

Arolsen
Archives

International Center
on Nazi Persecution

Two Kinds of Searches

**Findings on Displaced Persons
in Arolsen after 1945**

Edited by Christian Höschler
and Isabel Panek



The Arolsen Archives are an international center on Nazi persecution with the world's most comprehensive archive on the victims and survivors of National Socialism. The collection has information on about 17.5 million people and belongs to UNESCO's Memory of the World. It contains documents on the various victim groups targeted by the Nazi regime and is an important source of knowledge for society today.

Two Kinds of Searches Findings on Displaced Persons in Arolsen after 1945

Edited by **Christian Höschler**
and **Isabel Panek**
on behalf of the Arolsen Archives

Bad Arolsen, 2019

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Preface

The history of Displaced Persons (DPs) after World War II can be researched in many places. The archives of the *United Nations* in New York, for instance, preserve the collection of the *United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration* (UNRRA), the biggest international aid organization of the post-war era. The files of its successor, the *International Refugee Organization* (IRO), are kept in the *Archives Nationales* in France, at Pierrefitte-sur-Seine. These written records provide information on how the Allies and international relief organizations, following the end of the war, took care of the DPs – those millions of people who at the time were located in Europe, and also other parts of the world, outside their countries of origin, and who were unable to return to these or find new homes without assistance. Most DPs were survivors of Nazi persecution: former forced laborers, freed concentration camp prisoners, deported children and other victims of the Nazis.

But in no place can the millions of stories of DPs themselves – their individual origin, persecution and path taken after the war – be better researched than in today's *Arolsen Archives*. The institution came to Arolsen in 1946 as the *Central Tracing Bureau* (CTB), was run by UNRRA, and then reorganized as the *International Tracing Service* (ITS) under the leadership of the IRO in 1948. The organization's objective has been, and still is, to coordinate the search for missing victims of Nazi persecution and to document their fates. Millions of archival documents offer insight into the situation the DPs were faced with. Included are, for instance, registration documents with which the Allies kept a record of DPs when the war had ended; individual cards that they issued to DPs for the purpose of identification; applications for assistance by the IRO (*CM/1 files*); lists of DPs who returned to their countries of origin, i.e. were repatriated, after 1945; emigration lists showing where in the world those formerly persecuted tried to start a new life; and finally, correspondence files (*T/D files*) of the ITS and today's *Arolsen Archives* in which enquiries, submitted by former DPs or the next generation(s) for information on individual persons, are gathered. Rendered accessible, on the basis of metadata, in newly established digital collections, these documents are of immense value to historical research in that they offer both potential for biographic approaches and thematic studies, as well as innovative methods, e.g. from the field of *Digital Humanities*. The documents form a unique and also the world's biggest collection on the post-war DPs themselves.

The *Arolsen Archives* allow research on millions of DPs who were staying in Germany under Allied control, but also in other parts of Europe and the whole world after 1945. Arolsen is connected with the history of DPs in another way, though: the town, following the end of the war, housed its own DP camp in which people from various countries of origin found a temporary home. Many DPs living in Arolsen and its surroundings chose to work for the new tracing service(s), i.e. first the CTB and then the ITS later on – partly because of their language skills, but also in view of the special meaning the task of tracing held for them, given their own history of persecution.

The subject of this publication is the history of DPs living in Arolsen which has not yet been sufficiently explored. At its core is an annex showing exemplary documents on (Arolsen) DPs from the collections of the *Arolsen Archives*. Context is offered through a preceding essay part with three contributions: *Christian Höschler* provides an overview of the history of DPs in post-war Europe and also attempts to outline the development of academic research on the subject that – at least from a historiographical perspective – did not start until the 1980s. The article concludes with some thoughts regarding the current state of research on DPs, naming its desiderata and highlighting aspects that may deserve to be dealt with in more detail by future research.

The following essay by *Isabel Panek* focuses on the history of the DPs living in Arolsen after 1945. She analyses the role of both UNRRA and the Arolsen-based tracing service as employers and casts a look into the DPs' background, their accommodation, assistance in daily life, their cultural life and the decisions DPs had to take with regard to their future by choosing either repatriation, emigration, or the option of staying in Arolsen.

In the last essay of the volume, *Silke von der Emde* makes use of an interdisciplinary approach to examine the work of (former) DP staff at the ITS. A literary critical reading of personnel files allows insights into the role of DPs in establishing and developing the ITS archives, as well as supporting the search and documentation tasks. The intrinsic motivation of the DPs working at the ITS fostered a sense of empathy and respect which was mirrored in their language and can be understood as countering the humiliating Nazi terminology evident in many of the archival documents.

Adapted to the new look of the *Arolsen Archives*, this volume continues the previous *Findings [Fundstücke]* series published by the ITS between 2014 and 2016, with some changes: this volume is the first from the series that is published bilingually, as there is also a German version available. Second, the *Findings* published by the *Arolsen Archives* will be published primarily as an online publication, available in Open Access from our website (arolsen-archives.org), free of charge and with no restrictions.

This step is part of a broader strategy of the *Arolsen Archives* to allow researchers, but also other interested groups, to access as easily as possible both the archival holdings and the research based on them. Documentary holdings focusing on DPs are already freely researchable online. It is particularly worth mentioning the aforementioned *CM/1 files*: they include applications for assistance by the IRO that individual persons filled out after 1945. The online collections can be accessed at aroa.to/collections. In parallel, the *Arolsen Archives* are working on further resources to enhance the use of the DP holdings for researchers: the *e-Guide* that went online in 2018 as an interactive tool explaining the most frequent documents kept in the Arolsen Archives (eguide.arolsen-archives.org), will further grow at the end of 2019 and then

also feature detailed information on DP documents that are being preserved in Arolsen and continually made available in the online collections. Furthermore, the *Arolsen Archives* are currently working on an in-depth online bibliography with the aim of documenting the current state of research on the subject of DPs. This tool will go online in early 2020. Since researchers will be able to submit their own relevant works for the bibliography, it also features an interactive component through which the *Arolsen Archives*, in their role as service provider, intend to further connect with researchers.

Against the background of this development, we hope that this publication might encourage further investigations into the DP documents from the *Arolsen Archives* and, in view of the special history of the DPs in Arolsen after 1945, also constitute a valuable read in itself.

Finally, we would like to thank all those involved in the creation of this work: apart from our co-author Silke von der Emde, special thanks are due to Jan-Eric Stephan for designing the volume, to Jessica Spengler for translating some of the texts, and to our colleagues Anke Münster, Margit Vogt, and Christiane Weber, as well as to the colleagues from the Archives Department for assisting us in the production of this volume.

Christian Höschler and Isabel Panek,
November 2019

Displaced Persons (DPs) in Postwar Europe: History and Historiography

Introduction

After World War II, a substantial proportion of the 30–40 million¹ individuals, both civilian and military, who were scattered across the globe and outside of the borders of their home countries, were the survivors of Nazi persecution. Prior to liberation, some had endured incarceration in concentration camps inside and outside of Germany.² Others had been forced laborers for the war machine or exploited as slaves in other sectors of the German economy, again both within the realm of the Third Reich and the Nazi-occupied territories.³ These individuals constituted a large proportion of those who were referred to as *Displaced Persons* (DPs) at the time.

The aim and structure of this article⁴ are as follows: 1) I will provide an overview of the historical events surrounding Europe's DPs in the postwar period. 2) In conjunction with this, I will outline the development of historical research on this subject from the 1950s to the present. 3) I will conclude with some thoughts on the current state of DP historiography and suggest possible directions for future research. It is hoped that this article may serve as a supplement to the other contributions in this volume, which look at how the history of DPs unfolded in the town of Arolsen, Germany, after World War II.

- 1 Eugene M. Kulischer: *The Displacement of Population in Europe*, Montreal: International Labor Office, 1943, 176–177. Available at: <https://archive.org/details/displacementofpo031323mbp/page/n3>. Last accessed: 26.08.2019. 163–164.
- 2 See Nikolaus Wachsmann: *KL: A History of the Nazi Concentration Camps*, New York: Farrar, Straus and Girou, 2015.
- 3 See Ulrich Herbert: *Hitler's Foreign Workers: Enforced Foreign Labour in Germany under the Third Reich*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- 4 In part, this article is based upon the introduction of my PhD thesis. See Christian Höschler: *The IRO Children's Village Bad Aibling: A Refuge in the American Zone of Germany, 1948–1951*, University of Munich: Faculty of History and the Arts, 2017.

DPs: A Brief Overview

In the end stages of the war, having foreseen the need for a specific plan to handle and care for the millions of survivors of Nazi persecution, the Allies had already put in place a strategy that would allow them to gain control of the situation, at least at the level of planning and policy-making. In a central memorandum drawn up by the *Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force* (SHAEF) in 1944, the term *Displaced Persons* was defined as referring to “civilians outside the national boundaries of their country by reason of war”, who were “desirous but unable to return home or find homes without assistance”.⁵ While this definition appears straightforward and clear-cut, Europe’s post-war DPs were anything but a homogenous group. Apart from former forced laborers and concentration camp inmates, as mentioned at the beginning of this article, other groups who were granted DP status included citizens from the Baltic States who fled the advancing Red Army during the final stages of the war, as well as the political upheaval following it.⁶ There were even former POWs among the overall DP population, despite the underlying definition of DPs as civilians. This can be explained through the dissolution of certain armed forces. A case in point are those members of the *Royal Yugoslav Army* who during the war were taken to Germany as POWs. When in 1945 the monarchy in Yugoslavia was abandoned and a Socialist state under the former Partisan leader Tito was established, these POWs were de-militarized and granted DP status.⁷ These are just some examples of how varied the wartime experiences had been for those who were now referred to as DPs after the war.

Contrary to the hopes of the Allies for a swift resolution of the task ahead, the care and reestablishment of DPs in Europe would remain a challenge for many years to come. To start with, there were the sheer numbers. The Allies had to deal with 10–12 million DPs, approximately 4.5 million of whom were situated in the Western zones of occupied Germany alone. The advancing Allied forces and the soon-established military governments needed the help of international relief agencies to take on the enormous task of providing DPs with shelter, food, and other services. The *United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration* (UNRRA) was the most important organization of this kind. In order to house the vast DP population, and to prepare repatriation transports, special *assembly centers* (DP camps) were set up all across the continent, mostly in occupied Germany. Here, the DPs received shelter, food, clothing, and medical assistance. At first only the bare minimum of humanitarian support was provided, due to the assumption that the DP camps were only temporary places of refuge – holding places to accommodate the

5 SHAEF: Administrative Memorandum 39: Displaced Persons and Refugees in Germany, 18 November 1944, WO 204/2869, The National Archives, Kew.

6 See Christian Pletzing and Marianne Pletzing (eds.): *Displaced Persons: Flüchtlinge aus den baltischen Staaten in Deutschland*, Munich: Meidenbauer, 2007.

7 See Christian Höschler: “Von der Selbstverwaltung zum Repatriierungsstillstand: Ehemalige Soldaten der königlich-jugoslawischen Armee als Displaced Persons in Bad Aibling, 1946–1947”, in Christian Pletzing and Marcus Velke (eds.): *Lager – Repatriierung – Integration: Beiträge zur Displaced Persons-Forschung*, Leipzig: BiblionMedia, 2016, 19–46.

survivors of Nazi persecution ahead of their repatriation. After the first somewhat chaotic weeks – setting up several hundred camps for millions of individuals was an immense logistical task – this system functioned quite efficiently: by the end of September 1945, millions of DPs had been successfully returned to their home countries. This meant that a relatively small number remained, and the Allies expected to complete their repatriation within a matter of months.⁸

However, after the harsh winter of 1945/1946 had halted the majority of transports, the Allies were surprised to learn that most remaining DPs (roughly a million, many of whom were from Eastern Europe) were unwilling or unable to return to their countries of origin. Their motivations varied, but the fear of political persecution and concerns regarding the economic situation at home played a significant role, particularly with regard to Eastern Europe, where political systems had been overthrown and Communism established. Other DPs may have had more personal reasons, believing they could not start over in countries from which they now felt estranged, after years of captivity and hardship abroad. These individuals constituted, in the terminology of the occupying military governments and relief organizations, the so-called *hard core*. Another major factor contributing to this state of limbo was the fact that repatriation was, with few exceptions, the only option offered to DPs at the time: UNRRA's constitution had not foreseen the large-scale resettlement of DPs in territories other than their home countries. This state of affairs continued until UNRRA, which had always had a timestamp on its mission, ceased its operations in the field in the summer of 1947.⁹

At this point, a successor organization, also based at the UN, entered the field: the *International Refugee Organization* (IRO) took on UNRRA's responsibilities in the camps, continuing to encourage the repatriation of DPs. However, one change in policy proved crucial, for the IRO was also able to set in motion resettlement schemes on a global scale. This meant that some of the remaining DPs could emigrate to a third country and start over there. When the IRO in turn concluded its work in 1951, more than 700,000 of the remaining DPs had been successfully resettled abroad, the majority in countries such as the United States, Australia or Canada. Those still left in Germany were, for the most part, elderly or in poor health, and therefore not eligible for resettlement. The only remaining option was to place this group in Germany permanently. For this reason, the Allies demanded that the German government introduce a law that would ensure proper legal rights for the remaining DPs. In the wording of this law, the term *DP* was replaced by *Homeless Foreigner*.¹⁰ However, their integration into German society, in those cases in which it was successful, was painfully slow, and even decades after the end of the war, they still struggled with discrimination and unsatisfactory living conditions, including

8 Wolfgang Jacobmeyer: "Ortlos am Ende des Grauens: 'Displaced Persons' in der Nachkriegszeit", in Klaus J. Bade (ed.): *Deutsche im Ausland – Fremde in Deutschland. Migration in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Munich: Beck, 1992, 367–373, here 368–370.

9 Ibid., 370–371.

10 Ibid., 371–372.

camp-like accommodation and unemployment.¹¹ At the end of 2018, a little more than 9,000 people with the status *Homeless Foreigner* were still living in the Federal Republic of Germany.¹²

This highly condensed narrative constitutes only the tip of the iceberg. There are of course many more details and layers to the history of DPs, all of which are important, but also impossible to cover in a single contribution such as this one. Instead, the remainder of the article will highlight selected aspects against the background of how the historiography regarding Europe's postwar DPs developed over time. These aspects have dominated and continue to be relevant within historical research. While any attempt to divide a historiographical timeline into definite periods or clear-cut categories will inevitably remain crude – with many studies overlapping in content – it is at least possible to outline certain trends and deficits in previous and ongoing research.

Authorized Histories and Early Research

An important contribution to the early body of literature investigating the DP phenomena were the official UNRRA and IRO histories, authored by George Woodbridge and Louise Holborn respectively. Both works were published under the auspices of the UN,¹³ raising unavoidable questions of objectivity. Taking into account the context in which they were written, one would have to treat these early works less as academic studies than contemporary source material. However, it also has to be said that both publications offer useful factual documentation regarding the work of UNRRA and the IRO, particularly with regard to the administrative setup and practical organization in the field, e.g. the running of the DP camps. In other words, the most reliable sections of these works are descriptive in nature, as opposed to attempts to provide an appraisal of the organizations' work.

More studies that resulted from a personal involvement of the author(s) followed over the next years. In 1957, Malcolm J. Proudfoot, who himself had been employed with the *Displaced Persons Branch* of SHAEF in 1945, published a book on wartime and postwar refugee movements, forced labor, the history of concentration camps, the fate of DPs in the aftermath of the war, and the situation of German expellees and refugees at the time.¹⁴ Hence, although this publication does deal with the missions of UNRRA and the IRO, its

11 Haus des Dokumentarfilms: "Heimat wider Willen – Daheim in der Fremde". Available at: <https://www.daheiminderfremde.de>. Last accessed: 26.08.2019.

12 Federal Statistical Office: "Ausländische Bevölkerung nach aufenthaltsrechtlichem Status am 31.12.2018". Available at: <https://www.destatis.de/DE/Themen/Gesellschaft-Umwelt/Bevoelkerung/Migration-Integration/Tabellen/auslaendische-bevoelkerung-aufenthaltsrechtlicherstatus.html>. Last accessed: 26.08.2019.

13 George Woodbridge: *UNRRA: The History of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1950; Louise W. Holborn: *The International Refugee Organization: A Specialized Agency of the United Nations. Its History and Work, 1946–1952*, London: Oxford University Press, 1956.

14 Malcolm J. Proudfoot: *European Refugees 1939–52. A Study in Forced Population Movement*, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1957.

focus is wider. The same applies to a book on European refugees by historian Michael R. Marrus, released two decades later.¹⁵

The first account that dealt with the topic in greater depth was written by German historian Wolfgang Jacobmeyer, a pioneer of research on DPs.¹⁶ His book-length study was published in 1985,¹⁷ and the fact that it was authored in German is perhaps one of the reasons why subsequent research on DPs was at first largely carried out by German historians.¹⁸ Despite this, an American school of DP historiography emerged around the same time, with a study by Mark Wyman representing an important milestone in 1989.¹⁹ The writings of Jacobmeyer and Wyman both provide overviews, even though they differ in their approach. While Jacobmeyer's study mainly explores administrative and policy-related frameworks linked to the work of the Allies and various relief agencies, Wyman's book constitutes more of a social history by including some insight into the struggle of DPs and everyday life in the DP camps. Together, the two works have served as the foundation of an ever-growing body of publications on DPs. In addition, no similar works attempting an overview with the same thematic scope have been put together since Jacobmeyer and Wyman. For that reason, their studies remain an indispensable resource for historians to this day.

Local and Regional Dimensions

Following the early years, research propelled by the works of Jacobmeyer and Wyman has covered the story of DPs as it unfolded in individual regions, places, and assembly centers in postwar Europe. This strand of literature was particularly characteristic of the 1990s, and continues to grow to this day.²⁰ Many of the studies belonging to this group of publications follow a similar structure that, in its early days, became somewhat of a norm for subsequent works. The history of DPs in individual regions, places or camps is frequently told on the

15 Michael R. Marrus: *The Unwanted. European Refugees from the First World War through the Cold War*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.

16 Stefan Schröder: "DP-Lager in requirierten deutschen Straßenzügen, Vierteln und Ortschaften. Ein Beitrag zur Systematisierung dieser Sonderform der Unterbringung von Displaced Persons", in Sabine Mecking and Stefan Schröder (eds.): *Kontrapunkt: Vergangenheitsdiskurse und Gegenwartsverständnis*, Essen: Klartext, 2005, 113–126, here 125.

17 Wolfgang Jacobmeyer: *Vom Zwangsarbeiter zum heimatlosen Ausländer: Die Displaced Persons in Westdeutschland, 1945–1951*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985.

