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The Logic of the Objective Enemy

*Jews, Martial Law, and Nazi Security Policy
in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia*

Abstract

This article analyses Nazi repressive policy in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia during two periods of martial law – autumn 1941 and summer 1942 – with particular attention to the treatment of Jews as targeted enemies. It shows that Jews were not only affected by martial law; they also occupied a distinct and structurally significant position within its repressive framework.

Theoretically grounded in Hannah Arendt’s concept of the “objective enemy”, the article interprets Nazi repression as part of an ideologically driven security logic. Drawing on court records, archival documents, and deportation databases, it combines quantitative analysis with individual case studies to identify recurring patterns of anti-Jewish violence.

The article suggests that martial law served as an important instrument for implementing racialised security policies in which Jewish existence was construed as a security concern. By examining the overrepresentation of Jews among those persecuted and the specific forms of violence directed against them, the study seeks to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between Holocaust history and the broader repression of civilian populations in occupied Europe.

Large-scale arrests were an integral feature of the Nazi regime, as the expansionist policy of the Third Reich was marked not only by the deployment of military forces but also by the mobilisation of the Nazi regime’s security institutions – foremost among them the police. These organs included the Security Police (Sicherheitspolizei) and the Order Police (Ordnungspolizei), which from the very outset of the Reich’s territorial expansion served as a reliable instrument for the “pacification” of newly occupied territories.

The mobile Einsatzgruppen, primarily associated with operations following the Wehrmacht in the Soviet Union and Poland,¹

¹ Peter Klein, ed., *Die Einsatzgruppen in der besetzten Sowjetunion 1941/42. Die Tätigkeits- und Lageberichte des Chefs der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD* (Edition Hentrich, 1997) – in this volume, see: Wolfgang Scheffler, “Die Einsatzgruppe A”, 29–51; Christian Gerlach, “Einsatzgruppe B”, 52–70; Dieter Pohl, “Einsatzgruppe C”, 71–88; Andrej Angrick, “Einsatzgruppe D”, 88–111; Heinz Heinrich Wilhelm, *Einsatzgruppe A der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD 1941/1942* (Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1998); Helmut Krausnick and Heinz Heinrich Wilhelm, *Die Truppe des Weltanschauungskrieges. Die Einsatzgruppen der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD 1938–1942* (Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1981); Andrej Angrick, *Besatzung*

also played an important role in the earlier phases of Nazi expansion. These units – composed of members of Heydrich’s Sicherheitsdienst (SD) men as well as members of the Ordnungspolizei and Waffen-SS² – were already deployed during the annexation of Austria, the cession of border areas of the Czechoslovak Republic, and the subsequent occupation of the Bohemian-Moravian lands and the establishment of the Protectorate in the spring of 1939.³

The first wave of persecution in the territory of the former Czechoslovak Republic began immediately after the Munich Agreement in the autumn of 1938. The Einsatzgruppen targeted individuals and documents considered hostile to the Reich, closed institutions associated with the pre-Munich state and took control of local police stations.⁴ The commanders of these mobile units – aptly described by K. M. Mallmann as “the Gestapo on wheels” – later took over the leadership of the newly established SD and Gestapo offices in the “pacified” regions, including the Czechoslovak border areas, where these offices were established immediately after the end of military administration.⁵

Further large-scale arrests followed on the heels of the military occupation and the official establishment of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia in the spring of 1939. The number of those arrested ranged between 5,800 and 6,400.⁶ In this wave, repression was directed primarily against German exiles from the

und Massenmord. *Die Einsatzgruppe D in der südlichen Sowjetunion 1941–1943* (Hamburger Edition, 2003); Helmut Krausnick, *Hitlers Einsatzgruppen: Die Truppe des Weltanschauungskrieges 1938–1942* (Fischer-Taschenbuch-Verlag, 1993); Klaus-Michael Mallmann and Gerhard Paul, eds., *Die Gestapo im Zweiten Weltkrieg. “Heimatfront” und besetztes Europa* (Primus Verlag, 2000); Michael Wildt, *Generation des Unbedingten. Das Führungskorps des Reichssicherheitshauptamtes* (Hamburger Edition, 2003); Klaus-Michael Mallmann, Jochen Böhrer, and Jürgen Matthäus, *Einsatzgruppen in Polen. Darstellung und Dokumentation* (Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2008); Jochen Böhrer and Stephan Lenstaedt, eds., *Die Berichte der Einsatzgruppen aus Polen* (Metropol Verlag, 2013); Jochen Böhrer, *Auftakt zum Vernichtungskrieg: Die Wehrmacht in Polen 1939* (Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 2006); Alexander B. Rossino, “Nazi Anti-Jewish Policy during the Polish Campaign: The Case of Einsatzgruppe von Woyrsch”, *German Studies Review* 24 (February 2001): 31–50.

2 Klaus-Michael Mallmann, “Menschenjagd und Massenmord. Das neue Instrument der Einsatzgruppen und -kommandos 1938–1945”, in *Gestapo im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, ed. K.-M. Mallmann and G. Paul, 291–317.

3 Dalibor Krčmář; Petr Kaňák, and Jan Vajskebr, *S jasným cílem a plnou silou. Nasazení německých policejních složek při rozbití Československa* (Památník Terežín, 2010); Jan Vajskebr and Jan Zumr, “Velitelský sbor operačních skupin a oddílů bezpečnostní policie a SD při obsazení československého pohraničí a vnitrozemí”, in *1939. Rok zlomu*, ed. Marek Syrný (Múzeum SNP, 2019), 135–144.

4 H. Krausnick, *Hitlers Einsatzgruppen*, 17.

5 Peter Longerich, *Heinrich Himmler: A Life* (Oxford University Press, 2012), 405–406; “V Liberci byla zřízena řídicí úřadovna gestapa a dvě úřadovny gestapa vznikly v Opavě a Karlových Varech”, in Krčmář, Kaňák, and Vajskebr, *S jasným cílem a plnou silou*, 71.

6 Jan Vajskebr and Jan Zumr, *Gestapo. Velitelský sbor tajné státní policie v Protektorátu Čechy a Morava d* (Pulchra, 2024), 353–354; Wolf Gruner, *The Holocaust in Bohemia and Moravia: Czech Initiatives, German Policies, Jewish Responses* (Berghahn Books, 2019), 59. Gruner reports 4,600 arrests and refers to Livia Rothkirchen and Chad Bryant. However, neither of them draws on primary sources for these arrests but rather paraphrases other literature. Further, this was not action “Gitter”, as is still erroneously claimed in some parts of the literature. Gitter took place in 1944, not in 1939. See Dalibor Krčmář, “Aktion Gitter z roku 1944 ve služební oblasti řídicí úřadovny Gestapa v Praze”, *Terežínské listy* 38 (2010): 59–73; Vajskebr and Zumr, *Gestapo*, 353–354.

