

Bernd G. Ulbrich

On the history of the victims of National Socialism in Dessau-Roßlau (5): Slave labour

The economy of the Nazi regime - industry, agriculture, but also service and Administrative institutions - has been heavily based on the exploitation of slave labour. These had to be withdrawn to War service replaces the lack of local labour and war production since the beginning of World War II maintain. The largest group of forced labourers were foreign civilians, so-called **civil workers**, two depending on the conditions of existence and legal status A distinction must be made between the main groups: on the one hand civil workers from Western Europe, on the other "Eastern workers" from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus. On a large scale, too Prisoners of war from Eastern and Western Europe, prisoners from concentration camps, Gestapo Prisoners, Jews, Sinti and Roma, so-called anti-socials, Jehovah's Witnesses, etc. for forced labour used. In **the late summer of 1944** there were around 5.9 million foreigners in the German Reich Workers registered, as well as **1.9 million prisoners of war from 26 countries and 400,000 Concentration camp inmates**¹ person primarily responsible for this comprehensive system of forced labour was **Fritz Sauckel**, Hitler's "General Plenipotentiary for Labour Deployment" who worked from 1935 to 1937 as provisional Reich governor for **the Braunschweig and Anhalt** region – after the death of Friedrich **Wilhelm Loeper** and before **Rudolf Jordan** came to power - also in Dessau had resided. In 1946 **Sauckel was sentenced to death in Nuremberg and hanged.**

Many thousands of forced labourers were also exploited in Dessau-Roßlau. Of the Gau employment office district Magdeburg-Anhalt registered on September 30, 1944 for the Dessau area a total of **35,987 foreign workers**, including 13,989 "Eastern workers". Among these workers were 11,343 women.² In what was then **the district Dessau-Köthen (excluding the city of Dessau-Roßlau)** was a total of 3588 at the beginning of 1941 Civilian workers and 1,340 prisoners of war employed; in August 1942 there were 4,642 Civilian workers and 1,592 prisoners of war, in July 1944 a total of 7,456 civilian workers and 1,414 Prisoners of war³. Number of foreign workers in the district area Dessau-Koethen, July 1944

	männl	weibl.
Kriegsgefangene	1414	-
Polen	21	-
Belgier	184 -	
Franzosen	438	-
Serben	134	-
Russen	184	-
Italiener	453	-

Zivilarbeiter	4607	2849
Belgier	299	62
Bulgaren	2	2

¹ Encyclopedia of National Socialism, ed. v. Wolfgang Benz, Hermann Graml and Hermann Weiß, Munich 2001, p. 814.

² Mark Spoerer: Nazi forced laborers in the German Reich, in: Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte, vol.49 (2000), p. 676.

³ Cf. LHASA, DE, KD DE-KÖT, No. 1576, fol. 9, 42, 69.

Dänen	3	4
Franzosen	413 7	
Holländer	153	14
Italiener	113	47
Jugoslawen	7	8
Polen	1850	884
Rumänen	2	1
Russen	899	1246
Schweizer	11	12
Slowaken	22	8
Tschechen	200	89
Ukrainer	603	439
Ungarn	5	1
Sonstige	25	15

The Dessau-Roßlauer slave labourers were mainly employed in the largest Arms factory in the region, in the **Junkers aircraft and engine works**. But also the Production in the Dessauer **Waggonfabrik**, in the **Berlin-Anhaltischen Maschinenbau AG (Bamag)**, in Junkers calorimeter construction, at **Polysius** (cement plant construction) and the **Housing and road construction**⁴ based in part on forced labor. Several large Barrack camps on the grounds of **City**⁵ housed most of them Workers: the **Werkheim Nord I**, built from April 1937, and the **neighboring Werkheim North II** (a total of 69 barracks, from **January 1941**) on **Burgkühnauer Allee**, the **Werkheim South** on the **Kirchbreite in Alten** (22 barracks, from **May 1941**), the barrack camp **Schlagbreite** between **Triftweg and Weststraße**, the neighboring **Brachmeierei** barracks camp **Dormitory for women** in the **Kleine Kienheide** and others