18 Joanne Weiner Rudolf: "Die Geschichte der Displaced Persons Camps: Forschungsprobleme und der Beitrag von Zeitzeugen-Interviews", in Rainer Schulze and Wilfried Wiedemann (eds.): *AugenZeugen: Fotos, Filme und Zeitzeugenberichte in der neuen Dauerausstellung der Gedenkstätte Bergen-Belsen*, Celle: Stiftung Niedersächsische Gedenkstätten, 2007, 133–151, here 139.

19 Mark Wyman: *DP: Europe's Displaced Persons, 1945–1951*, Philadelphia: Balch Institute Press, 1989.

20 A few examples: Ulrich Müller: *Fremde in der Nachkriegszeit: Displaced Persons – zwangsverschleppte Personen – in Stuttgart und Württemberg-Baden 1945–1951*, Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1990; Hannes Harding: *Displaced Persons (DPs) in Schleswig-Holstein 1945–1953*, Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1997; Adam R. Seipp: *Strangers in the Wild Place: Refugees, Americans, and a German Town, 1945–1952*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013.

basis of certain parameters, some of the most common being: the housing of DPs and the setting up of camps; administrative aspects surrounding local and/or regional staff of UNRRA and the IRO; everyday life in the camps, including the provision of food and clothing, sanitary conditions, education, recreational activities, and politics; repatriation and resettlement as goals of the Allies and the DPs themselves; and finally, the often tense relationship between DPs and the German communities in the vicinity of the camps.

Although there is an element of redundancy to the table of contents in some of these works, one could argue that this has merely benefited DP historiography in that it was professionalized through the number of additional studies and their shared approach. Individual works drawing upon a more or less standardized analytical model offer a lot of potential for comparative approaches (hitherto untapped, one might add). Apart from this, the depiction of DP history in different places is, in the documentary sense, an invaluable contribution in its own right. This is especially true with regard to raising local interest in and awareness of the story of Europe's postwar DPs. Indeed, they "constituted an absentee category throughout most of the post-war years"²¹ and "almost entirely disappeared from the radar of public memory after the closing of nearly all DP camps in 1952",²² as historian Daniel Cohen has noted. For this reason, despite the *local history fatigue* occasionally displayed by historians dealing with DPs,²³ it is believed this strand of literature will remain relevant in the future.

Jewish DPs

Among the overall DP population, Jewish individuals constituted a minority group in the early months following liberation. This was an immediate result of the Holocaust. By the end of 1945, UNRRA was caring for around 75,000 Jewish DPs in occupied Germany.²⁴ In accordance with the general setup of the DP camps, Jewish survivors were initially placed in camps according to their nationality. This was highly problematic, for Jewish DPs, scattered across postwar Germany, continued to face antisemitism from some of their fellow DPs and a lack of understanding on the part of the occupying authorities with regard to the particular hardships they had endured under the Nazis.²⁵ Earl Harrison, an American public servant tasked on behalf of UNRRA with an assessment of the situation, reached the famous conclusion

21 Gerard Daniel Cohen: "Remembering Post-War Displaced Persons: From Omission to Resurrection", in Mareike König and Rainer Ohliger (eds.): *Enlarging European Memory: Migration Movements in Historical Perspective*, Ostfildern: Thorbecke, 2006, 87–97, here 89. Available at: https://www.perspectivia.net/publikationen/bdf/koenig-ohliger_memory. Last accessed: 26.08.2019.

22 Ibid., p. 91.

23 This is my personal impression gained through observations I have made at various academic conferences on DP history over the years.

24 JDC Archives: "JDC in the Displaced Persons (DP) Camps (1945–1957)". Available at: <https://archives.jdc.org/topic-guides/jdc-in-the-displaced-persons-dp-camps-1945-1957/>. Last accessed: 26.08.2019.

25 Juliane Wetzel: "Jüdische Displaced Persons – Holocaustüberlebende zwischen Flucht und Neubeginn". Available at: <https://www.bpb.de/geschichte/zeitgeschichte/deutschlandarchiv/255388>. Last accessed: 26.08.2019.

that the Allies “appear to be treating the Jews as the Nazis treated them, except that [they] do not exterminate them.”²⁶

As a result, the treatment of Jewish DPs slowly began to change in their favor, with the result that *Jewish* was even established as a separate DP category, meaning that Jewish DPs were placed in camps of their own, where they lived in settings of mixed nationality. What followed was a renaissance of Jewish life, especially in the US zone of Germany where Jewish DPs were granted a high degree of autonomy within the camps. In addition to UNRRA, and later the IRO, they were supported by several Jewish relief agencies (among them the *American Jewish Joint Distribution*, AJDC, and the *Jewish Relief Unit*, JRU). Despite their sufferings during the *Shoa* and the unspeakable loss of friends and family, the DPs displayed a remarkable determination to rekindle Jewish life. This was evident in the practice of their religion, the birth of thousands of Jewish children in the DP camps, and through political activism in the form of Zionism. For most Jewish DPs, returning to their home country was not an option. Not only had they lost their homes and personal belongings – they were also aware that upon returning, they would be met with considerable hostility from their former communities.²⁷

The Zionist goal of creating a Jewish state in Palestine, a safe haven for the survivors of genocide and the future of Jewishness, gained momentum when the number of Jewish DPs in occupied Germany did not shrink, but in fact began to rise in 1946. This was due to an outburst of anti-Semitic violence predominantly in Eastern Europe. One of the most tragic events was a pogrom in the summer of 1946 during which 42 Jewish citizens of the Polish town of Kielce were murdered.²⁸

Jews fleeing from Poland, Romania and other countries eventually arrived in the Western zones of occupied Germany. Here, the *infiltrates*, as they were also referred to, were first placed in transit camps and then granted DP status. The largest Jewish DP camp was situated in German garrison buildings neighboring the infamous concentration camp at Bergen-Belsen in the British zone of occupation. In the US zone, camps like Landsberg also housed thousands of Jewish DPs.²⁹ Their total number rose to 250,000 in 1947.³⁰

It was in places like these where Jewish DPs, detached from the German population, lived in their own microcosm. They focused on preparing for a new life following resettlement in Palestine. This was a dream that was anything but guaranteed to come true against the background of the ongoing British mandate in Palestine and subsequent efforts on the part of the British to limit Jewish immigration to these territories. However, despite the odds, Jewish DPs took Hebrew language courses, schooled and educated their children in Jewish tradition and customs, and adamantly fought for their right to establish a

26 United States Holocaust Memorial Museum: “The Harrison Report”. Available at: <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-harrison-report>. Last accessed: 26.08.2019.

27 Wetzel: Jüdische Displaced Persons.

28 David Engel: “Patterns Of Anti-Jewish Violence In Poland, 1944–1946”, in *Yad Vashem Studies* XXVI, 1998, 43–85.

29 Wetzel: Jüdische Displaced Persons.

30 JDC Archives: JDC in the Displaced Persons (DP) Camps.

nation-state in *Eretz Israel*. Finally, once this had been achieved in 1948, most of the Jewish DP camps in Germany gradually emptied following the emigration of their inhabitants. A substantial proportion of them, however, also ended up resettling in other countries, particularly the United States.³¹

The fate of Jewish DPs has received particular attention from researchers. An important early study was co-authored by Angelika Königseder and Juliane Wetzel in 1994.³² To date, an ever-growing number of articles and books covering a wide array of places and specific subjects³³ have continued to explore the history of Jewish DPs who were, in the words of Jacqueline Giere, a “unique group of survivor migrants”.³⁴ Not surprisingly, Jewish DPs are probably the best-studied group of postwar DPs.³⁵

Displaced Children

Another topic that has gained a lot of attention from historians during the last decade is that of displaced children. Some, albeit comparatively few, were Jewish child survivors liberated from the concentration camps. Others, sometimes born in Germany, belonged to families deported from their home countries to be exploited as forced laborers for the Nazi economy, and many children ended up as forced laborers themselves. Finally, thousands were kidnapped in their home countries (including Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia) and placed in German families under the *Germanization* policy of the Nazis. In the latter case especially, a major problem was the lack of documentation that would help facilitate the task of finding and identifying missing children. The Nazis had done a thorough job of destroying documents clarifying the identity of their youngest victims.³⁶

31 Ibid.

32 Angelika Königseder and Juliane Wetzel: *Lebensmut im Wartesaal: Die jüdischen DPs (Displaced Persons) im Nachkriegsdeutschland*, Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1994.

33 Only a selection can be presented here: Fritz Bauer Institut (ed.): *Überlebt und unterwegs: Jüdische Displaced Persons im Nachkriegsdeutschland*, Frankfurt: Campus, 1997; Angelika Eder: *Flüchtige Heimat: Jüdische Displaced Persons in Landsberg am Lech 1945 bis 1950*, Munich: Uni-Druck, 1998; Atina Grossmann: *Jews, Germans, and Allies: Close Encounters in Occupied Germany*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007; Jim G. Tobias: “Als die Fahne mit dem Davidstern in Dachau wehte: Jüdische Displaced Persons in Stadt und Landkreis Dachau”, in Sybille Steinbacher (ed.), *Transit US-Zone: Überlebende des Holocaust im Bayern der Nachkriegszeit*, Göttingen: Wallstein, 2013, 103–118.

34 Jacqueline Giere: “‘We’re on Our Way, but We’re Not in the Wilderness’”, in Michael Berenbaum and Abraham J. Peck (eds.): *The Holocaust and History: The Known, the Unknown, the Disputed, and the Reexamined*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998, 699–715, here 712.

35 Anne-Katrin Henkel and Thomas Rahe: “Einführung in das Thema”, in Anne-Katrin Henkel and Thomas Rahe (eds.): *Publizistik in jüdischen Displaced-Persons-Camps im Nachkriegsdeutschland: Charakteristika, Medientypen und bibliothekarische Überlieferung*, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2014, 9–18, here 11.

36 Eileen Blackey: UNRRA Closure Report on United Nations’ Unaccompanied Children in Germany, June, 1947, AJ/43/92, Archives Nationales, Pierrefitte-sur-Seine, 1–4.

Whenever a child was found, the information was forwarded to the national government in question. If, for example, a child was thought to be Polish, the case was referred to a representative of the Polish government on duty in occupied Germany. If the national authorities were able to verify the information and wanted a child to return to its established home country, a request was placed with the military government to have the child removed from its current environment. Such children were then taken to special DP camps, children's centers, run by UNRRA. Here they were prepared for repatriation and, if no further complications arose, ultimately returned to their home country.³⁷ UNRRA's final report on unaccompanied children in Germany states that there were 17 children's centers operated by UNRRA in the US Zone (11 of which were designated homes for Jewish children). They housed an average of 150 children at a time. In the British Zone, there were smaller centers with an average population of 50. In the French Zone, there were only two such centers.³⁸

However, as with adult DPs, there were problems surrounding the repatriation of many children. A crucial point was the question of nationality. Determining a child's nationality was by no means an easy task, particularly in the case of children believed to be *Germanization* victims from Eastern Europe. In several countries, the postwar era also saw the reversal or creation of borders and the expulsion of ethnic minorities, so in some cases the territory where a child was originally from no longer belonged to the nation-state in question. Naturally, as time passed, and many children returned home, what remained was a growing number of controversial cases. Not surprisingly, national governments wanted most of *their* children to be repatriated.³⁹ There were also children, usually older ones, who refused to be repatriated. As with adult DPs, the only option UNRRA had was to try to convince them to change their minds. There were hardly any resettlement schemes in place at the time, with the notable exception that some Jewish children were able to leave for Palestine. Since no children were forcibly repatriated, the result was that the children's centers failed to empty in the way the adult DP camps did.⁴⁰ When UNRRA ceased operations down in 1947, it had taken care of almost 13,000 children in DP camps and children's centers across Germany.⁴¹ A little over 4,000 children were transferred to the care of the IRO in July 1947, which continued to care for them in installations such as the IRO Children's Village in Bad Aibling, Bavaria, into the early 1950s.⁴²

Even though Mark Wyman's pioneer study already contained a chapter providing a good overview,⁴³ the issue of displaced children was neglected in early research. This trend was perhaps linked to the fact that for many years, the significance of children's wartime experiences was downplayed on the assumption that children are too young to realize what is

37 Ibid., 27.

38 Ibid., 44–45.

39 Ibid., 21–29.

40 Ibid., 39–52.

41 Holborn: The International Refugee Organization, 494.

42 Christian Höschler: *Home(less): The IRO Children's Village Bad Aibling, 1948–1951*, Berlin: epubli, 2017.

43 Wyman: DPs, 86–105.

happening around them during times of crisis.⁴⁴ However, research has shown that this is by no means the case. Following Wyman, several further books⁴⁵ have touched upon children as DPs after World War II, albeit not as their main subject. An important milestone was the publication of *The Lost Children* by American historian Tara Zahra in 2011.⁴⁶ Her book aims at a general history of children in the aftermath of World War II. Lynne Taylor has provided us with an in-depth study of how displaced children were cared for in the US zone of Germany.⁴⁷ Other publications have described the history of individual UNRRA and IRO children's centers,⁴⁸ the search for missing children,⁴⁹ how displaced minors were taken care of in the British Zone of Germany,⁵⁰ and, referring back to the previous section of this article, the specific situation of Jewish DP children.⁵¹

- 44 Marianne Kröger: "Kindheit im Exil. Ein Forschungsdesiderat", in Wolfgang Benz, Claudia Curio and Andrea Hammel (eds.): *Die Kindertransporte 1938/39: Rettung und Integration*, Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2003, 17–33, 18.
- 45 Everett Ressler, Neil Boothby and Daniel Steinbock: *Unaccompanied Children: Care and Protection in Wars, Natural Disasters, and Refugee Movements*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1988, 25–26; Ben Shephard: *The Long Road Home: The Aftermath of the Second World War*, London: Bodley Head, 2010, 300–322; Margarete Myers Feinstein: *Holocaust Survivors in Postwar Germany, 1945–1957*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 159–197; Verena Buser: *Überleben von Kindern und Jugendlichen in den Konzentrationslagern Sachsenhausen, Auschwitz und Bergen-Belsen*, Berlin: Metropol, 2011, 279–282.
- 46 Tara Zahra: *The Lost Children: Reconstructing Europe's Families after World War II*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011.
- 47 Lynne Taylor: *In the Children's Best Interests: Unaccompanied Children in American-Occupied Germany, 1945–1952*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017.
- 48 Jim G. Tobias and Nicola Schlichting: *Heimat auf Zeit: Jüdische Kinder in Rosenheim 1946–47. Zur Geschichte des "Transient Children's Center" in Rosenheim und der jüdischen DP-Kinderlager in Aschau, Bayerisch Gmain, Indersdorf, Prien und Pürten*, Nürnberg: Antogo, 2006; Anna Andlauer: *Zurück ins Leben: Das internationale Kinderzentrum Kloster Indersdorf 1945–46*, Nürnberg: Antogo, 2011.
- 49 Verena Buser: "'Mass detective operation' im befreiten Deutschland: UNRRA und die Suche nach den eingedeutschten Kindern nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg", in *Historie* 8/9, 2016, 347–360.
- 50 Iris Helbing: "Die Fürsorge und Repatriierung polnischer Displaced Children aus der britischen Besatzungszone", in Corine Defrance, Juliette Denis and Julia Maspero (eds.): *Personnes déplacées et guerre froide en Allemagne occupée / Displaced Persons and the Cold War in Occupied Germany / Displaced Persons und Kalter Krieg im besetzten Deutschland*, Bruxelles: Peter Lang, 2015, 77–95.
- 51 Kurt Schilde: "'Unsere Kinder, unsere Jugendlichen sind der Stolz und die Zukunft unseres Volkes': Jugend in westdeutschen DP-Lagern unterwegs nach Palästina/Israel", in Helga Krohn and Gudrun Maierhof (eds.): *Deutschland – trotz alledem? Jüdische Sozialarbeit nach 1945*, Frankfurt am Main: Fachhochschulverlag, 2006, 39–63; Boaz Cohen: "Representing the Experiences of Children in the Holocaust: Children's Survivor Testimonies published in *Fun Letsten Hurbn*, Munich, 1946–49", in Avinoam J. Patt and Michael Berkowitz (eds.): *"We are here": New Approaches to Jewish Displaced Persons in Postwar Germany*, Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2010, 74–97; Susanne Urban: "'I was separated from my family ... never heard a word from them again'. Frühe Erinnerungen von Child Survivors", in *Medaon – Magazin für jüdisches Leben in Forschung und Bildung*, 9, 2015.