Social Democratic Party, many of whom had sought refuge in Prague. However, Jews – regarded as the ultimate “enemies of the Reich” – were also systematically targeted by Security Police and SD units.⁷

Another wave of arrests in the Protectorate was carried out on the basis of pre-compiled lists known as the *A-Kartei*, which constituted a typical instrument to support the preventive detention of so-called objective enemies of the Reich. An outgrowth of Heydrich’s initiative, this card index represented a comprehensive system for identifying and arresting political opponents and dividing them into several categories according to their perceived level of danger; the cards were further differentiated in Nazi documentation by color-coded underlining.⁸ The origins of the *A-Kartei* system of “potentially dangerous persons” can be traced back to early 1936, suggesting that comparable lists were likely compiled not only in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia but also in other administrative districts and within the Reich itself.⁹

In the Protectorate, arrests based on the *A-Kartei* were carried out during the German invasion of Poland in the fall of 1939, and they focused primarily on prominent figures in cultural and public life, including academics, journalists, artists, clergy, politicians, and former legionnaires,¹⁰ with the total number of victims estimated at between 964 and 1,247 persons.¹¹ Jews were also targeted during this wave of repression (particularly Polish Jews residing in the Protectorate), and in the Olomouc region, Jewish detainees made up to one-third of all those arrested.¹²

Alongside arrest campaigns, in the autumn of 1939, the Nazi regime began to address the “Jewish question” in a more comprehensive manner, launching its first attempt at the systematic deportation of Jews. On 21 September 1939, Reinhard Heydrich announced that he had obtained Hitler’s consent to deport Jews and

7 Chad Bryant, *Prague in Black. Nazi Rule and Nationalism* (Harvard University Press, 2007), 34–35. However, Bryant also quoted from the secondary literature and not from the primary source: D. Brandes, *Die Tschechen unter deutschem Protektorat. Teil 1: Besatzungspolitik, Kollaboration und Widerstand im Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren 1939–1942* (R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1969), 24; Vojtech Mastny, *The Czechs Under Nazi Rule: The Failure of National Resistance, 1939–1942* (Columbia University Press, 1971), 56; Jan Vajskebr, “První zatýkáací akce německých bezpečnostních složek v Protektorátu Čechy a Morava (tzv. Akce Gitter)”, in *Okupace, kolaborace, retribuice*, ed. Ivo Pejčoch and Jiří Plachý (Vojenský historický ústav, 2010), 17–23.

8 Bundesarchiv Berlin Lichterfelde (hereafter BAB), R 58/1027, fol. 1. Geheime Staatspolizei, Geheimes Staatspolizeiamt, B. Nr. II 124/38 g. RS., Berlin den 7. Juli 1938. According to this document, the *A-Kartei* as such was established on the basis of a decree dated 5 February 1936. B. Nr. 79/36.

9 On the Protectorate and particularly the arrest operation *A-Kartei*, see Oldřich Sládek, “Stanné právo a stanné soudy/Stanné právo a stanné soudy”, in *Gestapo za druhé světové války*, ed. Klaus-Michael Mallmann and Gerhard Paul (Academia, 2010), 355–356. The book was translated from the German original, *Gestapo im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, by Petr Dvořáček.

10 J. Vajskebr, “První zatýkáací akce”, 18. For recollections of the arrested journalist in the *A-Kartei*, see Jan Hajšman, *V drápech bestie. Vzpomínky na Buchenwald* (XYZ, 2010).

11 Vajskebr and Zumr, *Gestapo*, 358–360.

12 Josef Bartoš, “Akce Albrecht der Erste na střední Moravě a zdejší židovská komunita”, in *Střední Morava. Vlastivědná revue*, no. 17 (2003), 4, 9–10, cited in accordance with Vajskebr and Zumr, *Gestapo*, 358.

Poles from the territories annexed to the Reich. On this basis, transports were dispatched from Ostrava, Vienna, and Katowice to the Nisko area on the San River, where a “Jewish reservation” was to be established and where the deportees were to construct the camp infrastructure. The project, initiated primarily by Adolf Eichmann and supported by the Protectorate’s Security Police and SD commander Walter Stahlecker, was, however, abandoned for logistical reasons shortly after its launch.¹³

In existing historiography, antisemitism, anti-Jewish policies, and the Holocaust are often examined separately from the broader framework of persecution and repressive measures carried out by Nazi security forces in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. The aim of this study, by contrast, is to use two major waves of arrests as case studies to connect the history of the Holocaust with other dimensions of Nazi policy – particularly the suppression of resistance. In the occupied Soviet Union and the Balkans, Jews frequently became primary targets of so-called anti-partisan operations. But can similar patterns of behavior be identified in administrative regions such as the Protectorate? This question lies at the core of the present investigation.

Constructing Order: Repressive Measures in Nazi Security Discourse

This study examines two large-scale repressive arrest campaigns conducted by Nazi security forces in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia during the autumn of 1941 and the summer of 1942. In both instances, the declaration of a state of emergency led to mass arrests and expedited trials by summary courts. Special attention is given to the extent and mechanisms by which Jews were affected by these measures, as well as to efforts to reconstruct the fates of selected Jewish individuals within the broader framework of Nazi repressive policy.

These two major waves of repression were usually interpreted in the historiography as the persecution of the Czech nation.¹⁴ This interpretation remains valid when viewed through the lens of the number of Czech (non-Jewish) civilian victims. However, the present study approaches these events from the perspective of Nazi security policy, shifting the focus to the specific target

13 Seev Goshen, “Eichmann und die Nisko Aktion im Oktober 1939. Eine Fallstudie zur NS-Judenpolitik in der letzten Etappe vor der Endlösung”, *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 77. On the role of Stahlecker, see Jan Vajskebr and Petr Kaňák, *Kariéry ve službách nacistu. Nejvyšší velitelé německého potlačovacího aparátu v protektorátu Čechy a Morava* (Lidové noviny, 2020), 90.

14 Vojtěch Mastný, *Protektorát a osud českého odboje* (Eurolex Bohemia, 2003); Jan Gebhart and Jan Kuklík, *Velké dějiny země koruny české*, vol. 15 (Paseka, 2007); Detlef Brandes, *Češi pod německým protektorátem. Okupační politika, kolaborace a odboj 1939–1945* (Prostor, 2019); Vojtěch Kyncl, *Bez výčitek: genocida Čechů po atentátu na Heydricha* (Historický ústav Akademie věd, 2012); František Vašek and Zdeněk Štěpánek, *První a druhé stanné právo na Moravě* (Brněnský Legionář, 2002); Oldřich Sládek, *První stanné právo v Praze (28. září 1941–20. ledna 1942)* (Český svaz protifašistických bojovníků, 1986).

groups of repression and examining the extent to which their selection aligned with the ideological framework of the Nazi regime.

This study builds on Hannah Arendt's concept of the *objective enemy*, a notion she developed in reference to legal theorists of the Third Reich such as Theodor Maunz, Hans Frank, and Reinhard Höhn.¹⁵ The *objective enemy* is a key term in Arendt's distinction between the role of the secret police in despotism and in totalitarian regimes: "The chief difference between the despotic and the totalitarian secret police lies in the difference between the 'suspect' and the 'objective enemy.' The latter is defined by the policy of the government and not by his own desire to overthrow it."¹⁶ Arendt's interpretation of the objective enemy is clearly grounded in the practice and ideology of Reinhard Heydrich.

Heydrich, head of Himmler's Security Service and, from the autumn of 1939, chief of the Reich Main Security Office (RSHA), articulated with striking clarity the challenges involved in combating the so-called enemies of the Reich – foremost among them, unsurprisingly, the Jews. In his writings, Heydrich emphasised that no exceptions could be tolerated in this struggle. He argued that if every German were to spare even a single "respectable Jew" from persecution out of misguided compassion, the result would be "exactly sixty million exceptions".¹⁷ The transformation of the police from an individualistic-humanitarian institution¹⁸ into a body concerned with the protection of the nation as an organic whole was articulated by Werner Best in his work *Die Deutsche Polizei*. According to Best, the primary function of the police was to safeguard the integrity of the national community by eliminating all elements deemed disruptive or destructive to its survival.¹⁹

This study is based on the hypothesis that the repressive policies of the Nazi regime in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia were expressions of an ideologically grounded security logic aimed at so-called objective enemies – above all, Jews. The first and second periods of martial law, examined through a comparative lens, represent critical moments when this logic was put into practice. The analysis that follows focuses on patterns of repression, the selection of victims, and the methods of violence employed. The treatment of Jews during both waves of repression highlights the continuity of the Security Police's worldview in which Jewish existence itself was construed as a security threat. At the same time,

15 Theodor Maunz, *Gestalt und Recht der Polizei* (Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt: Hamburg, 1943); Hans Frank, *Recht und Verwaltung* (Zentralverlag der NSDAP, Franz Eher Nachfolger, 1939); Reinhard Höhn, *Rechtsgemeinschaft und Volksgemeinschaft* (Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1935).