ORIGINAL GERMAN

Beschäftigt waren die Dessau-Roßlauer Zwangsarbeiter hauptsächlich im größten Rüstungsbetrieb der Region, in den Junkers-Flugzeug- und Motoren-Werken. Aber auch die Produktion in der Dessauer **Waggonfabrik**, in der **Berlin-Anhaltischen Maschinenbau AG (Bamag)**, im Junkers Kalorimeterbau, bei **Polysius** (Zementanlagenbau) sowie der Wohnungsbau und Straßenbau⁴ basierte teilweise auf Zwangsarbeit. Mehrere große Barackenlager auf dem Gelände **der Stadt**⁵ dienten zur Unterkunft des Großteils dieser Arbeitskräfte: das ab April 1937 angelegte **Werkheim Nord I** und das benachbarte **Werkheim Nord II** (insgesamt 69 Baracken, ab Januar 1941) an der **Burgkühnauer Allee**, das **Werkheim Süd** auf der **Kirchbreite in Alten** (22 Baracken, ab Mai 1941), das Barackenlager **Schlagbreite** zwischen **Triftweg und Weststraße**, das benachbarte Barackenlager **Brachmeierei**, ein **Wohnheim für Frauen** in der **Kleinen Kienheide** u.a.

Remi Lakiere lived through a characteristic fate of Western European civil workers West Flanders. At the age of 18 he was occupied on November 17, 1942 in his Registered hometown and sent to Germany for forced labour.⁶ He came after Dessau, where he worked as a mechanic in the Junkers aircraft factory until the summer of 1944. The working time was **12 hours a day**, initially on five and a half, later on six days a week. He didn't have to live in a barrack camp, he could take up quarters in a room rented by the Junkers factories. Difficult He sent his earned wages to his family in Belgium. Lakiere remembers that Forced labourers from around 14 nationalities had to work in the Junkers factories arrested them, too, with particularly poor food and barracks

Italian partisans. Some of them preferred suicide to these torments.⁷ Many came to death in the bombing of the Junkers factories on May 28 and 30, 1944.

The work of the Frenchman Viktor Bainvelzweig, born in 1917 took an unforeseen turn, an apprentice tailor and at the same time a music student from Lyon.⁸ Since he could not find work in France after his discharge from military service, reported he volunteered to work in Germany. According to his religious creed was Bainvel (Bainvelzweig) a Catholic. According to the National Socialists' racial terms, he was a full Jew. He withheld the Judaism of his ancestors from the German authorities; he erased in documents for this reason also the syllable "branch" from his family name. From July 31st 1941 to January 28, 1942 and from February 22, 1942 to May 1, 1942 Bainvelzweig employed in the Bamag office of Dessau. He lived in one

FOOTNOTES TO PAGE 2

⁴ Cf. Lennart Hellberg et al. Holger Barth: *Modernizing the City. Mass housing i National Socialism*, in: *Dessauer Calendar*, 41st year, Dessau 1997, p. 109.

⁵ See Walter Hartmann: *Housing camps for foreign forced labourers during the Second World War in Dessau*, in: *Dessauer Calendar*, 36th year, Dessau 1992, pp. 73-81; otherwise: *The procurement of specialist and unskilled workers for the German armaments industry*, Dessau 1999 (*Heimstube Alten*, issue 16).

⁶ Cf. Geert Lakiere: *Forced Laborers in Germany. My father's experiences*, Remi Lakiere im *Second World War*, in: *Dessauer Calendar*, ed. v. Stadtarchiv Dessau, year 49, Dessau 2005, pp. 30-39.

⁷ *Ibid*, p. 33 f.

⁸ See LHASA, DE, *Prison Coswig*, No. 93.

END PAGE 2

the "Werkheime", a mass accommodation for foreign civil workers in Dessau Franzstrasse. His superiors were happy with his work.