Specialization, Recent Developments and Future Research

Generally speaking, historical studies on Europe's DPs are becoming increasingly specialized. They now explore a wide variety of aspects, including the situation of different nationalities among the overall DP population. This growing strand of literature has helped demonstrate that the experiences of different DP groups in the postwar period were as varied as their wartime trajectories. This suggests that ultimately, the only characteristic truly shared by all of Europe's postwar DPs was the administrative label *DP* that had indiscriminately been assigned to them by the Allies.⁵²

Other in-depth studies have looked at the politics of resettlement in individual countries⁵³ or the work carried out by different relief agencies at the time.⁵⁴ Even aspects such as the dynamics of authority and leadership within DP communities⁵⁵ or sports in the DP context⁵⁶ have been investigated. Although most studies still deal with the situation in Germany, research has also been carried out on DPs in other countries, for example Austria.⁵⁷ Also, research on DPs is beginning to transcend the boundaries of traditional historical analysis by utilizing interdisciplinary approaches. One example is the work of German historian Holger Köhn who, in the spirit of the *spatial turn*, authored a study regarding the specific question of where DP camps were located in occupied Germany, and what implications this had for the experience of DPs.⁵⁸

Whilst the overview presented in this paper can neither claim to represent a complete history of DPs in the postwar period nor an exhaustive list of the available academic liter-

- 52 Azat Ordukhanyan: "Die armenischen Displaced Persons in Deutschland nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg", in Armenuhi Drost-Abgarjan and Hermann Goltz (eds.): *Armenologie in Deutschland: Beiträge zum Ersten Deutschen Armenologen-Tag*, Münster: Lit, 2005, 219–232; Stefan Wilbricht: "... wie ein Fisch im Aquarium": Polnische Displaced Persons im Nachkriegsdeutschland", in Miriam Rürup (ed.): *Praktiken der Differenz: Diasporakulturen in der Zeitgeschichte*, Göttingen: Wallstein, 2009, 115–126; Jan-Hinnerk Antons: *Ukrainische Displaced Persons in der britischen Zone: Lagerleben zwischen nationaler Fixierung und pragmatischen Zukunftsentwürfen*, Essen: Klartext, 2014; Christian Höschler: Von der Selbstverwaltung zum Repatriierungsstillstand.
- 53 Henriette von Holleuffer: *Zwischen Fremde und Fremde: Displaced Persons in Australien, den USA und Kanada 1946–1952*, Osnabrück: Rasch, 2001.
- 54 Leon Shapiro: *The History of ORT: A Jewish Movement for Social Change*, New York: Schocken, 1980.
- 55 Roman P. Smolorz: *Displaced Persons (DPs): Autoritäten und Anführer im angehenden Kalten Krieg im östlichen Bayern*, Regensburg: Stadtarchiv, 2009.
- 56 Philipp Grammes: "Ichud Landsberg gegen Makabi München: Der Sport im DP-Lager 1945–1948", in Michael Brenner and Gideon Reuveni (eds.): *Emanzipation durch Muskelkraft: Juden und Sport in Europa*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006, 190–215.
- 57 Melanie Dejnega, "Zwischen Nachkriegschaos und Kaltem Krieg: Alliierte Flüchtlingspolitik und die Versorgungssituation von volksdeutschen Ex-Enemy DPs in Österreich", in Corine Defrance, Juliette Denis and Julia Maspero (eds.): *Personnes déplacées et guerre froide en Allemagne occupée / Displaced Persons and the Cold War in Occupied Germany / Displaced Persons und Kalter Krieg im besetzten Deutschland*, Bruxelles: Peter Lang, 2015, 213–229.
- 58 Holger Köhn: *Die Lage der Lager: Displaced Persons-Lager in der amerikanischen Besatzungszone Deutschlands*, Essen: Klartext, 2012.

ature,⁵⁹ it has hopefully shown how the subject matter has developed into a diverse and multi-faceted area of historiographical interest. With the addition of new topics, methodological approaches and source material still coming to light, there is much potential for future research.⁶⁰ Possible future studies might attempt to shed some light on aspects that historians have previously not touched upon, certainly not in detail. For example, while the work of organizations other than UNRRA and the IRO has indeed been explored by some researchers, we still do not know enough about the postwar activities of, for instance, the *American Friends Service Committee* (AFSC) in assisting DPs in Europe after the war. Another future avenue of research might attempt to bridge the gap between the early overview studies from the 1980s and more specialized histories published in recent decades. A synthesis of the current body of literature would do much to consolidate the rich and diverse body of knowledge on DPs into a more comprehensive and nuanced narrative.

Finally, research on DPs can still be considered to represent a distinct and, for that reason, somewhat narrow area of historiography. Exploring its wider contexts, for example with regard to the later experiences of *Homeless Foreigners* in Germany or other historical migration events, above and beyond the specific situation of DPs, might help “de-border”⁶¹ historical research on Europe’s postwar DPs, as historian Stella Maria Frei concluded in late 2018.

59 It is worth mentioning that the *Arolsen Archives* are currently preparing an interactive online bibliography on the topic of DPs, with the goal of not only covering the existing literature to the greatest extent possible, but also of involving researchers by encouraging them to submit their own relevant publications for inclusion in the bibliography.

60 See also the introduction to this volume.

61 Stella Maria Frei: *Tagungsbericht: Displaced Persons im Nachkriegseuropa (1945–1950). Zwischen Zwangsmigration, Flucht und der Suche nach einer neuen Heimat, 12.09.2018 – 14.09.2018 Frankfurt an der Oder / Slubice*, in: H-Soz-Kult, 24.11.2018. Available at: <https://www.hsozkult.de/conferencereport/id/tagungsberichte-7963>. Last accessed: 26.08.2019.

Between Waiting and New Beginnings: Displaced Persons in Arolsen

In the first weeks and months after the end of the war, numerous DP camps were established in the Western zones of occupation. Accommodations were set up in former barracks, POW and forced labor camps, schools and hospitals. Some DPs were even housed in private homes. There were more than 450 DP camps in the US occupation zone in 1946.¹ In the city of Arolsen, too – a former princely seat which had nearly 5,000 inhabitants in 1945 – the Allies established a DP camp in 1946. But this camp was special: it was created specifically to accommodate Displaced Persons who, from 1946 onward, worked for the *United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration* (UNRRA) and the *Central Tracing Bureau* (CTB), the predecessor to what was the *International Tracing Service* (ITS) and is now the *Arolsen Archives*. This article is the first to take a comprehensive look at the history of the DPs in Arolsen and trace the life trajectories of former DPs in order to answer the following questions: What were the origins of the DPs who lived in Arolsen and worked for the Allies after 1945? Where were they housed? And what was their everyday life like after years of persecution and war? Who stayed in Arolsen and who emigrated to start a new life in Australia, Canada, South America, the USA or another country?

UNRRA and the Tracing Service as Employers

At the end of World War II, the Allies encountered not only millions of DPs who required care and support in returning home or emigrating, but also millions of people who were being sought by their families, friends and the governments of their home countries. This early search for the victims and survivors of Nazi persecution was carried out by various actors. At the start it was conducted primarily by the survivors themselves, or by Jewish aid organizations such as the *American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee* as well as national Red Cross societies. The first major tracing institution to emerge was the *Central Tracing Bureau*

¹ Holger Köhn: *Die Lage der Lager: Displaced-Persons-Lager in der amerikanischen Besatzungszone Deutschlands*, Essen: Klartext, 2012, 127.

(CTB), founded by the Allies in the late summer of 1945 under the direction of the *United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration* (UNRRA), the largest aid organization in the postwar period.²

The main task of the CTB was to circulate inquiries and documents between tracing offices in the three Western occupation zones (known as zonal tracing offices) and the numerous national tracing services that had been established in many of the victims' countries of origin. At the end of 1945, UNRRA moved its *Central Headquarters for Germany* (CHQ)³ to Arolsen. The CTB, which had initially been based in Frankfurt-Höchst, also relocated to Arolsen in January 1946. The CTB offices were scattered throughout the city at first.⁴ After UNRRA was dissolved, its successor, the *International Refugee Organization* (IRO), took over management of the CTB and expanded it in 1948 to create the *International Tracing Service* (ITS). As early as 1945, UNRRA and the CTB employed Allied military and civilian personnel as well as some Germans, but mostly DPs. These DPs handled a variety of tasks at CHQ, including clerical work and translation as well as kitchen duties and transport services. They were also entrusted with jobs in other DP camps in the region. At the CTB, there were DPs working in nearly every department, from the *Record and Tracing Branch* to the security service and motor pool. But it was their language skills that were particularly valuable, as Hugh G. Elbot, chairman of the ITS administration, noted in May 1952: "[The] work encompasses the sorting of cards with Slavic names in the alphabetical-phonetic card files, the interpretation and translation of documents from the East and a precise knowledge of the clerical tasks that were carried out in the forced labor and concentration camps. In addition, there is the translation of inquiries in Slavic languages."⁵ In 1945, only 80 people worked at the CTB. The number of employees rose very rapidly in the following years, however, reaching 1,758 by 1949. In these early years, the proportion of DPs among the employees was as follows: In June 1947 there were 63 DPs employed, in January 1948 there were already 109, one year later there were 150, and in the summer of 1949 there were 204 DPs.⁶ Most DPs left Arolsen from the start of the 1950s, however, so by January 1952 there were only 85 of them still employed by the ITS. UNRRA-CHQ had a total of around 1,000 employees in the summer of 1946, but it is not yet clear how many of

2 For a more detailed account of this institution's history, see Henning Borggräfe, Christian Höschler and Isabel Panek (eds.): *A Paper Monument: The History of the Arolsen Archives*, exhibition catalog, Bad Arolsen, 2019.

3 UNRRA was established in Washington on November 9, 1943, by member states of what would become the United Nations. After the end of World War II, its employees dealt with DPs worldwide, primarily in Europe.

4 Regarding the location of the individual offices, see Borggräfe, Höschler, Panek (eds.): *A Paper Monument*, 64–65.

5 Translation Jessica Spengler; Hugh G. Elbot writing to the Employment Office, 26.5.1952, 11.3/1745 II/ ITS Archive, Arolsen Archives.

6 The ITS soon began employing local Germans as well, which repeatedly led to conflicts because these locals included men who had been active in the SS or other Nazi organizations. At the start of the 1950s, the Allies began regularly reviewing the employees and dismissed at least 45 people on account of their Nazi past. See the White Paper by Hugh G. Elbot, 6.2.1952, 6.1.1/82507305/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.

them were DPs.⁷ The majority of DPs who worked for the tracing service or UNRRA-CHQ after the war lived in Arolsen, but some were housed in the neighboring communities of Rhoden, Landau and Korbach.⁸ It is not possible to determine exactly how many DPs in total lived in Arolsen between 1945 and 1951, but there are individual statistics that reveal how many DPs were registered in Arolsen at particular points in time.

Where Did the DPs Who Lived in Arolsen after the War Come From?

The above-mentioned statistics on DPs in Arolsen provide information about their countries of origin, but the DPs were not registered by name. As was the case in many other DP camps, there was a high rate of turnover in Arolsen due to repatriation and emigration, and because DPs left to search for missing relatives or friends themselves. As a result, some DPs spent only a few days or weeks in Arolsen, while others spent many years. The DPs included former forced laborers who had been deported to Germany mainly from Poland and the Soviet Union, former prisoners of war, concentration camp survivors and some Jews. One large group comprised people from the Baltic States who had come to Germany in the last months of the war or after the war ended in 1945. Most of them had fled from the advancing Red Army, either because they did not want to be trapped in the Soviet Union's sphere of control or because they feared accusations of collaboration with the Germans.⁹

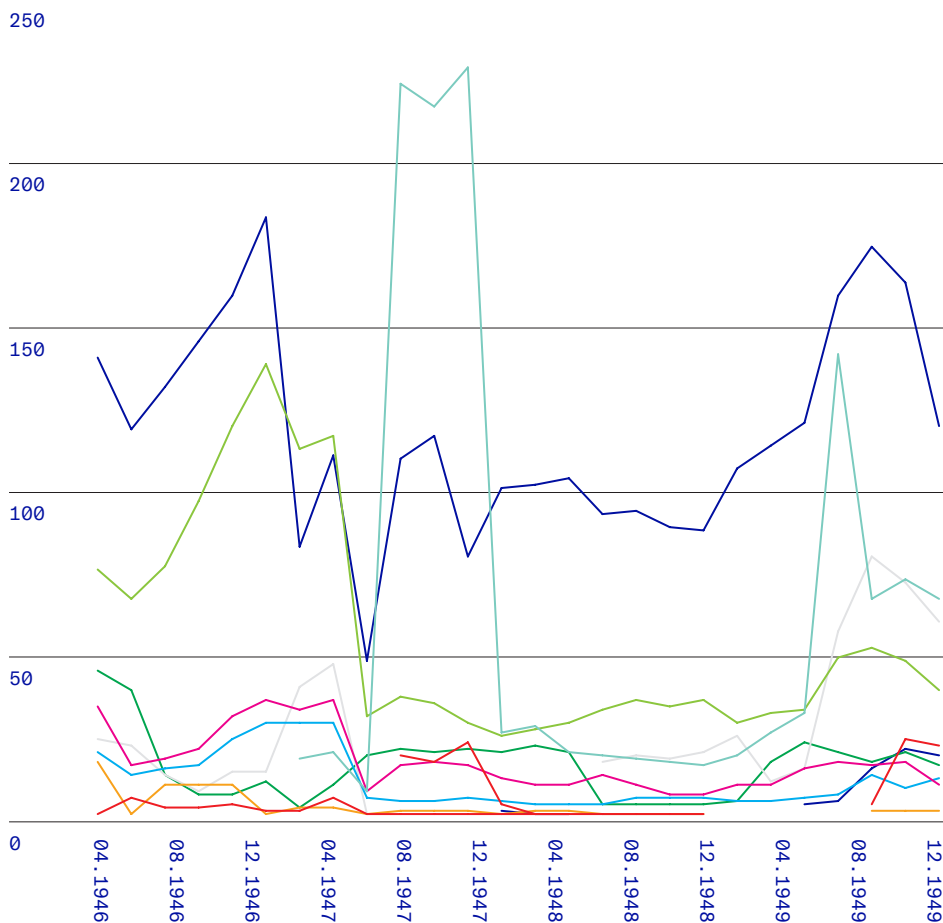
The first statistical information about the national origins of the DPs living in Arolsen comes from the year 1946. It can be found in UNRRA reports on the inhabitants of the DP camps in the US occupation zone, which are now stored in the *Arolsen Archives*.¹⁰ The largest group in April 1946 comprised 140 Poles, followed by 75 Lithuanians, 33 Latvians, 19 Estonians, 16 Jews, 23 stateless individuals and 44 people whose nationality was not mentioned.

7 Bernd Joachim Zimmer: *International Tracing Service Arolsen: Von der Vermisstensuche zur Haftbescheinigung. Die Organisationsgeschichte eines "ungewollten Kindes" während der Besatzungszeit*, Bad Arolsen: Waldeckischer Geschichtsverein, 2011, 136.

8 The Allies provided a shuttle to take them to and from work each day; see the monthly report for April 1946 on the work of Area Team 51, by UNRRA Field Supervisor Ralph W. Collins, 18.4.1946, S-0436-0024-0007-00003, United Nations Archives, New York.

9 Regarding the heterogeneity of the DPs, see the article by Christian Höschler in this volume.

10 See Collection 3.1.1.0 Generalia: Camps, Correspondence, Service Regulations/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.



Population of the Arolsen DP Camp by Nationality, 1946–1949¹¹

- Poland
- Ukraine (Polish minority)
- Belarus (Polish minority)
- Soviet Union
- Lithuania
- Latvia
- Estonia
- Jews
- Yugoslavia
- Stateless/ Nansen
- not specified

11 This graphic is based on an analysis of the statistical UNRRA reports on the inhabitants of the DP camps in Arolsen; see 3.1.1.0 Generalia: Camps, Correspondence, Service Regulations/ Folder 7-10/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.

The statistics show that Polish and Baltic DPs consistently made up the largest groups. Overall, the number of camp residents fluctuated tremendously. In April 1946 there were 350 DPs registered in the Arolsen camp, in October 1946 there were already 408, but in June 1947 there were just 114. The number subsequently rose again and continued to grow. This fluctuation was due in part to the repatriation and emigration of DPs, but also to the gradual expansion of the tracing service. It is important to note that not all registered DPs worked for UNRRA-CHQ or the tracing service; the statistical reports also listed all of the family members who had moved with the DPs to Arolsen. The DP biographies researched thus far reveal that there were four main reasons for moving to Arolsen and taking a job with the Allies: (1) The DPs were either already living in the Waldeck region or (2) had already worked for UNRRA or the CTB elsewhere, such as in Frankfurt-Höchst. (3) Some attended courses at the *Vocational Training Center* (VTC) for DPs, which was located in Arolsen from March 1947 to the end of July 1949, and were then employed by the ITS. (4) Others came to Arolsen when the zonal tracing bureaus were dissolved in 1949/1950.

The first DPs who lived in Arolsen after the war were probably former forced laborers, some of whom had arrived in Arolsen during the war or in its final weeks and had been forced to work for local companies or families.¹² Most of these deportees left the city in the course of 1945 and presumably returned to their home countries. Some were registered as DPs in other German municipalities. This was the case for Zofia Nowicka from Poland, who was forced to work as a domestic helper for a family in Arolsen during the war. From July 1945 she resided in the Mattenberg DP camp in Kassel-Oberzwehren, and in October 1945 she returned to Poland.¹³ Another example is Karl Kodrin, who was born in Slovenia in 1916 and had to perform forced labor in the main office of the estate of the Hereditary Prince of Waldeck in the last years of the war. He went back to Yugoslavia after the war ended.¹⁴ There is also evidence that a group of Lithuanian DPs was housed in the *Neues Schloss*, probably toward the end of 1945.¹⁵

But most DPs did not move to Arolsen until UNRRA-CHQ and the CTB were relocated from Frankfurt-Höchst. Roman Polubinski, a Pole born in Turek in 1914, is representative of the largest national group among the DPs. The Germans had deported Polubinski to Germany for forced labor in 1944. From March 1945 he had to work for a local family on a farm in Mengerlinghausen (near Arolsen). He initially stayed in Mengerlinghausen after the war, then lived briefly in Korbach, where his son was born in September 1945. He began working for UNRRA in December 1945 and moved with his family to Arolsen. A trained salesman, he worked first as a storekeeper and kitchen assistant in the Arolsen DP camp,

12 The topic of civilian forced labor in Arolsen is still in need of research.

13 See *T/D file 1219475* for Zofia Koch (née Nowicka), 6.3.3.2/113863570-113863584/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.

14 Register of Polish civilian laborers who worked in the main office of the estate of the Hereditary Prince of Waldeck in Arolsen during the war, 11.8.1947, 2.1.1.1/70474261/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives; DP 2 card for Karl Kodrin 3.1.1.1/67726843/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.

15 "Rapport du Commandant Meillon sur le Déplacement du C.T.P.B. à Arolsen et Höchst", 28.-30.11 and 1.12.1945, F/9/3848, Archives Nationales, Pierrefitte-sur-Seine.

then periodically at the CTB in 1946 and 1947 before returning to the camp again.¹⁶ By contrast, the Ukrainian Eugène Alakosow, who was born in Mariupol, followed the CTB when it relocated from Frankfurt-Höchst to Arolsen. He had left his homeland in 1922 and lived in France from 1931. After the Germans occupied Paris, the trained chemist was deported to Frankfurt am Main to perform forced labor. The CTB particularly appreciated his language skills; in addition to fluent Russian he spoke English, French, German and Bulgarian, which was very helpful for responding to search inquiries.¹⁷

Eduard Muszynski, who worked for the tracing service from 1946 to 1949, found himself in Arolsen for another reason. Until early 1945, Muszynski had been a prisoner in the Buchenwald sub-camp known as *Arthur*, which was located on the grounds of the barracks in Arolsen from 1943 to 1945.¹⁸ He had been arrested in 1941 by officers of the Munich Gestapo and sent to Dachau. Persecuted as a “political Pole,” Eduard Muszynski was transferred in December 1943 from Dachau to the Arthur sub-camp. The sub-camp was cleared shortly before the end of the war, and Muszynski was taken to the Flossenbürg concentration camp. He managed to escape during the transport.¹⁹ After the war he was not sure where to go at first, so he returned to Arolsen, where he met Rosemarie Voigt from Helsen, who had been persecuted as a “half-Jew.” They married in 1946 and had a daughter two years later. Although Muszynski was employed by the tracing service, the young couple emigrated to Australia in 1949.