16 Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (Harvest Book, 1973), 423.

17 Reinhard Heydrich, *Wandlungen unseres Kampfes* (Franz Eher Nachfolger, 1936), IV, Unsere Aufgabe; Reinhard Heydrich "Die Bekämpfung der Staatsfeinde", in *Deutsches Recht*, Heft 7/8 (1939).

18 Individualistisch-humanitäre Auffassung x Völkisch-Auffassung, see Werner Best, *Die Deutsche Polizei* (L. C. Wittich Verlag, 1940), 8–9.

19 Best, *Die Deutsche Polizei*, 12.

the repressive campaigns of autumn 1941 and summer 1942 may indicate a shift in the approach of Nazi repressive forces – a process of radicalisation and brutalisation linked to broader transformations in the regime’s warmaking and genocidal policies.

The study specifically investigates how Jews were affected by the arrest campaigns. It asks: What were the most common reasons for their persecution? What fate awaited them after their arrest? And to what extent did the actual practice of arrests reflect the ideological framework of the so-called objective enemy? If some correspondence existed, how consistent was it – and if not, what accounts for the discrepancy? To explore these questions, the research draws on a range of archival sources, including collections held at the National Archives in Prague, the Security Services Archive (Archiv bezpečnostních složek) in Prague, and the Moravian Provincial Archives in Brno.²⁰ It also engages with the online databases of the Terezín and Mauthausen memorials²¹ and editions of published documents – relating to the first, and especially to the second martial law. A four-volume edition on the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich and the second period of martial law in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, compiled by Vojtěch Šustek, provides a strong foundation of documentary evidence. The edition primarily comprises German-language documents created by Nazi security and administrative authorities including reports on the assassination and resistance activities; SD reports that evaluate the daily situation and sentiment of the population; materials related to the propaganda campaign following Heydrich’s death; documentation on the investigation of paratrooper groups; and records of repressive measures and executions carried out by martial law courts. The documents are divided into six thematically structured sections across four volumes, covering the period from the assassination to the declaration of martial law and subsequent repression in 1942.²²

Stabilisation through Terror: Heydrich’s Arrival and the First State of Martial Law

“As I was leaving, the Führer said to me: ‘Remember, wherever I see the unity of the Reich threatened, I will select an SS commander and send him on behalf of the Reich to preserve the unity of the Reich.’ From these words of the Führer, you can deduce the

20 Archiv bezpečnostních složek v Praze (Archive of the Security Services in Prague, hereafter ABS) here: Fonds 325; Národní Archiv v Praze (National Archive in Prague, NA) Fonds 109, 114; Moravský zemský archiv v Brně (Moravian Provincial Archives in Brno) Fonds B 340; Archival documents from the Jewish Museum in Prague were also partly used.

21 <https://raumdernamen.mauthausen-memorial.org/>; <https://www.pamatnik-terezin.cz/databaze>.

22 Vojtěch Šustek, ed., *Atentát na Reinharda Heydricha a druhé stanné právo na území tzv. protektorátu Čechy a Morava: Edice historických dokumentů*, 4 vols. (Praha: Archiv hlavního města Prahy, 2012–2022).

overall mission of the SS and thus my special mission here.”²³ In the fall of 1941, Reinhard Heydrich took over as acting Reich Protector, replacing Konstantin von Neurath.²⁴ After three months of fighting in the East, victory against the Soviet Union was nowhere in sight,²⁵ which was reflected in growing resistance and sabotage activities across Europe, and the Protectorate was no exception to this development. Although resistance activities in the Protectorate may seem modest compared to other occupied areas, the Nazi authorities considered them a serious threat to the stability of the territory, which they regarded as an integral part of the Reich. On 20 September 1941, the head of the Security Police and SD in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, SS Obersturmbannführer Horst Böhme, issued a directive for the establishment of special commissions at the offices of the Gestapo and Criminal Police, which were to record and evaluate suspicious events, fires, and cases of sabotage. The directive, a copy of which was also sent to the RSHA, states:

The experience of recent weeks has shown that there has been a significant increase in cases of sabotage in all areas of the Protectorate. For various economic and political reasons, an even stronger wave of sabotage can be expected in the coming months. In addition to acts of sabotage by individuals who are incited to such acts by hostile radio broadcasts or communist leaflets, large-scale acts of sabotage controlled centrally can certainly be expected. It is therefore necessary for the state police leadership to pay special attention to the fight against sabotage.²⁶

In the context of the ongoing campaign on the Eastern Front and growing military losses, the decline in arms production in the Protectorate, which reached up to 35 per cent in some areas, was particularly alarming for the regime.²⁷ According to Hitler, Konstantin von Neurath was no longer a suitable leader of the Protectorate because he was unable to take decisive measures. Reichsminister of Propaganda Joseph Goebbels shared this view in his diary, stating that the moment had arrived for individuals who would not hesitate to take decisive action to lead.²⁸

23 Heydrich's speech to occupation authorities at Černín Palace, Prague (2 October 1941), doc. no. 9., in Kárný et al., *Protektorátní politika*, 69.

24 NA, f. ÚŘP 109, sg. 109-5-133.

25 See David Stahel, *Operation Barbarossa and Germany's Defeat in the East* (Cambridge University Press, 2009); David M. Glantz, *Barbarossa Derailed: The Battle for Smolensk 10 July–10 September 1941*, vol. 1, *The German Advance, The Encirclement Battle and the First and Second Soviet Counteroffensives, 10 July–24 August 1941* (Helion & Company, 2010).

26 NA, f. ÚŘP 109, sg. 109-4/397, Der Befehlhaber der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD, Tgb. Nr. B. d. S.-IV-280/41-g-, Prag, den 20. September 1941.

27 From the records of conversations at Hitler's lunch and dinner table, compiled by Wilhelm Koeppen, personal assistant to Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories Alfred Rosenberg, 1941, October 1, 2, and 6, Hitler's headquarters, doc. no. 8, Kárný et al., *Protektorátní politika*, 96.

28 Ibid, 96; Joseph Goebbels, *Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels*, ed. Elke Fröhlich, Part II, Vol 1 (K. G. Saur Verlag 1996), entry from 24 September 1941, 479–480.

Heydrich's appointment as Acting Reich Protector aligned closely with Goebbels' vision of a more hardline approach. On 27 September 1941, Heydrich declared martial law, justifying the measure as necessary to protect both the Reich and the Protectorate from "enemy elements" and to combat subversive enemy propaganda.²⁹ Contemporary press coverage accompanied these measures with appeals for loyalty and warnings against the alleged influence of émigrés, Jews, and Western powers.³⁰ Antisemitism and anti-Jewish measures in the Protectorate were supported not only by Nazi policy but also by segments of the domestic political and administrative apparatus. However, Heydrich's approach was marked by unprecedented vigor, consistency, and ideological radicalism, reflecting his vision of how the occupied territory should be governed.³¹

On 29 September Heydrich issued a decree ordering the closure of all synagogues and prayer rooms, denouncing them as meeting places for "subversive Jewish elements" and "hotbeds of illegal whispered propaganda".³² Simultaneously, he instructed the state police to take repressive measures – including preventive detention – against Czechs who demonstratively displayed friendly behavior toward visibly marked Jews in public.³³

In his speech on 2 October 1941, Heydrich portrayed Jews and Freemasons as the leaders of a global conspiracy whose goal was to destroy National Socialism and to render Germany "small and ruined".³⁴ Similarly, Hitler emphasised that the Czechs must be kept under control through a system of hostages, strict rationing, and, above all, the deportation of all Jews from the Protectorate – not to the General Government but further east. He noted, however, that the current situation on the front prevented the immediate implementation of this plan, which was also intended to include Jews from Vienna and Berlin.³⁵

At a meeting on 10 October 1941, Heydrich and representatives of the occupying authorities discussed practical measures for

29 Detlef Brandes, *Češi pod německým protektorátem* (Prostor, 2019), 331.

30 Pavel Večeřa, "Židé a antisemitismus na stránkách vybraných českých deníků v letech 1939–1945", in *Média a realita 2002: Sborník prací Katedry mediálních studií a žurnalistiky FSS* (Masarykova univerzita, 2003), 110–111.