During this time, Bainvelzweig visited a Dessau brothel twice, where he Had sexual intercourse with a "German-blooded" prostitute - what from the point of view of the Nazi justice the offense of "racial disgrace" was fulfilled. The criminal chamber of the The Dessau regional court sentenced the young man on March 3, 1943 for "continued Rassenschande", forgery of documents, "flight from work" - to get yourself because of a TB disease Bainvelzweig had to go to France without permission from the authorities want to drive - as well as "deliberate handling of prisoners of war" - he had illegal with spoken to a French prisoner of war - for 5 years in prison. Meticulously Bainvelzweig's life in Dessau was targeted to avoid further "offenses" to find. Among other things, he was accused of having "dared himself as a Jew in the National Socialist daily newspaper Der Mittedeutsche to advertise about the content: Where can the French expand their language skills against French lessons?"⁹ His from this advertisement resulting contacts to two girls from Dessau who were with him Wanted to learn French were detailed for further evidence of "racial disgrace" investigated - unfortunately unsuccessful from the point of view of the prosecutor. Bainvel branch was ins Prison Coswig (Anhalt), where he, the budding tailor, was in the Had to work in patchwork. He survived that behind the walls of the institution Collapse of the Nazi regime. He went back to Lyon and called himself later Bainville.¹⁰

Foreign workers became foreign workers because of minor offenses or violations of the work regulations fined. The Belgian Josef Titz (1901-?), Who has been working in Dessau since 1941, was born in January In 1945 sentenced to one year in prison by a special court as a "pest". Man accused him of stealing a bracelet. He protested in vain, the bracelet to have found. Even the Coswig prison management came to the conclusion that Titz did not have a criminal disposition.¹¹

The Polish civilian worker Josef Neynert was fined 25 in October 1941 Reichsmark occupied because he did not like on the barracks site in Kochstedt prescribed that he had worn the "P" badge identifying him as Poland. Neynert worked in the Kochstedter barracks as a hairdresser. That a Pole has this activity at all The police who interrogated Neynert recorded that it was difficult to exercise Owing to conditions of the labor market and based on an order of the Barracks chief. This arrangement was made "out of the consideration that The "P" badge is inconsistent with a razor that the Badge bearers a few dozen times a day on the throats of all German soldiers Sets ranks in motion. Efforts to get another force for this office, have so far been unsuccessful.¹² The site commander, however, was unable to meet remember ever having given such an arrangement. In contrast to the civil workers from Western Europe, the "Eastern workers" became stricter guarded and especially inhumanly exploited. Their accommodations were primitive furnished, the food was barely sufficient for survival. That is characteristic Fate of Vladimir Voloshenko, who lived in Uman in occupied Ukraine in April 1942 was forcibly recruited directly from the street and transported to Dessau.¹³ He was then 17 years old. Voloshenko also worked in the Junkers factories. On his Work clothes he had to have a patch of fabric with the abbreviation "OST" - for "Eastern workers" -

FOOTNOTES TO PAGE 3

⁹ Ibid, fol. 8th.

¹⁰ See Johannes Berbig: Knast. Shadows and shapes of a time of suffering, Oberursel 1947, p. 216.

¹¹ LHASA, DE, Coswig prison No. 2591.

¹² LHASA, DE, KD DE-KÖT, No. 649, fol. 45.

¹³ Cf. Wladimir Sacharowitsch Woloshenko: As a forced laborer in the Junkers factories. A

Experience report, in: Dessauer Calendar, Volume 45, Dessau 2001, pp. 66-72.

END PAGE 3

wear. His quarters were pathetic mass quarters in a barrack. The Food was completely inadequate. After being caught stealing potatoes Woloshenko was sent to a prison camp in Coswig (Anhalt) for eight weeks. After the bombing of the Junkers factories in May 1944, he was in the Saxon Falkenau relocated near Chemnitz. Only the invasion of the Allies freed him from the Forced labor.

The Russian "Eastern worker" Kutschimar Glawatzki had an accident on April 8, 1944 in the Heeres-Munitionsanstalt Kapen fatal.¹⁴ Also in this one, since October 1935 In the existing business, a large part of the work had to be done by slave labour. According to statistics from February 22, 1943, there were 1150 Employed 353 forced laborers.¹⁵

Maria Poloskowa¹⁶ belonged to a group of children who died in June 1944 Belarusian village arrested as alleged relatives by partisans and after Germany had been abducted. She was then 14 years old. The children came to Dessau and worked in the Junkers factories. They lived in the Werkheim barracks camp South. After the American invasion in April 1945, they held out for a few months in Dessau, always looking for something to eat. Not until November 1945 they came back to Belarus.