When UNRRA ended its work in the summer of 1947, the management of the tracing service and responsibility for the DPs passed to the *International Refugee Organization* (IRO). The dissolution of UNRRA led to the closure of the CHQ in Arolsen as well. Most of the DPs subsequently found jobs with the tracing service. Around 700,000 DPs were still living in the Western occupation zones at the time, most of whom could not or did not want to return to their home countries. For this reason, the IRO increasingly supported their efforts to emigrate to other countries, such as the USA, and it set up *Vocational Training Centers* (VTC) which offered special courses to prepare the DPs for their emigration and new life. One such training center opened in Arolsen in March 1947 to serve the Frankfurt area. Other branches were established in the US zone in the spring of 1947 in places such as Ludwigsburg (serving the Stuttgart area) and Altenstadt (serving the Gauting area).²⁰ At these centers, DPs could attend foreign-language courses for several weeks or learn trades such as carpentry, metalwork, welding and sewing. The VTC in Arolsen was set up on the grounds of the former barracks, where the course participants were also housed. This brought hundreds of additional DPs to Arolsen in the spring of 1947.

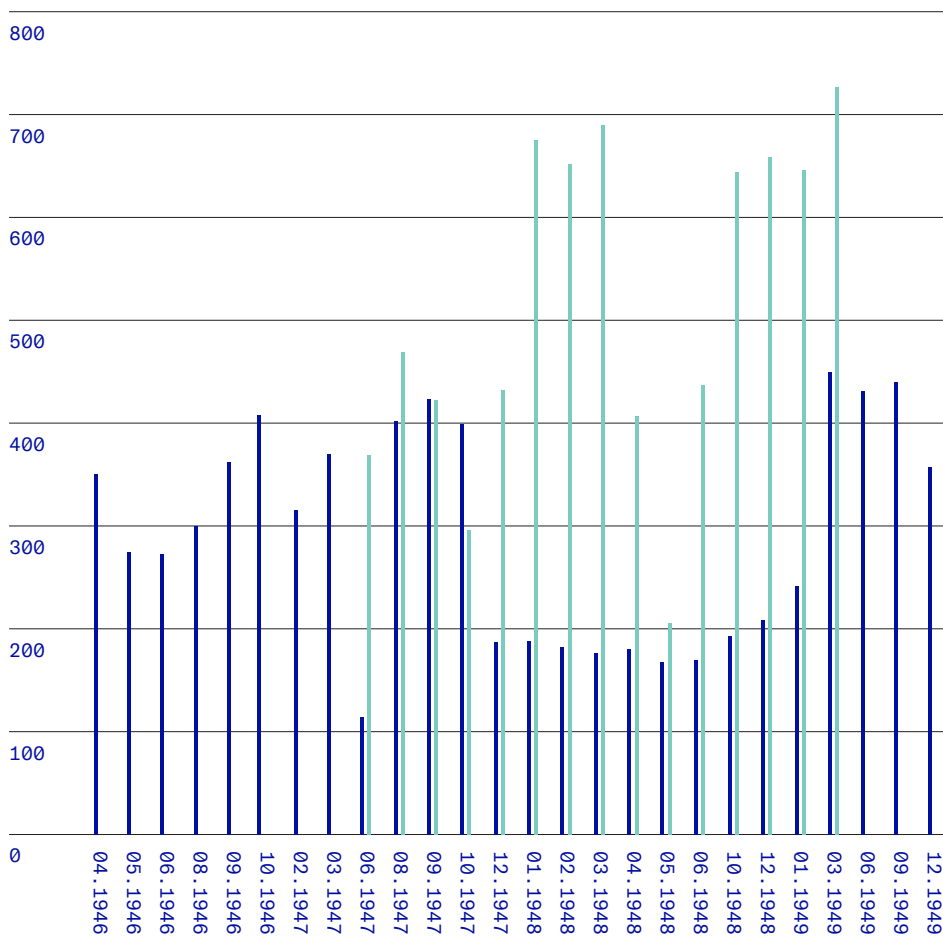
16 ITS Administrative Archive, Personnel File of Roman Polubinski, ITS Archive, Arolsen Archives.

17 CM1 file for Eugène Alakosow, 3.2.1.1/78870353–78870361/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives; ITS Administrative Archive, Personnel File of Eugène Alakosow, ITS Archive, Arolsen Archives.

18 For more detailed information on the *Arthur* sub-camp, see Bernd Joachim Zimmer: *Deckname Arthur: Das KZ-Aussenkommando in der SS-Führerschule Arolsen*, Kassel: Jenior und Pressler, 1994.

19 Eduard Muszynski's Prisoner Registration Card, 1.1.5.3/6682127/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives, and labor assignment card, 1.1.5.3/6682129/ibid. Also see Zimmer: *Deckname Arthur*, 330–331.

20 Information Bulletin of the PCIRO No. 21, 21.4.1946, 6.1.1/82505034/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.



Population of the DP Camp and *Vocational Training Center*, 1946–1950²¹

21 This graphic is based on an analysis of the statistical UNRRA reports on the inhabitants of the DP camps in Arolsen, see 3.1.1.0 Generalia: Camps, Correspondence, Service Regulations/Folder 7-10/ ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.

The statistics show that there were occasionally more than 700 DPs completing courses at the VTC. The center had around 400 participants in the spring of 1947, but by January 1948 there were already 675. This means that, at times, over 800 DPs lived in Arolsen and either worked for the tracing service or attended VTC courses. In March 1949, they actually numbered more than 1,000.



Anna Bielec in front of the entrance to the *Vocational Training Center*, former barracks, Arolsen, circa 1947 | *Private Collection of Marianne Roberts*

For a short time, Anna Bielec handled secretarial tasks at the VTC. She had previously been registered in the Ludwigsburg DP camp, and after working at the VTC she returned to Ludwigsburg and married Wally Grigoruk in March 1948. Not long after, she and her husband emigrated to Australia. Former forced laborer Józef Żyłka, who had been deported to Germany from Poland in 1940, also took a job at the VTC in 1948. Just one year later the VTC moved from Arolsen to Neuburg an der Donau, and some employees and course participants transferred to the ITS, including Józef Żyłka, who found a position in transportation services for the administration.²² The relocation of the VTC had been preceded by discussions about the cramped working situation at the tracing service, since the offices scattered across the city complicated the organization's day-to-day work. The imminent closure of the zonal tracing bureaus and associated transfer of hundreds of thousands of documents and numerous employees to Arolsen also meant that more offices and accommodations would be needed. When the VTC moved, the ITS took over the entire former *barracks* and was able to clearly organize and store all of its documents on shelves for the first time. At the same time, the zonal tracing bureaus could gradually be dissolved and their documents and employees could be brought to Arolsen. This led to the last major influx of DPs from 1949 onward. In May 1949, the entire *Concentration Camp Section* was relocated from Esslingen to Arolsen.²³ The employees were given the option of moving to Arolsen as well. Buchenwald survivor Marian Ciepielowski opted to move, as did Vilma Andersons from Latvia. She had left Latvia in 1944 as the Red Army advanced and worked as a forced laborer in Germany until the end of the war. Unlike the majority of DPs, Andersons did not emigrate afterward but instead stayed in Arolsen and worked at the tracing service until she retired in 1976.²⁴ Former prisoner of war Josef Blaszczyk from Poland also remained in Arolsen, he had been taken as a prisoner of war by the Germans in 1939. After the liberation, he lived in Korbach from March 1946 to August 1947. According to his son, he guarded imprisoned members of the SS there. In April 1949 he moved to Arolsen and was offered a job at the ITS, probably on account of his extensive language skills. He met a German employee at work, and they later married and had two children. Blaszczyk worked at the ITS until 1979 and was eventually involved in handling tracing inquiries.²⁵

Accommodations and Everyday Life

In the camps set up by the Allies, the DPs received food, medication and clothing. From the spring of 1945, the *Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force* was responsible for providing for the DPs; this responsibility later passed to the military governments of the occupation zones. After the war, US Army units commandeered many buildings and houses in Arolsen, most of which were taken over by UNRRA and the CTB at the end of 1945 for use as offices and employee housing. In early 1946, 96 residential buildings, three

²² For more detailed biographical information, see Borggräfe, Höschler, Panek (eds.): *A Paper Monument*, 123.

²³ ITS News Bulletin No. 7, 15.7.1949, 11.26/5007-2/ITS Archive, Arolsen Archives.

²⁴ For more detailed information about Marian Ciepielowski and Vilma Andersons, see the article by Silke von der Emde in this volume.

²⁵ Polish former prisoner of war Alexander Kopaniak followed a similar trajectory. For more detailed information, see the article by Silke von der Emde in this volume.

apartments, six public buildings and the former Arolsen barracks were requisitioned. A DP camp which was spread across several different sites in Arolsen was established for the DP employees at the start of the year. Communal housing was located in the former *Hitler youth center Am Tannenkopf*, in the *Hotel Bergischer Hof* at *Fürstenallee 9*, in the former *military hospital at Kasernenstrasse 19*, in the house of master painter Ernst Ruppel at *Kasernestrasse 15*, and in the former Arolsen barracks and the *Neues Schloss*. A few DP employees were also housed in requisitioned private homes. In the documents stored in the *Arolsen Archives* and *UN Archives*, the various sites are often referred to collectively as *DP Camp Arolsen No. 511*, the *DP Labor Camp* and, from July 1948, the *K-181 I.T.S. Employees Camp*.²⁶ In contrast to other camps in the US zone, the DPs in Arolsen were not separated by nationality when they were housed.²⁷

UNRRA Area Teams usually handled the daily provisioning and registration of the DPs. One Area Team would be responsible for one or more DP camps. Arolsen was looked after by Area Team No. 51, which also oversaw the camps in Korbach, Landau and Rhoden. In the camps, the DPs took on a variety of tasks together with the UNRRA employees and representatives of other aid organizations.²⁸ For example, in Arolsen, Korbach, Landau and Rhoden, DPs held the roles of *camp leader*, *assistant leader* and *secretarial staff*; they were chosen for these positions by the members of the Area Team and voted on by the camp's inhabitants.²⁹ Other everyday tasks were also assigned to the DPs, such as camp maintenance, kitchen and sanitary duties, police and fire services, and advisory and translation work for registering newly arrived DPs. The camp inhabitants provided medical services as well. In the Arolsen DP camp, doctor Eugenia Budak was responsible for providing medical care to the DPs along with Veronika Motrich-Shamray. The Germans had deported Eugenia Budak from western Ukraine to Germany for forced labor in 1944.³⁰ Her jobs in the DP camp probably included medical examinations for DPs who were new to the camp or leaving it permanently, everyday health care, and monitoring compliance with hygienic standards. Serious illnesses were treated in the local hospital or in special DP

26 Each DP camp was given a number, but these numbers changed frequently. Furthermore, several different camps could be referred to by the same number. See Administrative Order No. 10, Numbering, Names and Capacity of DP/Refugee Installations, 29.7.1948, 3.1.1.0/82383894/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.

27 It was actually the goal of the Allies to house the DPs separately based on their nationality in order to arrange repatriation transports. From the fall of 1945, camps were set up specifically for Jewish survivors in the US zone. See Köhn: *Die Lage der Lager*, 103–104.

28 With the DP camps being consolidated over time, Area teams were merged, and sometimes dissolved and renamed in the process. Team 51 was renamed Area Team 1024 at the end of 1946, and from April 1947, it was listed as Area Team 1025. See Station List NO. 12: UNRRA Assembly Centers in the U.S. Zone 3.1.1.0/82383531/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives, and Station List NO. 16: UNRRA Assembly Centers in the U.S. Zone 3.1.1.0/82383632/ibid.

29 UNRRA Team Report, 4.4.1946, S-0436-0024-0007-00003 UC, United Nations Archive, New York.

30 "Vorauszahlung auf Bezuege fuer Dezember 1948 an Angehoerige des D.P.-Camp", Abteilung II/Abschnitt 5/Konvolut 38/Faszikel 8, Municipal Archive Bad Arolsen; DP 2 card for Eugenia Budak 3.1.1.1/66722153/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.

hospitals.³¹ The job of ensuring security fell to the *camp police*, which mostly comprised Polish DPs, such as Auschwitz and Buchenwald survivor Franciszek Pytel.³²

During the DP camp's implementation phase, the responsible Area Team repeatedly came into conflict with UNRRA-CHQ and the tracing service. The latter two organizations increasingly intervened in the Area Team's sphere of authority by conducting unannounced inspections of the DPs' accommodations, for example, sometimes accompanied by local police. In the monthly report for April 1946, the UNRRA *Field Supervisor* summed up the challenge posed by the physical proximity between the organizations: "One of the special problems of this camp is its relationship with Central Headquarters where they have over 300 persons living and employed here. The camp has had to maintain its authority inasmuch as the Arolsen Camp is in Arolsen and close to Headquarters."³³

Sites of the DP Camp in Arolsen

The large communal living quarters in the former *Hitler Youth center*, the *Bergischer Hof* and at *Kasernenstrasse 15* and *19* were set up in early 1946, while those in the *Neues Schloss* were not established until 1949. They were all closed in the spring of 1950.

The largest and longest-standing communal living quarters existed from January 1946 probably until the summer of 1952 in the grounds of the former *barracks*. The *barracks* had housed the *SS Germania regiment* from 1935 to 1939 and an *SS leadership school* and *SS clothing storeroom* from 1943 to 1945, as well as the Buchenwald sub-camp known as *Arthur*.³⁴ The around 100 male prisoners in this camp were first put to work in the expansion of the *SS leadership school*. They later mainly worked in the large kitchen of

31 For example, there was a sanatorium in Gauting for DPs with tuberculosis and other lung diseases and a mental hospital in Wiesloch specifically for DPs with mental illness. DP children and infants were looked after in the Heckscher Children's Clinic in Munich, among other places, from March 1946 until January 1952. For an explanation of the areas of work in the DP camps, see *Guide to the Care of Displaced Persons in Germany*, SHAEF, 1945.

32 Franciszek Pytel's Prisoner Registration Card 1.1.5.3/6890054/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.

33 Monthly report for April 1946 on the work of Area-Team 51, by UNRRA Field Supervisor Ralph W. Collins, 18.4.1946, S-0436-0024-0007-00003, United Nations Archives, New York.

34 From the mid-1950s, a Waffen-SS veterans' group known as the *Hilfsgemeinschaft auf Gegenseitigkeit der ehemaligen Angehörigen der Waffen-SS* (German acronym: HIAG; *Mutual aid association of former Waffen-SS members*) and former members of the 3rd SS Panzer Division "*Totenkopf*" regularly held meetings in Arolsen. In 1959, the *Association of Victims of the Nazi Regime* (VVN) was able to have the event banned. Nonetheless, former SS members continued to hold meetings in Arolsen in the following years. Many residents of Arolsen ignored these meetings for years, while others sympathized with them. It was not until 1979 that wide-scale protests took place and initiatives such as the *Waldeck Civic Initiative Against Neo-Fascism* and the *Kassel Initiative for Prohibiting SS Meetings in Arolsen-Mengeringhausen* were founded. Also see Andreas Eichmüller: *Die SS in der Bundesrepublik: Debatten und Diskurse über ehemalige SS-Angehörige 1949–1985*, Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2018.

the school, managed the uniforms in the clothing storeroom, and worked as cleaners and hairdressers. In the spring of 1946, three buildings were used to house the DPs. Four garages, the former stables and the riding house were not taken over. From March 1947, the *barracks* also held the *Vocational Training Center* (VTC), which had classrooms as well as accommodations for the DPs taking courses there. After the VTC was relocated, the ITS took over the entire *barracks complex* in May 1949. It was then able to bring together the offices that had been scattered across the city and establish a central facility in the former SS quarters. The old SS *clothing storeroom*, which is now a hardware store, served as a canteen for all employees. In Block F, which is now a supermarket and electrical store, the DPs were housed in around 305 residential units with their own canteen.³⁵ From the spring of 1949, these units also housed DP employees from the zonal tracing bureaus who had gradually moved to Arolsen as the offices closed.



Employees crossing the former exercise yard on their way to work.
In the background, one can see Block F where the DP employees were housed.
Arolsen, circa 1950 | ITS Photo Collection, Arolsen Archives

³⁵ As of May 1949, Abteilung X/Abschnitt 5/Konvolut 61/Faszikel 1, Municipal Archive, Bad Arolsen.

In the *Bergischer Hof* at *Fürstenallee* 9, there were around 27 residential units in May 1949. This building, which had been purchased in 1921 by Friedrich-Wilhelm Strack from the *Bergisches Land* region and turned into a hotel, was used as DP housing from January 1946 to February 1950. A central canteen and a type of mess hall were set up on the ground floor in 1947, while the upper floors were used as accommodations.

More housing was located in the former *military hospital* at *Kasernenstrasse* 19, now Birkenweg 19. The building belonged to the city of Arolsen and was briefly used as an apartment building after the war. From January 1946 to early 1950, UNRRA took over the entire building, including its furnishings.³⁶ In February 1950, 22 rooms in the former *military hospital* were still occupied, mainly by families with children, most of whom emigrated in the spring of 1950 to the USA, Canada or Australia. The remaining DPs gradually moved to the former *barracks* or were housed in private apartments. There was a high rate of movement between the various sites, as the example of the Makuch family shows. In February 1950, the family was still living at *Kasernenstrasse* 19. They had previously lived briefly in the grounds of the *barracks* in Block E, then at the *Bergischer Hof*, then back at the former *barracks* from the spring of 1950, and finally, shortly before they emigrated to the USA, at *Parkstrasse* 16 and *Jahnstrasse* 50.³⁷

Additional communal housing was established close to the former *military hospital* at *Kasernenstrasse* 15 in February 1946 and in the former *Hitler youth center* *Am Tannenkopf* in January 1946. The *youth center* had been built in 1938/39 and was used as a military hospital during the war. In 1945, the US Army commandeered the building and continued to use it as a military hospital until it was handed over to UNRRA. In the former *youth center* and the housing in the former *barracks* in particular, the residents had hardly any private space. A renovation report for the *youth center* from the summer of 1950 indicates that the DPs took matters into their own hands and made many structural changes to the building. Above all, they tried to divide the large common areas into smaller units using lightweight construction materials, and they installed additional stoves, water lines and drains.³⁸

The sixth housing site identified to date was the *Neues Schloss*, where Higher SS and Police Leader Josias zu Waldeck und Pyrmont had occasionally lived between 1933 and 1945. The *Neues Schloss* also held the office of the SS-*Oberabschnitt* Fulda-Werra, which arranged for the organization, training and enlistment of new SS recruits. After World War II, UNRRA used the *Neues Schloss* as its headquarters from the end of 1945 to the summer of 1947. The tracing service subsequently moved into its vacated offices and remained there until the organization was centralized in the *barracks* in May 1949. The *Neues Schloss* was then used to house DPs and international employees. There were a total of 44 residential units and three kitchens in the *Neues Schloss*. In mid-February 1950,

³⁶ Abteilung II/Abschnitt 5/Konvolut 35/Faszikel 5, Municipal Archive, Bad Arolsen.