31 Miroslav Gregorovič, *Kapitoly o českém fašismu* (Lidové noviny, 1995); Tomáš Pasák, *Český fašismus a kolaborace 1922–1945 a kolaborace 1939–1945* (Práh, 1999); Ivo Pejčoch, *Fašismus v Českých zemích. Fašistické a nacionálně socialistické strany a hnutí v Čechách a na Moravě* (Academia, 2011); Milan Nakonečný, *Vlajka. K historii a ideologii českého nacionalismu* (Sol Noctis, 2021); Ivo Pejčoch, "NSGSA a NSČDRS – dvě tváře moravského nacismu", 120–128; Dalibor Státník, "Český fašismus – organizace, spolky, společky, bojůvky a jednotlivci", 139–152, both chapters in *Okupace, kolaborace, retribuce*, ed. Ivo Pejčoch and Jiří Plachý (MNO, 2010).

32 Livia Rothkirchen, *The Jews of Bohemia and Moravia: Facing the Holocaust* (University of Nebraska Press and Yad Vashem, 2005), 124.

33 NA, ÚŘP, f. sg. I-3b-5851, ka. 389, doc. no. 4, in Kárný et al., *Protektorátní politika*, 90.

34 NÁ, ÚŘP, d., ka. 53, Heydrich's speech to the leaders of the occupation authorities in the Protectorate gathered in Prague at the Černín Palace on 2 October 1942, doc. no. 9., in Kárný et al., *Protektorátní politika*, 103.

35 From the notes of the personal assistant to Alfred Rosenberg, Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories, recording Hitler's lunch and dinner conversations. Wilhelm Koepen, doc. no. 8, in Kárný et al., *Protektorátní politika*, 97.

“solving the Jewish question” in the Protectorate, including the coordination of propaganda efforts aimed at linking the Jewish population with the resistance movement.³⁶ A week later, the Chief of Security Policy in the Protectorate, Horst Böhme, drafted a press release regarding the deportations, warning that Czechs who expressed solidarity with Jews could themselves face deportation and public exposure. Authorities also considered publicly shaming several prominent Czech figures who had allegedly “become involved” with Jews.³⁷

The overall balance of the first period of martial law is as follows: between 29 September and 28 November 1941, a total of 1,591 sentences were handed down in Prague, of which 247 resulted in capital punishment.³⁸ In Moravia, military courts issued 1,145 sentences, including 219 death sentences, while an additional 927 individuals were “handed over to the Gestapo”.³⁹

The Jewish Population during the First Period of Martial Law

During the first period of martial law, people were most often tried for acts of resistance and economic crimes. For the vast majority of those convicted, the reason given for the verdict was the “violation of public order and safety”.⁴⁰ The declaration of martial law specifically addressed the following crimes: the disruption of economic production and supply chains and the deliberate or unauthorised possession of weapons or explosives; it also prohibited gatherings. However, it was not only those who committed such acts who might find themselves before a court martial; those who knew about such acts and did not report them could also be prosecuted. Virtually anyone could be brought up on charges.⁴¹ According to Tomáš Fedorovič, at least twenty-eight Jewish men were executed in Prague, most by hanging.⁴² Post-war testimonies further suggest that Jews were sometimes forced to assist in executions, revealing the particular cruelty of measures directed against them.⁴³

36 NA, sg. 114-3-17, Notizen aus der Besprechung am 10. Oktober 1941 über die Lösung von Judenfragen, doc. 15, in Kárný et al., *Protektorátní politika*, 129.

37 NA, sg. 114-2-26, Notizen aus der Besprechung über künftige Planungen im Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren am 17. Oktober 1941, um 16 Uhr, doc. 19, in Kárný et al., *Protektorátní politika*, 141.

38 Oldřich Sládek, *Zločinná role gestapa. Nacistická bezpečnostní policie v čes. zemích 1938–1945* (Naše vojsko, 1986), 168.

39 J. Vajskebr and J. Zumr, *Gestapo*, 365.

40 See inventory of fond MZA B 340.

41 Sládek, *První stanné právo*, 27.

42 Tomáš Fedorovič, “Zastupující říšský protektor v Čechách a na Moravě a Terezínské ghetto”, *Terezínské listy* 40 (2012): 118.

43 ABS f. 325, sg. 325-10-2; doc. no VI/37, in Šustek, *Atentát*, vol. 4, 151; Šustek, *Atentát*, vol. 4, 604 (ABS, sign. 305-192-4 II, Testimony of Michael Kneissl, SS Obersturmbannführer, born 30 November 1891, in Munich, Germany, originally a carpenter, from 1940 commander of the Waffen-SS Böhmen-Mähren Guard Battalion in Brno); ABS, f. 325, sg. 325-38-2, Brno, 5 April 1966, testimony of Jan Matoušek [previous surname Schwartz], born on

Documents relating to the first period of martial law indicate that Jews and individuals accused of violating wartime regulations were sentenced to death by hanging,⁴⁴ whereas those convicted of illegal resistance activities were typically executed by shooting.⁴⁵ In the cases involving Jewish victims, their identity was often – though not always – emphasised in official death certificates and press reports by inserting the designation “Israel”⁴⁶ between the first and last names or by adding the label “Jude”. Beyond its administrative function, this practice also was intended to humiliate the victim.⁴⁷

The persecution of Jews during the first state of martial law did not end with executions. With few exceptions, those who were arrested and subsequently “handed over to the Gestapo” were deported to the Mauthausen concentration camp – an almost certain death sentence, as the vast majority never returned.⁴⁸ The mortality rate in Mauthausen began to rise sharply during the autumn and winter of 1941–1942, as the camp adopted increasingly brutal killing methods – including the use of gas vans, ice showers, and practices derived from the T4 Euthanasia Program. In the spring of 1942, a gas chamber was also put into operation, further institutionalising mass murder within the camp system.⁴⁹

Calculating the exact number of Jewish victims of the first period of martial law in Bohemia is complicated by the fact that the persecution of some individuals had already begun prior to Heydrich’s arrival, making it difficult to attribute their fate solely to measures enacted during the state of emergency. This dynamic can be illustrated by the case of the fire at the Welzel fuel depot, which occurred in Náchod during the night of 30–31 August 1941. The Nazi authorities classified the incident as sabotage, prompting a wave of mass arrests. On 9 September a total of seventy-one individuals from Náchod were transferred to the Small Fortress in Terezín, including thirty-one Jews. Together with twenty-nine other individuals arrested in Úpice, the total number reached exactly one hundred – the number of hostages demanded by the Gestapo.⁵⁰ It was only after the first declaration of martial law that some of them were deported to the Mauthausen concentration camp, from which only one person returned alive. Pavel

26 December 1905, in Brno, original occupation barber and from 1929 employee of a funeral home in Brno, living at 8 Křenová Street, Brno, doc., in Šustek, *Atentát*, vol. 4, 611–612.

44 ABS, f. 325, sg. 325-141-14.

45 Fedorovič, *Zastupující říšský protektor*, 118.

46 ABS, f. 325, sg. 325-141-14, *Národní politika*, 1. října 1941, vol. LIX, no. 272, 1.

47 ABS, f. 325, sg. 325-141-14.

48 D. Brandes, *Češi pod německým protektorátem*, 331.

49 Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, *Der Ort des Terrors. Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager*, Band 4 (C.H. Beck), 312, 322; Hans Maršálek, *Mauthausen. Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslager Mauthausen* (Steindl-Druck, 1995), 197–198.