Another group of children - about 300 girls and boys between the ages of 8 and 15 Years - was in a special camp housed next to the former Hindenburg barracks (Hindenburgkaserne (Ebertallee) (Ebertallee). They came from the Vitebsk area and were also considered to be presumed children of Soviet partisans.¹⁷ The girls and boys worked in the Junkerswerk were brought to and from the factory daily under SS guard. Sometimes Dessau residents secretly stuck them, in violation of a strict prohibition Food, clothes or shoes too. Towards the end of the war they were transferred to the Soviet Occupation area transported across the Elbe.

In the Dessau wagon factory since 1942, forced labourers from Russia, but also from the Netherlands, France and the Czech Republic for the production of S-Bahn or U- Rail cars used.¹⁸ They were housed in a simple barrack north of the Waggonfabrik premises. (inserted JFS Dessau I?) Since 1943 the wagon factory had to have its own production in addition to helping the Junkers aircraft and engine plants. A document dated April 1st 1944 recorded 129 English among the total of 876 workers and employees Prisoners of war.¹⁹

In order to meet the growing demand for labor, the Use of up to 500 concentration camp prisoners as forced laborers approved. The first 50 prisoners came on October 27, 1944 from Buchenwald to this "external detachment Dessauer Waggonfabrik ". Another 283 followed on November 29 and December 4, 1944 Prisoners. This Buchenwald external command was closely guarded by SS men. Factory employees are said to have campaigned for the inmates several times, and so theirs Have kept living conditions bearable. Still, there were always deaths. It is proven that those from Dorpat died between December 1944 and March 1945 Born Hans Pöldaru (1903-1944), Eduard Kurmanski, who was born in Warsaw (1894-1945), Roman Bereczewsky (1918-1945), Reinhard Schacht (1904-1945), Robert

FOOTNOTES TO PAGE 4

¹⁴ LHASA, DE, KD DE-KÖT No. 592, fol. 21st

¹⁵ Joachim Specht: Kapenbericht, in: Dessauer Kalender, vol. 38 (1994), p. 71.

¹⁶ Walter Hartmann: The procurement of skilled and unskilled workers for the German arms industry, Dessau 1999 (Heimatstube Alten, issue 16), p. 74 f.

¹⁷ Walter Hartmann: Wohnlager ..., loc. Cit., P. 77 f.

¹⁸ Cf. Benoit Cazenave: A work of a larger style. History of the Buchenwald external command Dessauer Waggonfabrik, in: Dessauer Calendar, 50th year, Dessau 2006, pp. 168-173.

¹⁹ LHASA DE, Waggonfabrik DE, No. 22, fol. 29

Wavere (1902-1945), Johann Bluks (1917-1945), the political born in Le Havre Inmate Raoult Gaston (1921-1945). 20 The corpses or ashes of the dead were after Beech forest brought back. Buchenwald is in the SS administration for this period registered a total of 10 transports of corpses from the Dessau external command.

After the heavy bombing of the Dessau city center on 7/8 March 1945 were the Forced labourers from this external unit were used for clean up work. To the time when the Buchenwald camp was liberated, on April 11, 1945, were in Dessau Buchenwald external command still 338 prisoners. They stayed until the invasion the American in the city. Four of them were still on April 20, 1945 shot by the SS. A total of 12 deceased or murdered Buchenwald prisoners were after End of the war in the memorial for the victims of fascism in Dessau's cemetery III buried: André Mozanares (born December 6, 1900), Tadeus Flozorak (born July 13, 1909 in Kalisz), Wilhelm Rockerhoff (born July 18, 1890 in Gelsenkirchen), Albert Lugat (born April 18, 1903 in La Mettage), Joseph Mixa (born March 19, 1902 in Avellans Plane), Jean Pierre Renaud (b. June 13, 1906), Jerome Vanhuysse (born October 3, 1920 in Craix), Joseph Taberlet (born May 20, 1912 in Annecy), Leonhard Uchmann (born September 30, 1915 in Warsaw), Petrus van Geel (b. March 28, 1915 in Gneć), Arthur Rosso (born December 20, 1902 in Argenau), Berka Soudani (born. January 18, 1901 Saint Denis de Signe). 21 The exact number of those who died in Dessau-Roßlau or murdered concentration camp prisoners can no longer be determined.