³⁷ See ITS Administrative Archive, Personnel File of Maria Makuch, ITS Archive, Arolsen Archives; CM/1-Application Makuch Family 3.2.1/79440432-79440442/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.

³⁸ Abteilung VIII/Abschnitt 6/Konvolut 163/Faszikel 3, Municipal Archive, Bad Arolsen.

at least 39 of its rooms were still occupied. Since the building had been completely taken over by the Allies in 1945, it can be assumed that the *Neues Schloss* was occasionally used as housing even before 1949.

Cultural Life

Regardless of where they lived, the DPs developed a distinct social and cultural life rather quickly which was not restricted to the DPs alone but included the entire early staff of the ITS. French employee Yseult Sabatier described her first impression of the ITS workforce shortly after she arrived in Arolsen: “Arolsen [meaning the ITS] gave me the impression of Noah’s Ark, with all types and personalities mixed together in a very friendly family. The fact that all of the people speak English here makes conversation easy and breaks down many of the barriers which ignorance of this language would have caused. The international team spirit I found in Arolsen was even beyond my expectations. No one of any country is excluded from this team. This causes a wonderful friendly atmosphere, making work much easier.”³⁹ The DPs formed their own sports and entertainment committees and even a band. Bingo evenings, balls, cabaret performances and film screenings took place regularly. For an international tracing conference attended by representatives of many national tracing bureaus in the fall of 1949, Baltic DPs arranged an arts and crafts exhibition and presented traditional folk drawings, embroidery and jewelry. The sports committee organized regular swimming, tennis, ping pong and soccer classes, as well as competitions against DP teams from the surrounding area. Swimming classes were held at the old open-air pool *Am Tannenkopf*, which had also been seized by the US Army in 1945. Reports on the events and sports tournaments can be found in the *ITS News Bulletins*, which were published from the end of the 1940s and provide an insight into the DPs’ active social and cultural life.⁴⁰ The DPs and ITS employees mostly kept to themselves at these events, and the local population was only rarely invited. The DPs included many families with children. More than 50 children were registered at the start of 1950, around 20 of whom had been born in Arolsen or Korbach after the war. The families in particular celebrated holidays together, such as Christmas and Thanksgiving.

³⁹ ITS News Bulletin No. 2, 10.3.1949, 11.26/5007-2/ITS Archive, Arolsen Archives.

⁴⁰ 14 English-language issues are stored in the *Arolsen Archives*, see 11.26/5007-2/ITS Archive, Arolsen Archives.



ITS staff, including Polish DPs, probably celebrating the Polish Constitution Day, May 1950 |
Private Collection of the Kopaniak Family



Christmas party, circa 1952 | *Private Collection of Charles Elbot and sons: Jason Elbot & David Elbot*

Various locations were used for events until the summer of 1949, including the *Kurhaus* at Grosse Allee 23 and the *Altes Schloss*, where a carnival ball was held in February 1949. After the entire ITS was centralized in the grounds of the former *barracks*, most events took place in the large canteen in Block E. The life and work of the DPs thus intertwined, and the former *SS barracks* became a lively place where thousands of Nazi victims were traced and Nazi crimes were documented.

Emigrate or Stay?

From 1947 to 1949/1950, the majority of the DP camps in all three Western occupation zones were dissolved. First the smaller camps were gradually closed and their remaining inhabitants were moved to other camps. The statistical lists in the *Arolsen Archives* show that there were only 2,859 DPs living in the entire state of Hesse in December 1949. In addition to the *ITS Employees Camp* in Arolsen, there was just one other DP camp in Hanau and three facilities that been established specially for repatriation and emigration affairs: a *Control Center* in Hanau, a *Resettlement Center* in Butzbach and a *Repatriation Center* in Babenhausen.⁴¹ In Arolsen, too, the number of DPs declined considerably from the spring of 1950, falling from 357 at the start of 1950 to 237 in early summer. Most of the DPs emigrated to start a new life elsewhere. As the DP camps were wound down, the sites of the Arolsen DP camp *Am Tankenknopf*, at *Kasernenstrasse 19 and 15* and in the *Neues Schloss* were also closed. The camp in the grounds of the former *barracks* was finally handed over to the ITS administration in February 1950.

In the context of the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany, discussions began about who would be responsible for supporting the DPs and what the DPs' legal status was in Germany. Most of the DPs who stayed in Arolsen were skeptical of the changes facing them. A meeting was therefore held on January 9, 1950, at which the imminent changes were explained to the DPs by Mr. Rodgers, the *Welfare Officer* of the Kassel sub-area; Frederic Bales, the personnel manager of the ITS; and Father Franciszek Wenda.⁴² They told the Arolsen DPs that they would become the responsibility of the Germans in February 1950, and that while the camp would be formally dissolved, they could continue living in their current accommodations if they started paying rent. In addition to asking organizational questions at the event, the DPs expressed fears and concerns, such as that they might face reprisals after losing their international protection. Jan Kowalik, who had lived in the Arolsen DP camp since July 1949, said: "It means total integration, not just in the economic life but also the political life of the German people, and total subordination to the German judiciary. We can already imagine what this would mean for us, because we read German newspapers and we hear what the Germans say. Some of us have fought against Germanization or naturalization using every means possible for years [...]. We object to Germanization [...] until we have a guarantee that a legal authority will be created

⁴¹ Summary of D.P. Population, IRO Assembly Centers United States Zone, 31.12.1949, 3.1.1.0/82384127/ ITS Digital Archives, Arolsen Archives.

⁴² Polish priests were largely responsible for church services in the four DP camps (Arolsen, Korbach, Landau and Rhoden). See UNRRA monthly reports, 1946, S-0436-0024-0007-00003, United Nations Archives, New York.

on the side of the Allies to defend our rights in the German federal parliament.”⁴³ Others viewed the transfer of authority as an “insult to the national feelings” of those who had been deported to concentration camps on the basis of their nationality. To loud applause, Jan Jansinski went on to say: “Staying in Germany after the end of the activity of the IRO would become torture for the foreigners, even though the concentration camps have been disbanded.”⁴⁴ A few days later, a *public forum* was held in Arolsen to discuss the DPs being placed under German jurisdiction and the resulting effects on Arolsen. This forum was attended not only by DPs but also by many Arolsen residents, who believed the housing situation and the financial support for DPs who lost their jobs posed major challenges. The atmosphere at the forum appears to have been very tense. DPs had lived and worked in Arolsen for over four years, but there had rarely been any direct contact between them and the Germans. Many Arolsen residents were prejudiced toward the DPs and thought they were privileged compared to German refugees from the so-called “Eastern territories.” The Hungarian DP and ITS employee Akos Thiery⁴⁵ responded to the comments of the Arolsen residents during the forum and explained that many DPs would not stay in Arolsen, so the housing situation would improve. He also stressed that the DPs were protected against unemployment and would not be a burden on anyone if the ITS were to close. He reminded those present that the Allies had helped numerous Germans find jobs and had thus already eased the strain on the labor market in Arolsen.⁴⁶

Most DPs left Arolsen in the 1950s; very few remained. From 1951, they were legally considered *Homeless Foreigners* in Germany. This new status gave the DPs extensive rights, such as the ability to choose where they lived and what vocation they learned, and it gave them the security of being able to stay in Germany. At the same time, however, they were not fully equal to German citizens because they could not vote, for example.⁴⁷

The presence of the many international DPs and Allied civilians did not play a major role in the history of the city of Arolsen in the following decades. The former *barracks* were taken over in 1952 by Belgian NATO soldiers, and the grounds were redesigned after the soldiers withdrew in the early 1990s. Parts of the eastern buildings and stable area were placed under a monument protection order, while the former accommodation Block F and canteen were torn down. In the staff building, the *Historicum 20* association installed an exhibition on the history of the *barracks* in 2012. The exhibition deals with the tumultuous

⁴³ Minutes of the meeting: “Protokoll über die Versammlung der Insassen des DP-Labour-Camps”, 9.1.1950, AJ/43/815, Archives Nationales, Pierrefitte-sur-Seine.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ In December 1944, the Germans deported him to Germany for forced labor. After liberation, he taught art history and English linguistics at the UNRRA DP University in Munich. From November 1947 until July 1947, he attended an UNRRA administration course in Bad Wiessee. Following this, he moved on to Arolsen and became head of the English language school of the VTC, and then its director. In January 1949, he started work at the ITS, see ITS Administrative Archive, Personnel File of Akos Thiery, ITS Archive, Arolsen Archives.

⁴⁶ “DP-Debatte im Arolser Oeffentlichen Forum. Mr. Vadney, Kassel, erläutert den amerikanischen Standpunkt”, in *Waldecker Kurier*, 23.1.1950, 3.

⁴⁷ Wolfgang Jacobmeyer: *Vom Zwangsarbeiter zum heimatlosen Ausländer: Die Displaced Persons in Westdeutschland, 1945–1951*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985, 204–231.

history of the site, but it only touches on the time of the DPs in Arolsen. This article – which provides an initial overview of the history of the DPs in Arolsen – could be followed by further research into topics such as the relationship between the local population and the early employees of UNRRA-CHQ and the tracing service, and the subsequent life trajectories of the DPs who remained in Arolsen as *Homeless Foreigners*.

Recovering a Displaced Archive: DP Employees of the ITS in Arolsen

In December 2006, the US network CBS aired the sensational documentary *Hitler's Secret Archive*, which introduced the American public to the *International Tracing Service* (ITS), now known as the *Arolsen Archives*, which had up until that time been almost completely unknown and inaccessible.¹ In the documentary, correspondent Scott Pelley took his viewers through the more than 16 miles of shelves in Bad Arolsen, Germany, that held the “horrors of 17 million victims during the Third Reich.”² While this type of dramatic attention together with pressure from various historians and international institutions helped force the ITS to re-open its archive to scholars and members of the public in 2007, the simplistic tagline also ignored the complex history and mission of the institution.³ More importantly, it also erased the stories of some of the surviving victims of the National Socialist Regime – the Displaced Persons (DPs) – whom the ITS employed from the very beginning of its existence.

- 1 The ITS was originally set up as a tracing service to search for information on victims and survivors and to assist allies in repatriating the millions of displaced persons who were stranded in Germany. Its name has recently been changed to *Arolsen Archives – International Center on Nazi Persecution*. For the sake of convenience, I use the name ITS for most of my examples that occurred when the archive was still named ITS in the time between 1948 and 2019.
- 2 “Hitler’s Secret Archive”. Available at: <http://www.cbsnews.com/videos/hitlers-secret-archive>. Last accessed: 20.8.2019; also see the related article by Daniel Schorn: “Revisiting the Horrors of the Holocaust”. Available at: <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/revisiting-the-horrors-of-the-holocaust>. Last accessed: 20.8.2019.
- 3 Jennifer Rodgers shows that this designation had such traction that the director of the ITS, Rebecca Boehling, was introduced at a 2013 conference as the director of “Hitler’s Secret Archive”. See Jennifer L. Rodgers: “Archive of Horrors, Archive of Hope: The ITS in the Postwar Era”, in Elizabeth Anthony, Rebecca Boehling, Suzanne Brown-Fleming, and Susanne Urban (eds.): *Freilegungen: Spiegelungen der NS-Verbrechen und ihrer Konsequenzen*, Göttingen: Wallstein, 2015, 17–34.

Jacques Derrida has claimed that the very structure of an archive is shaped by the contexts of its creation.⁴ This is certainly true in the case of the ITS, which became a proxy in the political gamesmanship of various state actors throughout the Cold War.⁵ However, the Displaced Persons employed at the ITS also played a pivotal role in shaping this institution by transforming the collection of recovered Nazi documents into a useable and valuable archive. In addition to helping create an ordering system, they adapted a unique alphabetical/phonetic searching method that had been used by the *International Red Cross* in World War I. They also worked on the first *catalogue of camps and prisons* in order to search for missing victims and furnish incontrovertible evidence for restitution claims and, eventually, the trials of war criminals and Nazi collaborators.⁶ Crucially, however, the DPs also expanded the archive in more subtle ways. Personnel files document their valuable contributions to the ITS and the correspondence (T/D) files detail the way survivors and their families used the archive. These DP files, which I focus on in this article, are true *Fundstücke* since they are almost as displaced in the archive as the people to whom they pertain. The personnel files have not been digitized and are only accessible as hard copies at the *Arolsen Archives* in Bad Arolsen. In addition, for privacy reasons researchers only have access to files of individuals born at least one hundred years ago.⁷

Recovering this *displaced archive* within the ITS represents an important step in heeding Dan Stone's call for scholars to produce an *archive biography* that focuses on the epistemology of the archive and how it changes over time.⁸ Making sense of these seemingly modest and unassuming files, however, requires combining the research methods of historiography with the interpretive methods of literary and cultural studies.

4 Jacques Derrida: "Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression," in *Diacritics: A Review of Contemporary Criticism* 25.2, 1995, 9–63.

5 In her article "Archive of Horrors, Archive of Hope: The ITS in the Postwar Era", Jennifer Rodgers concentrates on the geopolitical context and shows how the different international players used the archive for their own political gains during the cold war. Bernd Joachim Zimmer described the administrative context of the ITS in its early years in some detail in his thorough study: *Der Internationale Tracing Service Arolsen: Von der Vermisstensuche zur Haftbescheinigung: Die Organisationsgeschichte eines „Ungewollten Kindes“ während der Besatzungszeit*, Bad Arolsen: Waldeckischer Geschichtsverein, 2011.

6 The catalogue is the *International Tracing Service: Catalogue of Camps and Prisons in Germany and German-Occupied Territories, Sept. 1st 1939–May 8th 1945*, Arolsen: International Tracing Service, 1949, a publication that was revised and enlarged several times over the next years. For a reproduction of this work see Martin Weinmann (ed.): *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990.
For more on the changing roles of the ITS in the context of political developments in Germany and Europe, see Jennifer Rodgers: "Humanity's Ancestral Inheritance: The International Tracing Service, 1942–2008". Available at: <https://arolsen-archives.org/content/uploads/humanitys-ancestral-inheritance-rodgers.pdf>. Last accessed: 20.8.2019; see also her dissertation: *From the 'Archive of Horrors' to the 'Shop Window of Democracy': The International Tracing Service, 1942–2013*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2014.

7 The *Arolsen Archives* will have to make some important decisions of how to deal with these very personal files that belong to individuals who lived in Bad Arolsen and were part of the community for a very long time.

8 Dan Stone: "The Memory of the Archive: The International Tracing Service and the Construction of the Past as History", in *Dapim: Studies on the Holocaust* 31.2, 2017, 69–88.

As it turns out, excavating the layers of meaning hidden beneath the surface of these texts and images mirrors in surprising ways the deep and empathetic reading that the DPs practiced in their tracing work. On one level, this *displaced archive* shows how a culture of respectful remembering was inscribed into the structure of the institution, enabling an archive of courage and humanity to emerge next to and on top of *the archive of horror* that the Nazis had created to support their killing machine. On another level, the records document the important relationships among employees of the ITS and their role in reestablishing vital paths of memorial transmission that compensated for the families they had lost. Ultimately, analyzing the archival remnants of the DPs in this multifaceted manner not only yields a more complex picture of the ITS archive and the people it employed, but also a deeper understanding of the very process of preserving direct links to the past and an embodied knowledge of Nazi atrocities. Though far from unambiguous and not without contradictions, this *displaced archive* is rich in meaning.



Entrance Gate to the ITS, 1950, HICOG Information Bulletin (n.d., 1951) | 6.1.1/82507276/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives

The DPs in the ITS worked in very complicated circumstances. Some of the multi-layered tensions that characterized the work of the DPs in Arolsen is revealed in the photograph of the ITS's entrance gate from the early fifties. This entrance used to be the entrance to the old Prussian barracks in Arolsen, that had also served as an SS officer training academy and sub-camp of Buchenwald under the Nazis. For today's viewer, the gate and the set-up of the photograph is eerily similar to the infamous and iconographic photograph of the entrance gate to Auschwitz, with its *Arbeit macht frei* ("work will set you free") banner. Thus, on the outside, the ITS looked very similar to the Nazi institutions it was tasked with documenting. Yet, photographs, as Susan Sontag reminds us, only present a surface

knowledge of reality because of their disconnectedness from time and context.⁹ Sontag explains that true understanding is based on functioning and “functioning takes place in time and must be explained in time. Only that which narrates can make us understand.”¹⁰ Due to the fact that this photograph of the ITS only shows a slice of a very complex reality at a single point in time, it hides more than it discloses about the organization and how it functioned. While the photograph with its outside, surface view irritates the viewer with its setting in the old SS barracks, the DPs did what the photograph could not do: they went back in time and found the traces of the victims’ identities and contexts in order to narrate their stories. The DPs performed a deeply meaningful labor of narration in the ITS, a work that truly did set them free, reversing in a paradoxical way the sadistic taunt on the Auschwitz banner, *work will set you free*” By performing the most unalienated, meaningful work one can imagine in recreating a person’s identity, they reversed the Nazis’ attempts to kill their victims with the most alienating slave work one can imagine. Going deep into the layers of the photograph’s meanings allows us to shed new light on the ITS and on the contexts of its creation.

The Bulletin from May 1951, where the photograph of the entrance was published, was similarly designed to shine a light on the work of the ITS and on the DPs who were employed there. Under the leadership of Hugh G. Elbot, the new American director once the *Allied High Commission of Occupied Germany* (HICOG) had taken over the ITS, the bulletin was intended to give a vivid and detailed report of the work of the ITS in Arolsen.¹¹ Its aim was clearly to *sell* the agency to the international community at the height of the Cold War when many international players thought that the tracing work should have long ended. Elbot’s report reveals the enormity of the labor that the DPs still had to do in the ITS: “The task was as absorbing as it was big: a detective story in reverse. The clues were captured concentration camp files, testimony of war criminals, statements of the survivors, and rusty number tags linked around a skeleton’s wrist.”¹² Elbot goes on to list the many difficulties that beset the “ITS men,” as he calls them despite the fact that more women than men worked there.¹³ These included the unreliability of records, attempts to destroy documents on the part of Nazi officials, and missed opportunities to secure important information on the part of the allied forces. Yet, both the ingenuity and the motivation of the employees become clear in Elbot’s report:

“As the grisly task proceeded, ITS personnel came to learn perhaps more about the Nazi concentration and slave labor camps than Himmler himself knew, but [the] ITS was always conscious that the investigation was no pure intellectual exercise... The main purpose was always to enable relatives and friends of the concentration camp inmates to learn what had happened and—the bit of sunlight in the death-laden atmosphere—to reunite surviving inmates with relatives whom the storm of the war had scattered to the four winds.”¹⁴

⁹ Susan Sontag: *On Photography*, Farrar: Straus & Giroux, 1973.