50 See <https://raumdernamen.mauthausen-memorial.org/?id=4&p=6410>. The entire story of Jiří Bondy was researched and written by Alena Čtvrtečková, who drew on sources from: Státní oblastní archiv (SOA)/Zámorsk State District Archive Zámorsk, Fonds MLS Hradec Králové 1945–1947, Ls 33/47, Karton 72, Blatt 72–Jiří Bondy, verhaftet nach dem Brand; SOKA Náchod, Fonds des Kreisgerichts Náchod, Todeseintrag–Jiří Bondy.

Mahler,⁵¹ for example, was executed on 21 October 1941,⁵² but Pavel Strass⁵³ and Pavel Lewith⁵⁴ were killed in the concentration camp a month later, on 26 November 1941.⁵⁵

Subsequent research indicates that Jews sentenced by summary courts and “handed over to the Gestapo” were most often deported to the Mauthausen concentration camp, where the vast majority perished within weeks or months of their arrival. This study focuses primarily on cases from Moravia – specifically from Brno – where relatively comprehensive documentation has been preserved, allowing for a more detailed reconstruction of individual fates and broader patterns of repression.⁵⁶

One such case was that of civil engineer Lipmann Brammer, who was sentenced to death on 3 October for “disturbing public order and safety”. He was deported to Mauthausen, where he died on 31 October 1941.⁵⁷ A similar fate befell the vast majority of Jews listed in the Terezín database with Mauthausen indicated as their place of death by the end of 1941. Their life expectancy in the camp was typically no longer than a few weeks, as illustrated by the cases of Friedrich Krainer⁵⁸ and Heinrich Kramer.⁵⁹ In rare cases, individuals such as Max Neufeld – who was arrested and sentenced in Brno on 3 October 1941 – survived more than two months in the camp before dying in Mauthausen on 16 December 1941.⁶⁰

51 Pavel Mahler (born 29 June 1909)/Paul Mahler (born 1 July 1916, in Náchod; died 21 October 1941, in Mauthausen), accessed 25 March 2025, <https://raumdernamen.mauthausen-memorial.org/?id=4&p=3526>.

52 See Pavel Mahler, accessed 26 March 2025, <https://raumdernamen.mauthausen-memorial.org/?id=4&p=3526>.

53 Pavel Strass, (born 19 September 1904, in Chrudim, byt. Náchod, prisoner no. 6430, died 26 November 1941, in Mauthausen), accessed 26 March 2025, <https://raumdernamen.mauthausen-memorial.org/index.php?L=0&id=5&txtFullSearch=Pavel+Strass>.

54 Pavel Lewith (born 24 December 1911, in Náchod, prisoner no. 6435; died 26 November 1941, in Mauthausen), accessed 26 March 2025, <https://www.pamatnik-terezin.cz/vezen/zi-lewith>.

55 Pavel Strass, accessed 26 March 2025, <https://raumdernamen.mauthausen-memorial.org/?id=4&p=3780>.

56 This article draws on archival fonds B 340 (Gestapo Brno) of the Moravian Provincial Archives in Brno, which contains investigative and administrative records documenting the repressive practices of the Brno Gestapo against the civilian population during the Nazi occupation. The fonds are also accessible through the EHRI portal: <https://portal.ehri-project.eu/units/us-005578-irn592858>.

57 Lipmann Brammer (born 11 June 1886, in Hodonín; last place of residence, Brno Pressburger Str. 2; imprisoned in Mauthausen, prisoner no. 5276; executed 31 October 1941), accessed 25 March, 2025, <https://www.pamatnik-terezin.cz/vezen/zi-bramer-lipmann>; Lipmann Brammer <https://raumdernamen.mauthausen-memorial.org/>. Geheime Staatspolizei, Staatspolizeileitstelle Brünn, -Standgericht- Im Namen des Deutschen Volkes, Brünn, den 3. Oktober, 1941. MZA, f. B 340, sg. 100-292-21, fol. 292.

58 MZA, Brno, f. B 340, sg. 100-280-3; Friedrich Krainer (born 23 December 1888, in Brno; prisoner no. 5358, 18 October 1941, in Mauthausen; sentenced by military court in Brno on 3 October 1941), accessed 4 April 2025, <https://www.pamatnik-terezin.cz/vezen/zi-krainer-friedrich>.

59 MZA, f. B 340, sg. 100-292-6, Heinrich Kramer (born 8 July 1869 in Miroslav, prisoner no. 5256, died 13 October 1941, in Mauthausen), <https://www.pamatnik-terezin.cz/vezen/zi-kramer-heinrich>; <https://raumdernamen.mauthausen-memorial.org/?id=4&p=3359&L=0>; Mauthausen database has Otto Kramer registered: <https://raumdernamen.mauthausen-memorial.org/?id=4&p=3359&L=0> where date of birth of Otto Kramer is 28 December 1880 in Miroslav.

60 MZA, Brno, f. B 340, sg. 100-291-3, k. 291; Max Neufeld (born 26 June 1897, in Kuželov; residing at Svatoplukova 5, Brno-Královo Pole, Brno-Město District; prisoner no. 5696; died

In some instances, those convicted were not deported directly to Mauthausen. Walter Neumann, arrested on 30 September 1941, was first transferred to Brno for further proceedings and was subsequently deported to Auschwitz, where he died in March 1942.⁶¹ This fate was most often suffered by Jews who were tried for alleged violations of public order and security and for offenses such as breaching wartime economic regulations or listening to foreign radio broadcasts, etc.⁶²

Among the victims of the first martial law period were Jews who actively participated in the anti-Nazi resistance. A prominent example is Jiří Stricker,⁶³ who was sentenced along with four other members of a communist resistance group. Nazi documentation did not fail to highlight Stricker's Jewish origin, using it to underscore his perceived threat.⁶⁴ However, the vast majority of the Jewish individuals examined in this study were sentenced for offenses such as "disturbing public order and security" rather than for direct involvement in organised resistance.

The proportion of Jewish victims during the first period of martial law can be clearly illustrated by the example of the well-documented court-martial in Brno. Available documentation and a comparison of two online databases reveal that a total of 1,146 people from all over Moravia were arrested and tried here in the fall of 1941, of whom 155 were Jews, representing 13.5 per cent of all cases. An even more striking example is the city of Brno itself, where a total of 237 Czechs and 117 Jews were arrested.⁶⁵

The Assassination of Reinhard Heydrich and the Second State of Martial Law

Following the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich on 27 May 1942, by Czechoslovak paratroopers Jan Kubiš and Josef Gabčík of the Anthropoid group, which was operating under the umbrella of the British Special Operations Executive (SOE), martial law was declared in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. By the time it was lifted on 4 July 1942, a total of 1,587 people had been

6 December 1941, in Mauthausen), sentenced on 3 October 1941, in a court-martial in Brno for disturbing public order and safety, to be handed over to the Gestapo and the confiscation of all his property, accessed 1 April 2025, <https://www.pamatnik-terezin.cz/vezen/zi-neufeld-max>.

61 MZA, f. B 340, sg. 100-103-24, k. 103, Walter Neumann (born 14 May 1907), accessed 4 April 2025, <https://www.pamatnik-terezin.cz/vezen/zi-neumann>.

62 The results of the author's own research are based on the 155 Jews convicted by a court-martial in Brno. MZA, f B 340.

63 Accessed 4 April 2025, <https://www.pamatnik-terezin.cz/vezen/zi-stricker-jiri>.

64 NA, f. 109, sg. 109-5-133. Furthermore, the Gestapo Head Office in Prague commented on the arrest of Dr Bondy at the end of October 1941, with the following words: "Moreover, two of them had been living underground for several years on the basis of false documents. Remarkably, these people were Jews." See NA, ÚŘP, f. 109, sg. 109-4-175 doc. in Kárný et al., *Protektorátní politika*, 170.

