of Schutzpolizei from the town of Oberhausen in the Ruhr, similarly explains how police commemorated their comrades who were killed in a battle with communist and separatist fighters in 1920, during left-wing resistance to the Kapp-Lüttwitz Putsch. By ritualising these memorial events with the public reading of the names of “fallen heroes” and laying wreaths, the police nourished their founding myth that they had sacrificed their lives for Germany in the struggle against Bolshevism. The Nazis continued these “death cult rituals”, connecting the extirpative struggle against Bolshevism with the eradication campaign against Jewry, and used the events to integrate police from the Weimar era into their system.¹²³

This third stage in Vienna, the integration of the police into Nazism, is similar to Westermann’s description of the Nazis’ use of propaganda and training courses to instil the Nazi worldview that “Judeo-Bolshevism” was a dangerous force permeating the modern world, and it had to be eradicated.¹²⁴ He especially dates this stage to 1941 (the period when police leaders gave speeches to their units), in preparation for mass murder actions in the Soviet Union. However, the Viennese police were socialised to believe this earlier, prior to the deportations of 1941. Furthermore, the police administration accomplished this without having to create a deep fusion with the SS, and without a lot of extra training for career policemen (as opposed to new recruits). Furthermore, it does not appear that the *Kameradschaftsbund Deutscher Polizeibeamten* (Fraternal Order of German Policemen) played a significant role. Westermann argues that in Germany, this police welfare organisation was a tool to “acculturate members with National Socialist values”, and that it was mandatory by early 1939 for all policemen.¹²⁵ But Daluege’s office allowed 7,340 policemen in Vienna to remain in their own separate Austrian police welfare association, founded in 1874, until the end of the war.¹²⁶ It provided pensions, death benefits, and apartments (it owned 911), and not necessarily ideological indoctrination. Therefore, the preceding stages – the cultural ideas and political discourse of the Habsburg and interwar eras, the transformation of the police during the Austro-fascist state, and the Nazification of the police in 1938 and 1939 – created the organisational culture within Austrian institutions that made compliance possible.

The second half of this study, appearing in the next issue of S.I.M.O.N., will explain how the police bureaucracy operated and who organised the police units as guards for deportation trains. It will analyse a post-war investigation in which some policemen claimed they had merely “acted under orders”, arguing that their answers were probably coordinated by senior police officials who wanted to reinstate them in the force. This section will also challenge the prior historical view that the police force was totally transformed after the Second World War, showing that many policemen who had served as deportation guards were rehired.

122 LPDW, Personalakt Friedrich, Viktor, Sperlich to Führer and Reichskanzler, 6 February 1939; Gauleitung Wien to Steinhäusl, Z.b.V. Ka/Sp., 77777/S 2a, 4 April 1939; Bundespolizeidirektion, G.I. 766/I, Aktenvermerk, 2 May 1936.

123 Daniel Schmidt, “Polizeisoldaten. Die Oberhausener Schutzpolizei zwischen Bürgerkrieg und Vernichtungskrieg 1918–1945”, in *Eine keine reine Stadtgesellschaft: Oberhausen im Nationalsozialismus 1933 bis 1945*, ed. Clemens Heinrichs (Oberhausen: Verlag Karl Maria Laufen, 2012), 181.

124 Westermann, *Hitler’s Police Battalions*, 12–13, 94–99, 165–167.

125 *Ibid.*, 112.

126 ÖStA/AdR, RStH Wien, Referat Ia-S Pol, S Pol. 1501 406/42, K. 529, Polizeipräsident in Wien, Abt. 2 b Tgb. Nr.280 res., 12 July 1938; RfSSuChdDtPol. Im RMdl. O-VuR.PBG.2393/38 VII, 15 January 1940.

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Quotation: Mark Lewis, "Wheels and Cogs". Why Viennese Policemen Guarded Deportation Transports, 1941–1943. Part I, in S:I.M.O.N. – Shoah: Intervention. Methods. Documentation. 11 (2024) 2, 4–37.

https://doi.org/10.23777/sn.0224/art_mlew01

S:I.M.O.N.– Shoah: Intervention. Methods. DocumentatiON. is the semi-annual open access e-journal of the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies (VWI) in English and German.

ISSN 2408-9192 | 11 (2024) 2 | <https://doi.org/10.23777/sn.0224>

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