¹⁰ Ibid., 18.

¹¹ HICOG Information Bulletin, 1951, 6.1.1/82507276/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.

¹² Ibid., 1.

¹³ For more discussion on the women at the ITS see my article “Women in the Archive: Locating the International Tracing Service in German Memory Work”, in *Seminar: A Journal of Germanic Studies*, 53.3, September 2017, 202–218.

¹⁴ HICOG Information Bulletin, 2.

Elbot was right that the ITS employees worked extraordinarily hard to become singular experts on the crimes of the *Third Reich*, because they had a special motivation to do so. The “bit of sunlight in the death-laden atmosphere” in the aftermath of the *Third Reich* was also the light at the end of the tunnel that the DPs saw for their own lives. By helping others, the DPs were able to help themselves. By telling other victims’ stories they were also narrating their own collective past and by returning the humanity to the millions of victims of the Nazi regime, many won back their own humanity and self-worth.



This is ITS's Buchenwald Division's index room. Filed here are more than 1,000,000 documents relating to fate of 220,000 persons who passed through notorious camp.

File Room in the ITS (HICOG Information Bulletin (n.d., 1951) | 6.1.1/82507276/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives

The enormity of the tasks that the international workers and the DPs had set for themselves can also be seen in the photos that exist from the early time in the tracing service.

Almost every shot depicts huge amounts of documents, index cards, and filing cabinets with people deeply immersed in their work behind their desks. Similar to the photograph of the entrance gate, there is an eerie resemblance to the iconography of what Werner Sollors calls *atrocities photographs* that were disseminated with General Dwight D. Eisenhower's encouragement to document the killing sites and to educate the public after April 1945.¹⁵ The piles of corpses in the photographs of concentration camps almost seem replaced with piles of documents in the ITS photographs. The caption “This is ITS's Buchenwald Division's index room. Filed here are more than 1,000,000 documents relating to fate of 220,000 persons who passed through notorious camps” is not even necessary to know that the cards represent victims of Nazi atrocities. Although the atrocity photographs from Nazi camps were still very shocking at this time, we know that readers of the bulletin would have been aware of them because as Werner Sollors explains, these “widely disseminated photographs of the victims of mass atrocities in concentration camps became a powerful tool in the last weeks of the war and continued to be of importance for

15 Wener Sollors analyzes these photographs in his book: *The Temptation of Despair: Tales of the 1940s*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014.

the reeducation effort that followed.”¹⁶ From Susan Sontag, we know what a deep effect these photographs had on viewers to the point that Sontag divides her life into two parts, before she saw those photographs when she was twelve and after: “When I looked at those photographs, something broke. Some limit had been reached, and not only that of horror; I felt irrevocably grieved, wounded, but a part of my feelings started to tighten; something went dead; something is still crying.”¹⁷ Although we do not see the corpses and the thousands of victims in the photographs from the ITS, the photographer and the authors of the bulletin capitalize on our familiarity with these photographs to make their point about the emotionally draining task that the ITS employees had to perform in working with these documents. The DP employees that work among the index card boxes look lost in the vast amounts of documents; but by interrupting the vastness of the landscape of files, they show their steadfastness and heroism through their concentrated expression. The picture is supposed to demonstrate that these DPs are the ones who bring order to the files; thereby they are our guides through the desolation and despair.



Marian Ciepielowski among the files. (HICOG Information Bulletin (n.d., 1951) | 6.1.1/82507276/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives)

The picture of Marian Ciepielowski that was also chosen for the 1951 Bulletin uses this same kind of iconography. This photograph is especially striking in conjunction with the caption “Dr. Marian Ciepielowski, 44, who survived five years at Buchenwald, leafs through files concerning that camp.” The awe inspired by the fact that someone was able to survive five years in this concentration camp is intensified by the contrast between the caption and the image of Ciepielowski, who seems strangely trapped between the boxes of filing cards and dwarfed by the oversized map of the Buchenwald on the wall behind him. In a way, it seems as if his incarceration in Buchenwald is still ongoing and the magnitude of the DPs’ task to bring order to the files is matched only by the magnitude of the atrocity.

As the photograph already indicates, Ciepielowski must have been an invaluable worker in Arolsen, despite his horrible ordeal under the Nazis. In fact, the impression of the

¹⁶ Ibid., 59.

¹⁷ Sontag: *On Photography*, 15.

photograph is supported by his personnel file, which contains glowing evaluations, a quick succession of promotions within the ITS, and a resignation in 1951 in order to emigrate to the US. When we dig deeper to understand who Marian Ciepielowski really was, we find an extraordinary story of resilience, heroism and deep humanity. From his arrest notice on 22 February 1941, we learn that Ciepielowski was apprehended by the Gestapo as a young doctor in Krakow for “dissemination of inflammatory pamphlets and illegal activities.”¹⁸ The first hint that Ciepielowski was no ordinary prisoner at Buchenwald is a note from a registration card in Buchenwald about his being a “Dikal” prisoner (a “darf in kein anderes Lager” or a prisoner who “cannot be moved to another camp”), and a transfer notice from the general camp to the medical Block 50, designating Ciepielowski as a “skilled laborer” (Ciepielowski was in fact a medical doctor).¹⁹ He was transferred to Block 50 to be part of the typhus vaccine experiments. It turns out that Ciepielowski was part of a group of prisoners with Ludwik Fleck (a brilliant Jewish immunologist) and Eugen Kogon (a historian who later wrote the decisive book on the concentration camps, *The SS State*) who helped sabotage cruel medical trials in Buchenwald and save countless lives in the camp.²⁰

Apart from the Nazi documents from Buchenwald, the *Arolsen Archives* have a wealth of other materials on Ciepielowski, including his personnel files from after the war and his work in the archive, his *T/D file* (post-war correspondence concerning individuals), and one of Ciepielowski’s own reports about his time in the camp created for the *Nuremberg trials*. Reading the files side-by-side, we notice a shocking contrast in tone between the Nazi files, which treat Ciepielowski as an object, work material to be shuffled around at the pleasure of SS officers, and postwar materials, which are carefully collected in his personnel file and in the correspondence files (*T/D files*). The Nazi files list him as number 4367; they show his arrest, and any change in assignment, such as a transfer from “Stubendienst” (barracks duty) to “Strumpfstopfer” (sock mender) on 13 February 1942.²¹ The ITS personnel file on Ciepielowski, on the other hand, contains glowing work evaluations and attests to the many responsibilities he had in the ITS, stating for example that he worked on the “more difficult non-routine jobs of analysis and processing of records” and was one of the people who planned and organized the searches and set up procedures and methods in the tracing of concentration camp victims.²² These personnel records attest to Ciepielowski’s intelligence, his great analytical talent and his dedication to the work in the ITS.

18 “Verbreitung von Hetzschriften u. illegale Tgk.,[Tätigkeit]” in: Aufnahmebefehl, Kommandeur der Sicherheitspolizei im Distrikt Krakau, 1941, 1.2.2.1/11443940/ITS Digital Archives, Arolsen Archives.

19 The “Dikal” designation appears among other places on his registry office card 1.1.5.3/5685347/ITS Digital Archives, Arolsen Archives; he is handled as a “Gelernter Facharbeiter” in: Veränderung zum Arbeitsbericht, Kommando Pathologie 1943, 1.1.5.1/5329881/ITS Digital Archives, Arolsen Archives.

20 The story of these men reads like a film and it is hard to believe that the heroism of these people, Jews and Christians alike, has not been more noticed. Only in 2014 did Arthur Allen publish the bestselling book *The Fantastic Laboratory of Dr. Weigl*, which chronicles the work of these men in the Buchenwald experiments.

21 Veränderungsmeldung, Buchenwald, 13.2.1942, 1.1.5.1/5323766/ITS Digital Archives, Arolsen Archives.

22 ITS Administrative Archive, Personnel File of Marian Ciepielowski, ITS Archive, Arolsen Archives.

However, the most radical change in tone is found in the documents that contain Ciepielowski's own voice, such as in a report that Ciepielowski and his fellow prisoner Robert Waitz wrote in May of 1946 as supporting evidence for the *Nuremberg trials* about the medical experiments at Buchenwald.²³ This elegantly written document is very much a scientific report with facts, numbers and tables, explaining what happened in the vaccine experiment unit in Buchenwald. It clarifies the complicated set-up of the medical unit in Buchenwald and uncovers the corruption, inefficiency and irresponsibility that permeated the unit. Ciepielowski's and Waitz's final evaluation of the experiments at Buchenwald reads as follows:

"Thousands of people suffered and were sacrificed over the course of experiments that were conducted without proper scientific methods and with insufficiently trained personnel and which yielded minimal results."²⁴

Aside from this direct damnation of the concentration camp system and of Nazism, which is characterized by "the utter disregard and negation of the human individual," the extent of the suffering at Buchenwald becomes even clearer when Ciepielowski and Waitz talk about the conditions in the hospital.²⁵ In contrast to the rest of the camp, they explain, there was an abundance of food in Block 46 with an "Überfluss über sehr reichliche und sehr abwechslungsreiche Kost" (a surplus of very plentiful and very varied food). The underlining appears in the original report and it is followed by a detailed list of the menu in Block 46, which consisted of "milk (1/2 l per patient), butter (50g), white bread, an egg, jam and honey, sugar, sweet milk soups with oats, semolina, wheat flower or dough."²⁶ They go on to explain that the floors were polished and that the beds were actual hospital beds with real mattresses. Because this detailed description leaps out from the rest of the report, which is otherwise analytical and efficiently written, we sense how unusual and unbelievable the conditions in Block 46 must have seemed to the prisoners assigned to the medical unit after they had experienced the starvation, filth and misery in the rest of the camp. Although the authors never speak of their own suffering, these excessive descriptions of the food and the cleanliness of the hospital unit indicate their suffering, their feelings of guilt for having been chosen to work in the medical unit over other prisoners who were left to die, and their sadness over all these losses. The passages that go beyond the efficient style of the rest of the narrative and break the genre conventions of a scientific report inadvertently reveal the underlying emotions of these two men as they remember their ordeal.

Reading different documents side by side to compare the language, tone, and contexts reveals important information not only about what happened, but also what the events meant to the people who were affected. That the DPs were willing to do the important

23 Robert Waitz and Marian Ciepielowski: "Fleckfieberversuche im Lager Buchenwald" (Translation of the article "Le Typhus Expérimental Au Camp De Buchenwald"), 18.5.1946, 4.2/82231672/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives

24 "Tausend Personen haben gelitten und sind geopfert worden, um im Verlauf von ohne mit besonders strenger Wissenschaftlichkeit durch ungenügend geschultes Personal durchgeführten Versuchen minimale Ergebnisse zu erhalten." Ibid., 2.

25 "In all diesen Experimentierzentren wie auch in den Konzentrationslagern im allgemeinen bestätigt sich eines der Merkmale des Nazismus: die völlige Mißachtung und Verneinung der menschlichen Person." Ibid., 5.

26 Ibid., 2.

work of witnessing and remembering shows the sense of urgency and responsibility they felt toward the past. Many additional documents in the ITS and in private family archives, like that of the Kopaniak family, bear witness to the DPs' extraordinary initiative and energy, their deep dedication to the work, and their attachment to the ITS.²⁷ The Kopaniak family is exemplary of this profound connection. Alexander Kopaniak came to Arolsen from Peckelsheim in the summer of 1946 by bike because he had heard that there was work in Arolsen at the ITS. After having been wounded in the war as an officer in the Polish army, spending more than five years as a prisoner of war, and narrowly surviving a death march, Kopaniak was eager to contribute his education and intelligence in order to help build up the archive. After marrying a young German, who was one of only ten Germans employed in those early years at the ITS, Alexander and Johanna Kopaniak made the ITS their lives' work, with the archive in turn becoming a new home for them. Alexander Kopaniak, who proved to be one of the pillars of the archive, was quickly promoted to head the general documentation section. Johanna Kopaniak, meanwhile, was appointed personnel manager and head of administration in 1953, becoming at just thirty-one the first and only German and the only woman in a managerial position. The personnel files of the employees at the *Arolsen Archives* contain many documents that show how well she and the directors, especially the highly successful Albert de Cocatrix, who led the ITS first as deputy director and then as director from 1970 until 1977, worked together to mediate conflicts among employees, assist with letters to lawyers, and even contact family members when employees needed help.



Birthday Celebration in the ITS office, 1972 | *Private Collection of the Kopaniak Family*

27 I conducted several oral interviews with Johanna Kopaniak and her two younger children from 2015 on and the Kopaniak family generously shared photographs and letters with me from their private collection.

Two photos from the 1960s reveal what kind of position Johanna Kopaniak held within the ITS. The first shows the tall woman among her colleagues looking directly at the camera, smiling and relaxed as director de Cocatrix on the right and three of her colleagues on the left look at her intently. They are colleagues from the personnel department, smiling approvingly in, it seems, an atmosphere of friendly respect. Johanna Kopaniak is clearly the focus of the picture just as she often seems to have been in the center of the ITS in her quiet and unassuming way.



Official picture in front of the ITS main building, 1965 | *ITS Photo Collection, Arolsen Archives*

The second picture is an official photo from 1965 in front of the new ITS building. Again, it is Johanna Kopaniak who is the only woman in the middle among department heads and directors Burckhardt and de Cocatrix. Kopaniak sticks out even more because while a number of other women are in front of her and the directors, they sit lower on make-shift benches made of planks on top of what seem to be filing boxes, with some of them having to uncomfortably angle their legs in their slim fitting skirts, almost like children in a family photograph. Johanna Kopaniak is clearly above them in rank and, due to her outstanding work, just as central in the ITS as the directors. The photo from the personal archive of the Kopaniaks and the official photo in front of the new ITS building seem very much aligned in the way they center Johanna Kopaniak. The seamless matching of the personal and the public creates a type of authenticity of purpose that went beyond facts and goals and took people's perceptions and emotional investment into account. For the Kopaniaks, as for other DP employees at the ITS, the personal and the professional seem to have aligned in deeply satisfying ways.

As important as the Kopaniaks were for the ITS from its beginnings, their own lives in turn revolved around the archive: administrative director Bales was the best man at their wedding, they socialized with other DPs from the ITS, and their children would spend their

afternoons in the archive, doing their homework in between the filing cabinets. Thomas Kopaniak, their youngest son, told me that he can still remember the smell of the old documents, which was so familiar to him and his siblings. The Kopaniaks thus escaped the ostracization they experienced in the conservative town of Arolsen by building a new family and community for themselves in the ITS. Their efforts were supported by director Albert de Cocatrix, whose successful tenure at the ITS in the 1970s was also partly due to his efforts to encourage support and community among his employees at the ITS. In a country that took Johanna Kopaniak's citizenship away when she married a stateless foreigner and in a town that was hostile to the ITS and to the DPs, who seemed to remind citizens daily of their stained past, the Kopaniaks succeeded in building a new life for themselves against all odds.²⁸ In many ways, their story is the story of the ITS: a story of hope, humanity and generosity of spirit.

Aside from the special light these stories cast on their resilience and courage, the fact that many of the DPs seem to have recreated family and family-like structures in the ITS is also important from a memorial point of view and for the role of the archive as a *memorial institution*. According to Jan and Aleida Assmann, the family is the privileged site of *memorial transmission*, where what they call *communicative memory* is passed on from the people who experienced the events to the next generations.²⁹ In contrast to *cultural/archival memory* that is transgenerational and relies on symbolic systems, the family is the place where memory is mediated through embodied practice. Following Marianne Hirsch's work on "how certain stories and certain histories circulate through a generation where some people feel drawn to them, being responsible and holding them and caring for them to hand them down," I want to show how the DPs often set up meaningful personal connections and family-like structures that helped ensure memorial transmission of the personal and embodied stories that were in great danger of getting lost in the massive amounts of documents in the ITS.³⁰

A good example of how these connections worked is Vilma Andersons, who seems to have felt a similar family loyalty to the ITS as the Kopaniaks did. Andersons was a Latvian teacher ordered to leave her home in 1944 because of the approaching Red Army and then forced to work as a slave laborer in a factory in Germany. After the war, she worked for UNRRA and then for the US Zonal Tracing Bureau in Esslingen before she came to Arolsen. Quickly promoted from clerk to case reviewer to tracing officer in charge of 25 people, she was subsequently made head of the children's tracing division in 1955. Her dedication and work ethic, like that of many other DPs who stayed in Arolsen and made a new life for themselves, had a great influence on the people who came into contact with her. While we don't have documents in Vilma Andersons's own voice in the ITS archive, we do have records of her work in her personnel file and additional documentation in the form of witness accounts. Her personnel file also contains two obituaries from January 2000, which testify to the respect and friendship with which she was regarded in the ITS and in Bad Arolsen. One obituary is from the director and the staff members of the ITS and one

28 In my interview with Johanna Kopaniak, she speaks about overheard conversations at the hairdresser and other occasions where people expressed their resentment against the DPs and their families who were perceived as intruders by many Arolser.

29 Aleida Assmann: *Cultural Memory and Western Civilization: Functions, Media, Archives*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

30 Ayşe Gül Altınay and Andrea Pető: "Gender, Memory and Connective Genocide Scholarship: A Conversation with Marianne Hirsch", in *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 22.4, 11, 2015, 386–396.

is from “Her Friends” to “our dear Vilma Andersons” who passed away after a “fulfilled life.” The personnel manager made sure to include these obituaries in Vilma Andersons’ personnel file together with two articles from the local newspapers about her and her volunteer work at the local art museum almost like a family would preserve documents like these. These personal words of farewell bear witness to the way that Vilma Andersons, who had lost her entire family in the war, was able to find new connections and a new family in the town that had been extremely ambivalent about housing the ITS in the first place.³¹

Andersons not only overcame animosities on the part of the local citizens of Arolsen but she also passed her humanity on to the young employees who she trained. One of these employees was Margret Schlenke, a young German woman who began working in the ITS in 1970. Trained by Vilma Andersons, Schlenke is a witness to the dedication and passion that many employees in the ITS felt.³² In an oral interview from October 2018, Schlenke conveyed the deep respect that young German employees felt for the DPs who were their supervisors: “The DPs were always friendly to us. I don’t know if they had forgiven us but they were always open to us and wanted to help and train us well.”³³ The generosity of spirit that the DPs showed these young women, children of their oppressors, seems to have instilled an extraordinary work ethic and commitment in the employees. Schlenke describes: “It was extremely satisfying to be able to bring families back together, the sense that one could help.”³⁴ In a sense, the DPs almost created substitute familial bonds in the ITS in order to be able to pass their direct, bodily, and affective connections to the past on to their descendants, in their case their employees. Because the victims’ familial connections were destroyed in the Holocaust, the surviving DPs strove to reactivate and reembody memorial transmission processes in other ways. In fact, Marianne Hirsch, building on the work of Jan and Aleida Assmann, has pointed out “how the break in transmission resulting from traumatic historical events necessitates forms of remembrance that reconnect and reembody an intergenerational fabric that has been severed by catastrophe”.³⁵ Hirsch shows how photographs and even works of art can become pieces that reconnect the next generation to the past. In the case of the DPs in the ITS, bonds to the past were mediated by new familial structures that the DPs established. In particular, the DPs wanted their employees to feel a strong connection

31 See my article “Women in the Archive”, and Bernd Joachim Zimmer’s International Tracing Service in Bad Arolsen for the early years of the ITS in Arolsen on Arolsen’s past.