65 The author thanks Mirka Salavová for assistance in preparing the Brno dataset.

executed.⁶⁶ The destruction of the village of Lidice marked the culmination of Nazi terror. All men over the age of sixteen were executed, the women of the village were deported to the Ravensbrück concentration camp,⁶⁷ and the children were either selected for Germanisation or, in most cases, murdered in gas vans at the Chełmno (Kulmhof) extermination camp. Two weeks later, the settlement of Ležáky suffered the very similar fate.⁶⁸

The measures that accompanied the so-called Heydrichiáda closely followed the proposals SS-Obergruppenführer Karl Hermann Frank⁶⁹ presented to Hitler immediately after the assassination: the declaration of martial law, the launch of extensive search operations, the punishment of the perpetrators along with their accomplices and families, and a display of German power through the deployment of numerous police units.⁷⁰ As the Higher SS and Police Leader, it was K. H. Frank who was directly subordinate to Reichsführer SS Heinrich Himmler and therefore stood at the top of all SS units and police security forces of the Nazi apparatus in the Protectorate.⁷¹ Thus, immediately after the assassination attempt, he was the person who went to Hitler's headquarters.

K. H. Frank insisted that repression should be directed specifically at perpetrators and their associates rather than executed through indiscriminate mass arrests or the killing of hostages. He also proposed offering a substantial reward for information leading to the assassins. In addition to these repressive measures, Frank called for an extensive propaganda campaign: the Protectorate government was to publicly denounce the assassination and

66 Šustek, *Atentát*, vol. 4, doc. IV/122, 832, compare with Vajskebr and Zumr, *Gestapo*, 374 (counted 398 executed persons).

67 Pavla Plachá, *Zerrissene Leben. Tschechoslowakische Frauen im Konzentrationslager Ravensbrück* (VSA Verlag, 2023); Pavel Kreisinger and Jan Zumr, "Heinz Pannwitz (1911–1975): kdo byl hlavní vyšetřovatel atentátu na Reinharda Heydricha?" *Paměť a dějiny: revue pro studium totalitních režimů* 11, no. 2 (2017): 81–92; V. Kyncl, *Bez výčitek: genocida Čechů*; V. Kyncl, *Lidice. Zrození symbol* (Academia, 2016); Eduard Stehlík, *Lidice. Příběh české vsi* (Tváře, 2023). For more information on Special Operations Executive (SOE) parachute operations, see: Jiří Plachý, ed., *Výsadbáři v týlu nepřítele* (Jota, 2025); Oldřich Sládek, *Přicházeli z nebe* (Naše Vojsko, 1993); Jaroslav Čvančara, Zdeněk Jelínek, Josef Plzák, and Vojtěch Šustek, eds., *Operace Silver A* (Scriptorium, 2011).

68 Vojtěch Kyncl, *Ležáky – obyčejná vesnice. SILVER A a pardubické gestapo v zrcadle heydrichiády* (Nová tiskárna, 2008).

69 Karl Hermann Frank (born 24 January 1898, in Karlsbad, Austrian-Hungarian Empire; died 22 May 1946, in Prague) was a Sudeten German Nazi politician and SS-Führer who served in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia starting in 1939 as State Secretary of the Reich Protector's Office, Higher SS- and Police Leader, and later as German State Minister with the rank of SS-Obergruppenführer and General of the Police and Waffen-SS. In this last position, he headed the occupied country and its security apparatus; was responsible for repressive policies against the population, including the massacres in Lidice and Ležáky; and was sentenced to death and executed in Czechoslovakia after the war. René Küpper, *Karl Hermann Frank (1898–1946): Politische Biographie eines sudetendeutschen Nationalsozialisten* (Oldenbourg, 2010); Karl Hermann Frank, *Zpověď K. H. Franka: podle vlastních výpovědí v době vazby u krajského soudu trestního na Pankráci. S úvodem Karla Vykusa*, intro. by Karel Vykusa (Cíl, 1946).

70 NA, f. 114, sg. 114-10-2, Protokoll! Geheim! Besuch im Führerhauptquartier am Donnerstag, den 28. Mai 1942, Eintreffen 1:15 Uhr, Abflug 16.30 Uhr. Doc. no. 1/49, in Šustek, *Atentát*, vol. 1, 208.

71 Ruth Bettina Birn, *Die Höheren SS- und Polizeiführer. Himmlers Vertreter im Reich und den besetzten Gebieten* (Droste, 1986); Friedrich Wilhelm, *Die Polizei im NS-Staat. Die Geschichte ihrer Organisation im Überblick* (Paderborn, 1999), 93–96, 106–109.

the Czechoslovak government-in-exile in London while Czech loyalty to the Greater German Reich was to be affirmed through the press, radio broadcasts, and orchestrated public demonstrations.⁷²

However, the original plans devised by Himmler and Hitler envisioned far more radical measures. In a telegram sent from Sonderzug Heinrich Himmler ordered the arrest of 10,000 hostages, primarily drawn from the Czech intelligentsia.⁷³ Hitler, for his part, intended to send Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski to demonstrate that Heydrich's successor would be willing to "wade through a sea of blood".⁷⁴

However, the interpretation advanced by historian Vojtěch Kyncl – that the second period of martial law constituted genocide against the Czechs – does not align with the available evidence concerning Nazi strategy and the scope of the repression.⁷⁵ Records of discussions at Hitler's headquarters indicate that although the number of executions was calculated, there was no expressed intent to annihilate the Czech nation as a whole. To our knowledge, the only higher-ranking official who publicly addressed the "Czech question" as a collective problem at that time was the Reich Governor of Vienna Baldur von Schirach, who declared on 5 June: "Just as I will make this city judenfrei, I will also make it tschechenfrei."⁷⁶ Yet this type of rhetoric met with immediate criticism from the Nazi leadership. In a letter to Goebbels dated 8 June 1942, Martin Bormann emphasised that such expressions were unacceptable.⁷⁷

Forms of Anti-Jewish Persecution during the Second Period of Martial Law

The Security Service of the Reich Führer SS, Main Section of the Security Service in Prague reported on 7 June 1942:

"The news of the assassination of the acting Reich Protector triggered near-panic among Jews in Bohemia and Moravia. Initially, many feared that a Jew might have been involved, raising concerns about the possibility of intensified anti-Jewish measures. Noticeable relief followed only after reports confirmed that no Jews had participated in the attack. Moreover, the fact that only a small number of Jews were sentenced by the military courts had a markedly calming impact on the Jewish population."⁷⁸

72 NA, f. 114, sg. 114-10-2, Protokoll! Geheim! Besuch im Führerhauptquartier am Donnerstag, den 28. Mai 1942, Eintreffen 1:15 Uhr, Abflug 16.30 Uhr. Doc. no. I/49, in Šustek, *Atentát*, vol. 1, 208.

73 ABS, f. 325, sg. 325-140-156, BLITZ SDZ HEINRICH NR. 5745 27.5.42 21.05/HER AN SS GRUPPENFUEHRER FRANK PRAG SOFORT VORLEGEN.

74 NA f. 114, sg. 114-10-2, Protokoll! doc. no. I/49, in Šustek, *Atentát*, vol. 1, 212.

75 This is Kyncl's argument in his book *Bez výčitek* (quoted above).

76 BAB, NS 19, sg. NS 19/1969, doc. no. I/80 in Šustek, *Atentát*, vol. 1, 340.

77 BAB, NS 19, sg. NS 19/1969 doc. no. I/80, in Šustek, *Atentát*, vol. 1, 339–340.

78 NA, f. ÚŘP 109, sg. 109-14-53, doc no. III/20 in Šustek, *Atentát*, vol. 2, 175.

This shows that the SD monitored the attitudes among Jews after the assassination of Heydrich and focused on their reactions and perceptions of repression during the second period of martial law.