Michael Winkelmann gives a good overview of the anti-Semitism in Arolsen during and after the war.

See Michael Winkelmann: *Auf einmal sind sie weggemacht: Lebensbilder Arolser Juden im 20. Jahrhundert. Eine Dokumentation*, Kassel: Jenior und Pressler, 1992. Available at:

<https://hds.hebis.de/ubks/Record/HEB20431688X>. Last accessed: 20.8.2019.

32 German employees began to be hired in the early 50s when there was a shortage of workers in the ITS after more and more DPs and international employees left. They were usually young women who only did secretarial work at first and in the early years were even physically separated from the original files in separate rooms for security reasons. (See my article “Women in the Archive”.)

33 “Die DPs haben uns immer freundlich behandelt. Ich weiß nicht, ob sie uns verziehen hatten, aber sie waren immer offen für uns und wollten uns helfen und uns ausbilden.“ (Personal Interview, October 2018)

34 “Das Zusammenführen von Familien war ungeheuer befriedigend, das Gefühl helfen zu können. Was man da erlebt hat, war unbeschreiblich.”

35 Marianne Hirsch: “The Generation of Postmemory”, in *Poetics Today*, vol. 29, no.1, 2008, 103-128, here 110.

and responsibility to the victims whose fates were being preserved in the archive and they inadvertently reinvested the archive with resonant individual and familial forms of mediation. Often these forms of mediation, such as organization principles, reading and evaluation strategies, and correspondence and communication practices, were based on language and aesthetic expression.

In fact, one of the remarkable points that the employees had to learn about tracing work was that this task demanded an extraordinary amount of attention to language and tone. From Vilma Andersons and others who trained her, Margret Schlenke learned that it was not enough to write to institutions asking for information about a certain case; these kinds of requests were seldom successful. Instead, writing these letters was an art, she says, "one had to write differently, with more detail and with lots of context, so that the administrator would connect to the person about whom we needed the information. Business letters or standardized forms were never successful. You had to bring it [the case/the request] home to an official. You had to do this with heart."³⁶ It is precisely this attention to language and to the emotional undertones of the letters, the care to transform the case from a file number to an actual human being that made a search successful. It seems as if the DPs understood instinctively that one of the big tasks that the Germans had to do after the war was to unlearn the dehumanizing Nazi language, displayed in its most extreme excesses on the forms of the concentration and labor camps. Setting up instead a practice of compassion and empathy, practices that were and are also reflected in the language and procedures at the ITS from the early years on was something in which the DPs played an essential role.

Inadvertently, the tone that the DPs set and the work ethic and responsibility they took for narrating the victims' stories changed the archive and provided it with additional layers and depths. The authenticity that the archive was supposed to provide took on a different form. The focus was not only on facts and correctness but it also included a commitment to narrative and depth. This commitment was often ensured through relationships and family-like connections within the archive that were able to reactivate and preserve the lived knowledge of the surviving victims and DPs. Schlenke says: "This [the searching] never stopped to grip me; often I sat at the computer late at night and thought about what I could say and *how* I should say it."³⁷ The DPs and the employees trained themselves to take the time and care to dig up what was underneath the surface, deep inside the document, in order to reactivate and reembody the knowledge that would have been lost otherwise. This is what makes the ITS unique: the specific responsibility toward the material and the different reading strategies that the DPs practiced from the very beginning of the archive.

The materials in the ITS are often hard to read and to interpret and always have been, even for the DPs who first dealt with them after the war. They are unique in their rawness, in their incompleteness and their brokenness. From the beginning it took people who had a special connection to the victims and an embodied knowledge of the past to decipher them, people who knew that the missing pieces, the almost incomprehensible mix of languages and the faded color tell the real stories of the victims of National

36 "Man musste anders schreiben, ausführlicher und mehr Hintergrund geben, damit die Beamten sich dann auch einsetzten für die Person. Geschäftsmäßige Briefe oder gar Formblätter waren nie erfolgreich. Man musste das den Bearbeitern nahebringen. Das musste mit Herz gemacht werden."

37 "Mich hat das nie losgelassen, oftmals habe ich abends am Computer gesessen und überlegt, was ich sagen sollte und wie."

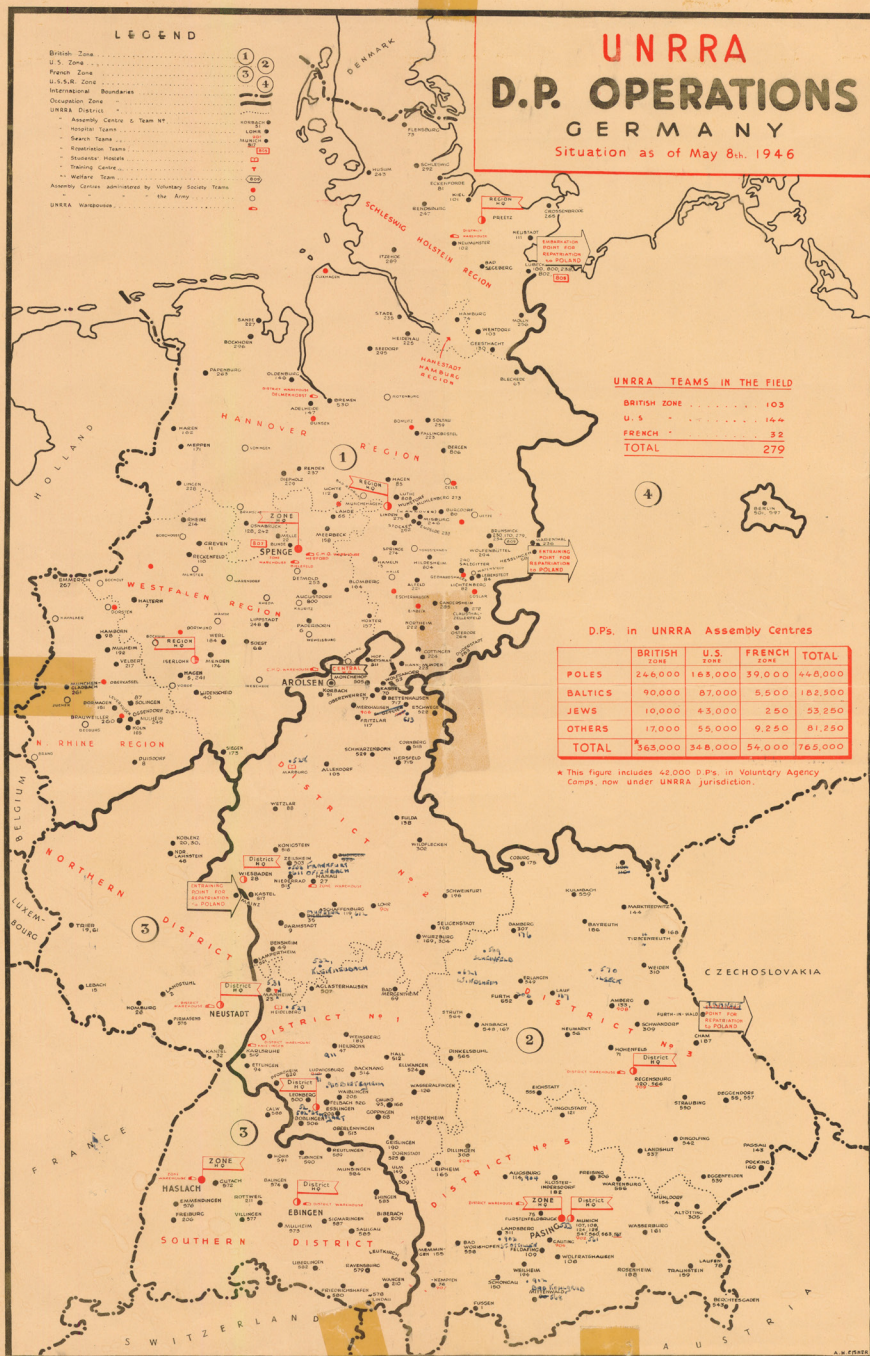
Socialism. In their damaged nature we find the humanity of the documents and in their incomprehensibility, we can begin to grasp not only the extent of the suffering but also the courage of the DPs to survive and rebuild. The DPs were the ideal people to reconstruct these stories and to mend the broken links of memorial transmission between individuals and the family, between the family and the social group, and between social group and cultural/archival memory. They were active players who not only fought to build a new life for themselves and their fellow DPs under difficult circumstances in Arolsen but also to set up archival structures and practices that are unique because they encourage us to read differently, to look closer and to excavate meaning hidden deep in the inner layers of the papers. In my reading of the files, I attempted to mirror what the DPs often did when they searched for traces of a person's identity and past. I tried to examine exemplary photographs and documents at very close range, peeling away layer after layer of meaning and complicating the message. Reading differently and seeing differently was something that the DPs began to practice right after 1945 in the ITS. It helped the employees who came after the DPs in the ITS find a connection to the victims who were so different from them and to become co-witnesses to the suffering even though they had not been there. In a sense, the reading of the people who learned from the DPs and our reading in the volume is the reading of the second, third, or even fourth generation and a type of postmemory in Marianne Hirsch's use of the term. By reinvesting the files with resonant individual and familial forms of mediation and finding forms of expression that were ideally suited to build connections, the DPs began to create a new language with which generations that had not directly experienced the past could begin to connect to it. The DPs' work in the ITS is ongoing in the *Arolsen Archives* with the recent name change of the ITS to *Arolsen Archives: International Center on Nazi Persecution* reflecting the continuing mission of the archive to "provide opportunities for people to engage with their hearts and minds (*Angebote schaffen die Herz und Kopf erreichen*)" [my own translation], as director Floriane Azoulay puts it in the announcement on April 2019.³⁸ In this way, the DPs and the people who come after them have made the archive into a *living body of memory*, they have contributed to replacing a language of cruelty and instrumentalization with one of deep human expression, and they have helped to reverse the dehumanization of millions of victims of National Socialism.

38 "ITS wird Arolsen Archives". Available at: <https://arolsen-archives.org/news/its-wird-arolsen-archives>. Last accessed: 30.8.2019.

Documents from the Arolsen Archives

The following documents from the *Arolsen Archives* provide an insight into the registration, repatriation, and emigration of DPs in the post-war period. Most were mentioned in the previous articles and refer directly to Arolsen. If you are interested in learning more about the original context of the documents, we recommend our e-Guide:

<https://eguide.arolsen-archives.org/en>



UNRRA
Central Headquarters for Germany
APO 757 Baor

Registry card **Labour office**

Name KOWALIK, JAN Date started 1.7.46

Nationality POLISH Clearance by CIC _____

Date of birth 28.8.1910 Medical examination yes

Place of birth SKOCZÓW (POLAND Reassignments

Address D.P. CAMP KORBACH

Department	from	to
D.P. OFFICE	1.7.46	24.9.46
SUPPLY DEPT	25.9.46	

Profession TEACHER

Occupation CLERK

Marital status single Tbc

Date of discharge: 20.1.47
(Datum der Entlassung) 13

2

Document 1

Locations and operational areas of the *United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration* (UNRRA) in Germany under Allied Control, 8.5.1946, 10.15.52/ ITS Archive, Arolsen Archives.

Document 2

Registration card issued to Jan Kowalik by the personnel bureau of the UNRRA Headquarters, 1.7.1946, ITS Administrative Archive, Personnel File for Jan Kowalik, ITS Archive, Arolsen Archives.

Some of the DPs working for the Tracing Service or at the UNRRA CHQ in Arolsen were living in the neighboring towns of Korbach, Rhoden or Landau – one of them was Jan Kowalik who, having been employed with UNRRA since July 1946, started working for the ITS in the summer of 1949.

ORIGINAL

562812 *

UNITED NATIONS DISPLACED PERSON/REFUGEE

IDENTITY CARD

For resident of International Refugee

Organization (IRO) Assembly Center
U. P. Lab. Comp. 5th Arsenal

POLUBINSKI

ROMAN

Date of Birth 7 Feb 14

Name (Familie)

Vorname

Geburtsdatum

Height
Grösse

Cm. 171

Weight
Gewicht

Kgs. 55

Hair
Haar

BROWN

Eyes
Augen

GRAY

Nationality
Nationalität

Polish

Sex
Geschlecht

M

Identifying Marks
Besondere Merkmale

SPARROW

RIGHT EYE

Roman Polubinski

Holder's Signature

Inhabers Unterschrift

Roman Polubinski

Validating Officer / Ausstellungsbehörde

APPROVED

RO
CAP
S-5



RK
INF.
M.P.

Fingerprints
Fingerabdrücke

Right Index
R. Zeigefinger



Left Index
L. Zeigefinger



Official Stamp
tlicher Stempel

Date
Datum

AT #1

TRACING

10 FEB 1946

ORIGINAL 565603 *

UNITED NATIONS DISPLACED PERSON/REFUGEE
IDENTITY CARD
 For resident of International Refugee
 Organization (IRO) Assembly Center
 Training Center Arolsen

TROCHIMIUK, Maria *Marriage*
 Name (Familie) Vorname Date of Birth *11.11.25*
 Geburtsdatum


Height Cm. 159 Weight Kgs. 59 Hair black Eyes brown
 Grösse Gewicht Haar Augen

Nationality Polish 19 Sex F
 Nationalität Geschlecht

Trochimiuk Maria
 Holder's Signature / Inhabers Unterschrift

...
 Validating Officer / Ausstellungsbehörde

APPROVED



ARK
INF
K.M.P.

Fingerprints
 Fingerabdrücke

Right Index
 R. Zeigefinger

Left Index
 L. Zeigefinger

Official Stamp
 Amtlicher Stempel

12-FEB 1948
 Datum

AROLSEN

4

Document 3

DP Identity Card (IRO) issued on 10.2.1948 to Roman Polubinski, residing at DP Labor Camp 511 Arolsen, 3.1.1.1/68661868/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.

Universal ID cards like this one were issued to individuals living in a DP camp. Their owners were expected to always carry them with them.

Document 4

DP identity card (IRO) issued on 12.2.1948 to Maria Trochimiuk (Makuch), registered at the [Vocational] Training Center Arolsen, 3.1.1.1/68146089/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.

LEGAL AND POLITICAL PROTECTION ONLY

C.M.1-548771

Annex A to Administrative Order 29.

APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE

PCIRO

K 61

1. BLASZCZYK 4. 18.12.48 5. 693652
Family Name / Familienname Date / Datum Identity No. / Ausweis Nr.

2. _____ 6. Polish
Other spelling or aliases / Anderer Name Nationality / Nationalität

3. R. C. ☒ Prot. ☐ Jew. ☐ Other ☐ 7. S. ☒ M. ☐ Sep. ☐ D. ☐ Wid. ☐ Un. C. ☐
R. K. Religion Jud. Andere Led. Verh. Gert. Gesch. Ww. Alleinsth. Kind
Marital Status / Familienstand

8. Names / Name	Relationship to head of family / Verwandtschaftsgrad z. d. Familienhaupt	Date of birth / Geburtsdatum	Nationality / Staatsangehörigkeit / Nationalität	Town, province and country of birth / Geburtsort, Bezirk, Staat
(1) <u>Joey</u>		<u>9.1.1916</u>	<u>Polish</u>	<u>Herne - Germany</u>
(2) _____				
(3) _____				
(4) _____				
(5) _____				
(6) _____				
(7) _____				

9. Other Members of Family / Andere Familienmitglieder

a. Full Names / Volle Namen

b. _____

c. Resettlement Check AUSTRALIA
Date 18.7.50 2488

Resettlement Check USA
Date 21 Nov 50 286

d. Control Center Officer

e. Control Center Officer
IRO Control Center Frankfurt a.M.

10. Places of residence for last 12 years / Aufenthaltsorte seit den letzten 12 Jahren

For whom / Für	Dates / Datum	Town or village, province and country / Stadt, Dorf, Bezirk, Staat
<u>Joey</u>	<u>1936-39</u>	<u>Kanar - Poland</u>
	<u>1939-45</u>	<u>Prisoner of War in Germany -</u>
	<u>1945-46</u>	<u>Polish Military Camp for Displaced</u>
	<u>1946-47</u>	<u>Polish Guard Company - Korbach</u>
	<u>1947-48</u>	<u>U.S. Camp 593 Kassel</u>

11. Employment for last 12 years, including present / Beschäftigung in den letzten 12 Jahren, bis heute

For whom / Für	Dates / Datum	Type of work / Beschäftigungsart	Wages / Gehalt oder Lohn	Employer / Arbeitgeber	Town, province and country / Stadt, Bezirk u. Staat	Reason change / Warum den Arbeitsplatz geändert
<u>Joey</u>	<u>1936-37</u>	<u>Military School</u>			<u>Poland</u>	
<u>*</u>	<u>1937-39</u>		<u>350</u>		<u>Kanar</u>	
	<u>1939</u>	<u>Sgt. cadet off.</u>		<u>Army</u>		
	<u>1939-45</u>	<u>Prisoner of War</u>		<u>in Germany</u>		
	<u>1946-47</u>	<u>Pol. Guard Comp.</u>	<u>660</u>	<u>U.S. Army</u>	<u>Korbach - Germany</u>	
	<u>1947-50</u>	<u>Infantry Company</u>		<u>U.S. Army</u>	<u>Kassel</u>	

5.49

Cases reviewed

ITS IRD

Problem

A.E.F. D.P. REGISTRATION RECORD

Original ☒ Duplicate ☐

For coding purposes
A. B. C. D. E. F. G. H. I. L.

Dr. THIERY Akos

M. ☒ Single ☐ Married ☒ stateless
F. ☐ Widowed ☐ Divorced ☐ ~~Under 18 (in Hungary)~~

(2) Family Name: 22.07.1909 Temesvar Rumania (3) Sex: (4) Marital Status: r.cath. (5) Claimed Nationality: 2
(6) Birthdate: 22.07.1909 Birthplace: Temesvar Province: Country: Rumania (7) Religion (Optional): r.cath. (8) Number of Accompanying Family Members: 2
(9) Number of Dependents: Carles Thiery Irma Witenberger (10) Full Name of Father: (11) Full Maiden Name of Mother: ~~OR RESIDENCE IN HUNGARY 1938~~
(12) DESIRED DESTINATION: U.S.A. or Brasilia (13) LAST PERMANENT RESIDENCE: Budapest Hungary
City or Village: Province: Country: City or Village: Province: Country:
Accountant-teacher Industrial-University
(14) Usual Trade, Occupation or Profession: (15) Performed in What Kind of Establishment: (16) Other Trades or Occupations:
Hung., Engl., Germ., Rum., French (18) Do You Claim to be a Prisoner of War: ☒ ☐
a. Ital., b. Latin c. Yes No (19) Amount and Kind of Currency in your Possession
(20) Signature of Registrant: (21) Signature of Registrar: RAISON Date: 19.3.48 Assembly Center No. Arolsen
(22) Destination or Reception Center: RESETTLED TO U.S.A. ON 5.5.50
(23) Code for Issue: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28
Name or Number: City or Village: Province: Country:
(24) REMARKS: HELENE-FRAU JUDITH-TOCHTER DR-2
From CP to Arolsen (R. 35.3.48-5)
From Arolsen to Arolsen (R. 41.4.48-2)

Document 5

Application (CM/1) for IRO assistance, submitted by Josef Blaszczyk, 12.2.1948, 3.2.1.1/78943013/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.

The IRO used to check thoroughly whether persons applying for assistance were in fact eligible, i.e. had a genuine right to receive the agency's support. Accordingly, applicants had to fill in forms like the one shown here.

Document 6

DP 2 card issued on 19.3.1948 to Akos Thiery, residing in the DP Camp section of the Vocational Training Center Arolsen, 3.1.1.1/69452785/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.

DP 2 cards were used to register DPs and issued twice per person: while the original was kept in the camp for administrative purposes, a duplicate was transferred to the CTB to be used for tracing.

SUMMARY OF D.P. POPULATION
IRO ASSEMBLY CENTERS UNITED STATES ZONE

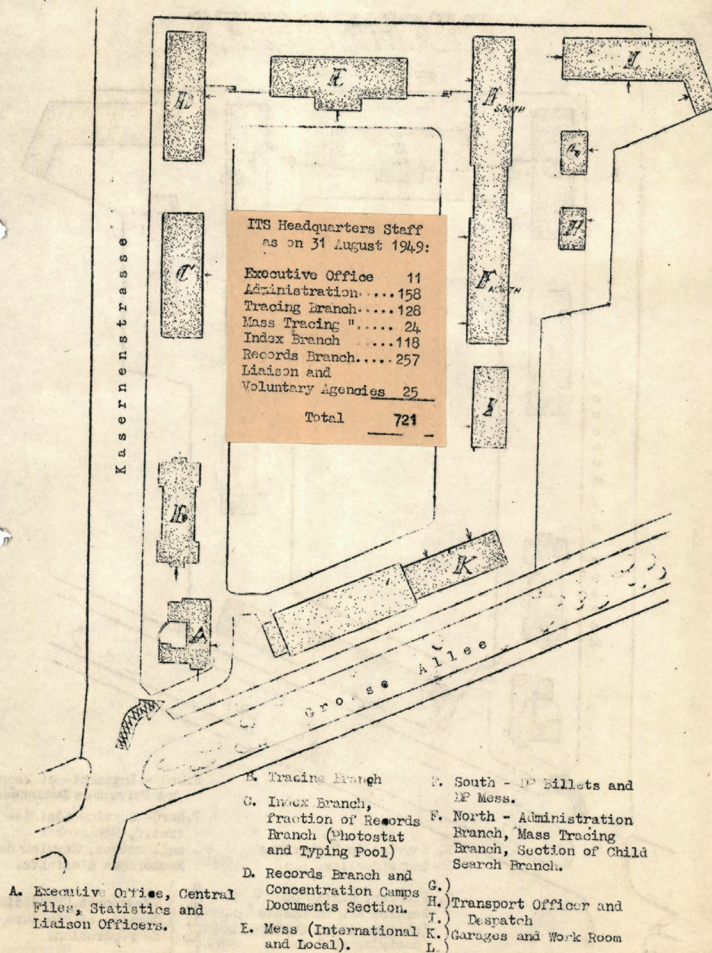
AREA	AC NO.	CAMP NAME CAMP LOCATION	LANDERIES	OO-ORDS	CAMP- CITY	EST. LAWF. LITM. SEN	NON- SEN	ROL- AND	USR.	USUR	YURO	YTHRS	JWS	TOTAL
H.Q.														
MIL. POST														
AREA No. 1.	K-103	Moncheberg	Kassel	O-2020	1610			7					1440	1447
FRANKFURT	K-114	Rocheille	Witzenhausen	H-3594	1400	1							1083	1084
MIL. POST	K-115	Eschenstruth	"	H-3990	650								346	346
WETZLAR	K-116	Gold Cup	"	"	1050			5					623	628
	K-104	Hess Lichtemau	"	"	410								353	353
	K-105	Hess Lichtemau	Hofgeismar	O-1523	1500		2	6					1003	1011
	K-117	Kaserne Hofgeismar	"	"	2700								2032	2032
	K-163	Hofgeismar	Eschwege	H-6280	134	2	4	5	1	11	3	2	79	107
	K-105	Air Base	Ziegenhain	H-0657	1200	14		15	766	10	4	143		952
		TB Hospital	Waldeck	G-7997										
		Stolmatel												
		Conti												
	K-131	Korbach	"	B-8708	200	5	32	14	120	31	3	22	20	241
	K-151	I.T.S. Employees Camp	"	"	700	15	83	134	156	139	29	16	469	726
		Arolsen												
	K-118	Area V.T. School												
		Arolsen												
		Walter Kaserne	Fritzlar	H-0883	1000		1	3					45	472
	K-161	TB & General Hospital	Wolfhagen	H-0694	460	9	49	88	50	21	12	14	45	352
	K-125	Marbach	Marburg	G-9751	1000	5	835	7	2					850
		Stedhel Kaserne												
		Neustadt												
		TOTAL MILITARY POST WETZLAR :				151	2431	2432	329	2370	432	425	615	27568
		TOTAL AREA No. 1, FRANKFURT :				892	4987	5420	397	3170	4108	525	813	38079

Document 7

Summary of D.P. Population IRO Assembly Centers United States Zone (extract),
31.12.1948, 3.1.1.0/82383946/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.

PLAN OF THE NEW HEADQUARTERS OF ITS

Arolsen, 1st May, 1949



Document 8

Plan of the *International Tracing Service* (ITS) as well as the DP housing on the site of the former barracks, 1949, 6.1.1/82505819/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.

MS. 8.5.50

NAME: *B o d e , Boris* DP. *83*
SEX: *m.*

NATIONALITY: *Nansen*

E. O. D.: *1. June 1949*

BIRTHDATE: *1. 1. 04*

SECTION: *Records Branch, Conc. Camp Sect.*

TITLE & GRADE: *Asst. to Chief* K ~~11~~ *5-1.2.50*

LANGUAGES: *Russian, Czech, German, French, littl. Englis*

TYPING: SHORTHAND:

MARITAL STATUS: *Married, wife and 2 children (2 and 8 ys*

PROFESSION: *of tobacco AOK* *287*

P. T. O.

9

Document 9

ITS labor card for Boris Bode. He worked at the ITS from June 1949 until February 1950, in the *Concentration Camp Documents* section among others, ITS Administrative Archive, Personnel file Boris Bode, ITS Archive, Arolsen Archives.

Document 10

IRO Registration Form on the Resettlement of Franciszek Wenda, 10.9.1951, 3.2.1.1/79911835/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.

421349

Duplicate

I. R. O.

RESETTLEMENT REGISTRATION FORM

1. EMIGRATION TO USA		AREA Frankfurt Office		DATE 30.8.1951
2. WENDA Franciszek ✓		3. H 4968/638968 ✓		
Family Name		First	DP Identity or referral slip	CM I No. and Name if different
4. Arolsen, Kasernenstrasse 15		5. Polish		
Present Address		Nationality		
6. 4.4.1897 ✓	Lutowko	.poland	7. May 1942	
Birth Date	Birth Place	Town	Province	Date arrived in Germany
8. r.c.	9. male	10. single	11. free living	
Religion	Sex: MF	Marital Status: SMW.	Camp or Free-Living	

12. ACCOMPANYING FAMILY MEMBERS	RELATIONSHIP TO HEAD	DATE OF BIRTH	NATIONALITY	TOWN PROVINCE AND COUNTRY OF BIRTH
(Maiden Name if wife)				

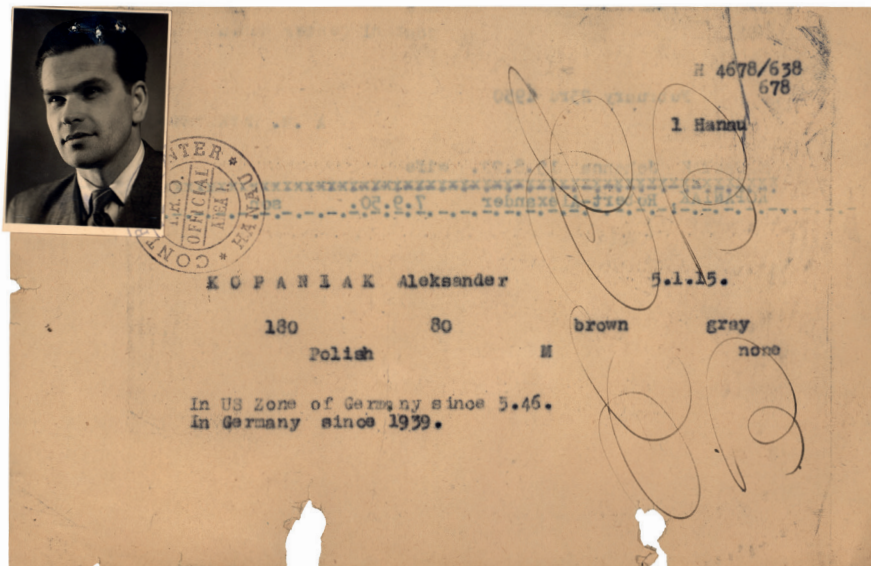
Reg. Reg. Form copy retained by Control Center Area 2 on **10 Sep 1951**

Handwritten signature: [unclear]

13. EMPLOYMENT FOR LAST 12 YEARS BEGINNING WITH PRESENT			
DATES	TYPE OF WORK	EMPLOYER	TOWN, PROVINCE AND COUNTRY
10.46- now	Parish Priest		Arolsen, Germany
10.46-5.46	inmate of	DP Camp	Rhoden, Germany
5.46-2.46	inmate of	DP Camp	Landau, Germany
2.46-12.45	inmate of	DP Camp	Bremen-Tirpitz, "
11.45-7.45	unemployed		Braunschweig, Cafe Braun
7.45-3.45	unemployed		Ringelheim, Presbytery
3.45-1.45	on the way to	Ringelheim, Brit. Zone	
12.44-5.42	unemployed		Buchenwalde, Germany
5.42-1.42	unemployed		Lacyn, Poland
12.41-1939	imprisoned		Torum, Poland

14. EDUCATION			
DATES	TYPE OF SCHOOL	TOWN, PROVINCE AND COUNTRY	CERTIFICATES OR DEGREES
1906-08	primary school	Lutowko, Poland	
1908-17	High school	Choinice, "	
1917-21	Theolog. Seminary	pelplin, "	

LANGUAGES SPOKEN **Polish, German, English**LANGUAGES READ **X** **X**LANGUAGES WRITTEN **X** **X**



11

Document 11

Carbon copy of the IRO Certificate of Eligibility for Alexander Kopaniak, issued by IRO Control Center Hanau on 23.2.1950, 3.2.1.1/79313498/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.

Document 12

Nominal roll of persons emigrating to Australia via Naples, 19.3.1950, 3.1.3.2/81712691/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.

Train No. of Rail Certif. of No.	Date of Select.	CM-1 No.	Family	NAMES	First	Religion	Country of birth	Mar. status	Date of birth	Country of birth	Place of birth	Zone or field Off. of origin	
MARRIED COUPLES													
70.	125011	28.2.	4734	ADAMCZYK	Stanislaw	S	Poland	R. Cath.	M	12. Oct. 1923	Poland	Bachennock	AZG-3 S Watzemborn
71.	125012	28.2.	4734	ADAMCZYK	Gertrud	S	Poland	Evang.	M	27. May 1927	Germany	Watzemborn	AZG-3 S "
72.	083297	13.1.	565012	BEEZINS (NC)	Fricis-Augusts	C	Latvia	Evang.	M	9. May 1921	Latvia	Riga	AZG-3 Arlsen
73.	083298	13.1.	565012	BEEZINS	Silvijs	C	Latvia	Evang.	M	7. Apr. 1921	Latvia	Riga	AZG-3 "
74.	083917	30.1.	634917	CISINSKY (NC)	Adam	S	Poland	R. Cath.	M	28. Apr. 1912	Poland	Chorzelow	AZG-2 S Mannheim
75.	083918	30.1.	634917	CISINSKY	Margareta	S	Poland	Ev. Luth.	M	9. Jul. 1905	Germany	Mannheim	AZG-2 S "
76.	125220	27.2.	06261	CZEKANSKI	Stanislaw	S	Poland	R. Cath.	M	8. May 1924	Poland	Law	AZG-2 S Stuttgart
77.	125221	27.2.	06261	CZEKANSKI	Noelije	S	Poland	Evang.	M	29. May 1921	Holland	Burgerflotbr.	AZG-2 S "
78.	084483	22.2.	632061	DOROZNIJ (NC)	Borys	C	Ukraine	Orth.	M	15. Dec. 1900	Poland	Stanislawow	AZG-2 Ettligen
79.	084484	22.2.	632061	DOROZNIJ	Nadia	C	Ukraine	Orth.	M	28. Feb. 1906	Poland	Stanislawow	AZG-2 "
80.	084768	28.2.	703934	HOLOVIC	Vojtech	C	CSR	R. Cath.	M	12. Dec. 1914	CSR	Batrovice	AZG-2 Uim/Danube
81.	085769	28.2.	703934	HOLOVIC	Judmila	C	CSR	R. Cath.	M	29. Sep. 1929	CSR	Litomyal	AZG-2 "
82.	084453	22.2.	K 4604	IVANOW	Juri	S	USSR	Orth.	M	28. Sep. 1913	USSR	Kowno	AZG-3 S Alsfeld
83.	084454	22.2.	K 4604	IVANOW	Anna	S	USSR	Orth.	M	31. Dec. 1918	Ukraine	Tomrunk	AZG-3 S "
84.	083242	5.1.	615244	KALIN	Borys	S	Poland	Orth.	M	16. Dec. 1910	Poland	Kobryn	AZG-3 S Frankfurt
85.	083243	5.1.	615244	KALIN	Marianna	S	Poland	R. Cath.	M	19. Jul. 1922	Germany	Mainz	AZG-3 S "
86.	125035	30.3.	622031	KISZKUNO	Mieczyslaw	S	Poland	R. Cath.	M	12. Dec. 1919	Poland	Olkowice	AZG-3 S Langendieba
87.	125088	30.3.	622031	KISZKUNO	Waldetrudis	S	Poland	R. Cath.	M	3. Apr. 1926	Germany	Choffeschuetz	" S Witz-Hausen
88.	074524	22.2.	982930	NEWRIVA (NC)	Jindrich	C	CSR	R. Cath.	M	27. Apr. 1911	CSR	Bedice	AZG-2 Ludwigsburg
89.	074525	22.2.	982930	NEWRIVA	Mario	C	CSR	R. Cath.	M	27. Jun. 1921	CSR	Miklasovice	AZG-2 "

MARRIED COUPLES

20/81

About the Authors

Prof. Dr. Silke von der Emde is Associate Professor of German Studies at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York, where she teaches German language and literature, Women Studies, and Film. She is the author of *Entering History: Feminist Dialogues in Irmtraud Morgner's Prose* (Peter Lang, 2004), as well as several articles on memory, archive, GDR literature, feminist theory, and German film. She has also co-published, together with Jeffrey Schneider, articles on foreign language pedagogy. She is currently working on a book project tentatively entitled *Gendered Pasts: Women, Memory and Coming to Terms with the German Past(s)*.

Dr. Christian Höschler is a historian and Deputy Head of Research and Education at the *Arolsen Archives*. He works on the history of the Second World War and its consequences (with a particular focus on the situation of DPs in the postwar period), the history of tracing and documenting Nazi victims, as well as educational projects surrounding the archival collections. He studied History, English, and Educational Sciences and subsequently received his PhD in Modern and Contemporary History from the University of Munich in 2017. His dissertation explored how displaced children were cared for in the IRO Children's Village in Bad Aibling (American Zone of Germany) from 1948 until 1951.

Isabel Panek is a research associate at the Research and Education Department of the *Arolsen Archives*. She has co-curated the first permanent exhibition on the history of the *Arolsen Archives*, entitled *A Paper Monument: The History of the Arolsen Archives*. Isabel Panek studied Medieval and Modern History as well as Educational Sciences in Frankfurt/Main and Leipzig. Her working field is the interface between research and education, her thematic focus being Nazi forced labor, the history of the concentration camps as well as the culture of memory and teaching of history after 1945.

Imprint

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Die Beauftragte der Bundesregierung
für Kultur und Medien

After the Second World War, a tracing service holding the world's largest collection of documents on individual victims of Nazi persecution was established in Arolsen, Northern Hesse, Germany. These were the roots of today's Arolsen Archives. However, not only did millions of documents on the victims of Nazi persecution arrive in Arolsen after 1945, so did a significant number of survivors: known as Displaced Persons (DPs), at times over 1,000 such individuals were accommodated in Arolsen and the surrounding area. Many of them had survived concentration camps, forced labor, or flight. This publication brings together new research on the history of these DPs, a subject that has received little attention to date. Special emphasis is placed on the contribution of DPs to the predecessor organizations of the Arolsen Archives – the *Central Tracing Bureau* (CTB), established in Arolsen in 1946, and subsequently the *International Tracing Service* (ITS), founded in 1948. The volume also presents a selection of documents from the Arolsen Archives, for instance those that were created in the context of registering DPs (in Arolsen). Finally, it is hoped that this publication will encourage additional research on DPs within the collections of the *Arolsen Archives*.