Nevertheless, fears among Jews must have persisted given the unpredictability of the situation. The atmosphere of uncertainty was illustrated, for example, by a search operation in Terezín on 16 June 1942, during which prisoners were forced to march under the supervision of gendarmes around tables displaying boards with photographs of the assassins' personal belongings (such as a briefcase and coat), and to sign statements confirming that they did not recognise them.⁷⁹ Although the procedure was largely a formality – since most Jews had been interned in the ghetto long before the assassination – no one could be certain that the operation would not escalate into something more serious. In the context of Nazi persecution, factual circumstances often played little role.

Fear was heightened by reports of the massacre in Lidice. Labor commandos from Terezín were sent to dig graves for the executed men of the village without knowing whether they were digging their own. František R. Kraus recalled: “Quicklime, we looked at each other ... We thought: What if we never return to Terezín.”⁸⁰ Viktor Laš described his arrival at the destroyed village: “There were still whispered comments among us – a mine exploded somewhere here. And it was Lidice, already razed to the ground.”⁸¹ Kraus described the terrifying scene: “They drove us with rifle butts to a meadow where a carpet of dead bodies lay in front of a farmhouse.”⁸² The burial at Lidice was not an isolated experience. According to later testimonies, Jewish prisoners were reportedly also forced to assist in executions, loading the bodies of victims into vehicles and transporting them for cremation.⁸³

The assassination of Heydrich led to further restrictions on the freedom of movement for the Jewish population.⁸⁴ Individuals who “violated” these regulations, even unknowingly – such as Albín Taussig (born 1883) and Josef Goldschmidt (born 1856) – faced the immediate risk of deportation.⁸⁵ Taussig was assigned to transport AAe on 20 June 1942, and was deported to Ausch-

79 Alena Dobišová, “Břežanská balada, Heydrichiáda a její odraz v Malé pevnosti a ghettu Terezín”, *Terezínské listy*, no. 20 (1995): 103.

80 František R. Kraus, *Dvořákovo Rekviem. Modlitba za lidické mrtvé* (Cattacan, 1945), quotations from his book also in *Terezínští hrobaři* documentary film produced by Czech Television, 2019.

81 Testimony of Viktor Laš, one of the members of an Arbeitskommando. Testimony of Viktor Laš, Video History Archives Interview Code: 6809, USC Shoah Foundation Institute.

82 F. R. Kraus, *Dvořákovo Rekviem*, quoted in *Terezín Gravediggers*.

83 Šustek, *Atentát*, vol. 4, 472 (BAL, sign. B 162/4804, Interrogation protocol of Otto Karl Maier, born 18 February 1902, in Brenden, Waldshut district, Germany, residing at Radolfzell, Seestrasse 33), 476; BAL, sign. B 162/4804, Singen, 1960, January, 20th, interrogation report with Friedrich Pfluger, born 2 February 1900, in Worblingen, district of Konstanz, Germany, living in Rielasinegn, district of Konstanz, Hegaustrasse 32).

84 Praha, 1942, červen, 6.: *Národní práce*, 4; headline “Místa v Praze zakázána Židům”, in Šustek, *Atentát*, vol. 2, 188.

85 Šustek, *Atentát*, vol. 2, 189.

witz,⁸⁶ and Goldschmidt was deported to Terezín on 9 July, where he died less than three months later.⁸⁷

Paradoxically, however, the scheduled transports may also have been the reason some Jews who had been arrested during the second period of martial law were temporarily released – to be included in organised deportations. This was the case for Adolf Berger from Lipník nad Bečvou, who was released on 20 June 1942, after four weeks in protective custody;⁸⁸ Alfred Bick⁸⁹ and Oskar Drucker⁹⁰ experienced a similar fate.

Although the so-called Jewish penal transports following the assassination of Heydrich have since been shown to be a myth,⁹¹ the deportations during the second period of martial law were nonetheless extremely intense and were perceived by the Jewish population with growing anxiety. Egon Redlich noted in his diary in June the unrest surrounding the departures of transports “straight to the East” and the worsening situation in Prague.⁹² Similarly, Eva Roubíčková described in July the changes within Terezín and the regular arrival of new transports, particularly of elderly people and members of the AK (Aufbaukommando).⁹³

During the Heydrichiáda, Jews were also subjected to an escalation of hateful antisemitic propaganda. Pavel Večeřa identifies the assassination of Heydrich as a turning point, marking a shift

86 Database of Terezín prisoners and persons deported to the Łódź and Minsk ghettos and to the Ujazdów labor camp, accessed 7 April 2025, <https://www.pamatnik-terezin.cz/vezen/te-taussig-albin>.

87 Database of Terezín prisoners and persons deported to the Łódź and Minsk ghettos and to the Ujazdów labor camp, accessed 4 April 2025, <https://www.pamatnik-terezin.cz/vezen/te-goldschmidt-josef-8>.

88 MZA, f. B 340, sg. 100-8-16, ka. 8. Adolf Berger (12 June 1913), Lipník nad Bečvou, Nerudova 79. Berger was transported from AAF from Olomouc on 26 June 1942. After spending several days in the Terezín ghetto, he was further deported by transport AAx on 14 July 1942, to Malý Trostinec, where he perished. See: <https://www.pamatnik-terezin.cz/vezen/te-berger-adolf-4>.

89 MZA, f. B 340, sg. 100-9-34, ka. 9 Alfréd Bick, 26.2.1886 Kojetín, okr. Přerov, bydlíště Kojetín č. 735. He was denounced for not complying with the curfew and shopping hours set for Jews. The matter was resolved when he was transported to Terezín on 22 June 1942. From there, he was transported to Buchenwald and then to Auschwitz, where he died on 21 November 1942. See the Terezín database, accessed 5 April 2025, <https://www.pamatnik-terezin.cz/vezen/zi-bick-karel>.

90 MZA, f. B 340, sg. 100-28-4, ka. 28, Oskar Drucker, 16 June 1923, Lipník nad Bečvou, okr. Přerov, bytem Lipník nad Bečvou, Pernštejnská 659, okr. Přerov.

91 In post-war historiography, there are repeated references to the so-called punitive/retaliatory transport of Jews from the Protectorate in response to the assassination of Heydrich. This transport was allegedly designated *Aah* (Attentat auf Heydrich) and was to be carried out as a vendetta for Heydrich (in fact, it was transport AAh). It was to be followed by two more punitive transports (AAk and AAi). However, these retaliatory transports have now been proven false as there is no documentary evidence to support their existence. Furthermore, the transport of Jews from the Protectorate was fully underway at the time of the assassination of Heydrich, and the designation of the transports clearly follows the previous markings. See Anna Hyndráková, Raisa Machatková, and Jaroslava Milotová, eds., *Denní rozkazy Rady starších a sdělení židovské samosprávy Terezín 1941–1945* (Sefer, 2003), 36.

92 Jewish Museum in Prague, Collection: Diaries and Memoirs of Youth and Adults, inventory number: 324aThe Diary of Egon Redlich, translation from the Hebrew, accessed 17 April 2025, https://collections.jewishmuseum.cz/index.php/Detail/Object/Show/object_id/1942, 34–37.

93 Vojtěch Blodig, “Z deníku Evy Roubíčkové, July 15, 1942”, *Terezínské listy*, no. 20 (1992): 71.

in the Protectorate press, where antisemitism was reframed: Jews were now depicted as a threat to European civilisation, against which Nazism was portrayed as waging a defensive war.⁹⁴ This development reflected the broader line of Nazi propaganda which, according to Jeffrey Herf, openly legitimised the extermination of Jews from the end of 1941 onward.⁹⁵ Radicalisation was most evident in the newspapers *Venkov* and *Polední list*, which adopted an increasingly extreme rhetoric against both Jews and the Czechoslovak government-in-exile.⁹⁶ Organised demonstrations adopted a similar tone, presenting Nazi repression as a necessary measure to protect the Czech nation.⁹⁷ This propagandistic framing was in line with the instructions of Ernst Kaltenbrunner, who ordered the authorities to exploit tensions between the government-in-exile and the domestic resistance while spreading fear of communism through Gestapo informants, known as V-Leute.⁹⁸

From information found in 121 preserved execution reports, the majority of victims were shot. Jews and homeless and mentally disabled individuals, who were regarded as racially inferior or socially dangerous according to Nazi ideology, were more frequently executed by hanging. So, there was a certain continuity in the executions due to the procedures introduced in the fall of 1941. A further continuity can be seen in the executioners themselves: in Bohemia, executions were carried out by Order Police battalions,⁹⁹ while in Moravia, these actions remained the responsibility of the Waffen-SS Böhmen-Mähren guard battalion.¹⁰⁰

The execution reports from this period were far from uniform. In some cases, the Jewish origin of victims was explicitly stated; in others, it was omitted, and their identity must be inferred from context – such as in the case of Irena Demertiniová – or using the information included on the long lists of those executed at shooting ranges in Prague, Tábor, and Klatovy. Occasionally, these reports also recorded the final words of the condemned. One such example appears in a report submitted by the police battalion in Klatovy, which documented the last words of a Jewish woman named Kamila Barth, who protested the false accusations against

94 Pavel Večeřa, “Židé a antisemitismus na stránkách vybraných českých deníků v letech 1939–1945”, *Média a realita 2002. Sborník prací katedry mediálních studií a žurnalistiky FSS* (Masarykova Univerzita, 2003), 115.

95 Jeffrey Herf, *The Jewish Enemy. The Nazi Propaganda During World War II and the Holocaust* (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press 2008), 137.

96 Jitka Rašková, “Role českého protektorátního tisku při uplatňování říšské germanizační politiky” (MA thesis, Faculty of Arts, Palacký University, 2010), 17.

97 For the course of the manifestations in the Protectorate, see documents: no. IV/25 and no. IV/24 in Šustek, *Atentát*, vol. 2, 533–542.

98 NA, ÚŘP, f. 109, sg. 109-5-71.

99 Kyncl, *Bez výčitek*, 102–187.

100 Jan Vajskebr, “Represivní činnost strážního praporu SS ‘Böhmen-Mähren’ v období prvního a druhého výjimečného stavu na Moravě”, in *Morava v boji proti fašismu*, ed. Jan Mitáček and Libor Vykoupil (Moravské zemské muzeum, 2008), 100–119. While police battalions conducted executions in Bohemia, in Moravia this function was performed solely by Waffen-SS battalion “Böhmen-Mähren”. See Šustek, *Atentát*, vol. 4, LII.

her before execution.¹⁰¹ A similar fate befell the merchant Leopold Singer.¹⁰²

In the case of the second period of martial law, the data reveal an even more pronounced disparity than the first wave. Although the execution of 66 Jews may seem marginal compared to 1,521 Czech victims, the opposite is true when viewed proportionally. By 27 May 1942, only 51,475 Jews remained in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, making the probability of execution among them approximately 0.13 per cent.¹⁰³ For the non-Jewish population – about 6.95 million – the probability was roughly 0.022 per cent. In other words, being Jewish in the Protectorate during the Heydrich terror meant that there was a sixfold higher risk of execution than being Czech.

Conclusion

This study examined two major waves of repression enacted through martial law in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia – first in the autumn of 1941 following Reinhard Heydrich's appointment as Deputy Reich Protector, and again in late May 1942, in the aftermath of his assassination. Both actions were marked by mass arrests and executions and have traditionally been interpreted in the historiography primarily as repressive measures targeting the Czech population.

Building on the theoretical framework of Hannah Arendt, this analysis started from the assumption that Jews – understood as “objective enemies” and a latent security threat – would be the natural targets of Nazi repressive measures. The central question, therefore, was whether these assumptions were borne out in practice – and if so, in what specific forms this targeting was manifested during the two periods of martial law.

The analysis confirmed that Jews were a central target of both repressive actions, with their persecution evident in the severity of punishments and in the manner of their execution. By “central”, this study does not imply numerical dominance but rather a structurally privileged position within Nazi security logic. Jews were hanged rather than shot, and, in some cases, forced to carry

101 Kamilla Barth (born 4 September 1897; executed 22 June 1942), ABS, 325, sg. 325-140-199, Abschrift, Anlage 1 zu Res.-Pol.-Batl. Klattau-Ia-Tgb. Nr. 154/42 (g), Klattau, den 23. Juni 1942, Bericht. Hüser, Leutnant d.Sch.d.Res; accessed 19 March 2025, <https://www.pamatnik-terezin.cz/vezen/zi-barth-kamilla>.

102 Leopold Singer (born 19 March 1894 in Ustalec), in Šustek, *Atentát*, vol. 4 (2022), doc. VI/46, 291–93.

103 Wolf Gruner, *Die Judenverfolgung im Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren. Lokale Initiativen, zentrale Entscheidungen, jüdische Antworten 1939–1945* (Wallstein Verlag, 2016), 395–398; Helena Krejčová, Jana Svobodová, Hana Hyndráková, eds., *Židé v Protektorátu. Hlášení Židovské náboženské obce v roce 1942. Dokumenty* (Maxdorf, 1997) 364–366; Miroslav Kárný, ed., *Terezínská pamětní kniha*, vol. 2 (Melantrich, 1995), 1341–1343. Gruner gives the number of Jews in the Protectorate as 48,273 on 15 June 1942. To this number, I had to add four transports of Jews that took place between 27 May and 15 June 1942 – AAb, AAc, AAH, Aad – a total of 3202 židů – to obtain number 51,475 as of 27 May 1942.

out executions of one another. This method of execution was characteristic of the first and second periods of martial law in both Bohemia and Moravia. Additionally, during the second period of martial law, members of Jewish labor units from Terezín were forced to serve as gravediggers for the victims of the massacre in the village of Lidice.

While Heydrich's speeches in the autumn of 1941 already reflected virulent antisemitism, portraying Jews as a global threat, this rhetoric intensified after his assassination. The press and public demonstrations – often involving Czech nationalists – called for the elimination of the Jewish threat and the cleansing of the Czech nation from elements deemed hostile to the Reich, including supporters of the émigré “Jewish” government led by Edvard Beneš. Public condemnation of Jews thus also served to legitimise the ongoing deportations from the Protectorate.

The proportional representation of Jews among the victims (based on the available data I worked with in the article, which may not be final)¹⁰⁴ in both waves of persecution clearly confirms the premise that Jews were the target of repression. This is all the more surprising given that this also applies to a large extent to the second period of martial law in the summer of 1942, when the deportation of Jews from the Protectorate was already fully underway. Combining qualitative and quantitative methods, this study identifies systematic differences in Nazi repression while documenting specific cases of Jewish victims.

Empirical analysis demonstrates that Arendt's concept of the objective enemy applies not only to the repression directed against Jews but also to the experiences of many other detainees. Persecution frequently targeted individuals not for specific acts they had committed but because they were perceived as existential threats to the political order, as reflected in the prevalence of charges such as “disturbing public order and security”, which often lacked sufficient evidence.

The findings suggest the need to reconsider methodological approaches that strictly separate Nazi persecution directed against the numerically dominant national population from interpretations that treat the Holocaust as an isolated historical phenomenon. As the article shows, relating waves of Nazi repression aimed at suppressing resistance to the persecution of Jews allows for a more comprehensive understanding of these events and allows for a more critical reflection on the collective memory of the occupation.

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¹⁰⁴ Although I drew data from two databases and the Gestapo inventory, the exact total number of victims under the first period of martial law may vary. In contrast, thanks to Šustek's edition, the data for the second period of martial law can be said to be absolutely accurate.

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