

INTERNATIONAL TRACING SERVICE

LIST OF FIRST NAMES

Introduction

Since the beginning of the International Tracing Service's work, the evaluation of documents had hardly begun when it became evident that personal data of one and the same person deviated on the different documents. Also the surnames and first names stated by the inquiry do not always correspond with those recorded in the documents. This is almost exclusively concerned with persons who had been in the German Reich for some reason (CC-inmates, forced labourers, foreign labourers etc.) and whose surnames and first names, when registered, were altered by the persons themselves for the sake of simplicity.

In the offices of the concentration camps the names of the prisoners were registered mostly by clerks (fellow prisoners) of various nationalities. The registrars were confronted with first names mainly in a foreign language, which because of difficulty of comprehension, were often recorded only phonetically or in the German translation. A similar situation arose when foreign workers, mainly originating from Eastern European countries, were registered by health insurance, registry offices etc. Also here the possibilities for changes or misspelling of names due to linguistic differences were manifold. For instance, instead of the Polish first name Jerzy, the German version Georg was entered, the Russian name Venjamina was changed into Benjamin and the Czech name Bedřich into Friedrich.

On account of the deviating first names in the inquiry and in the records of the International Tracing Service, inquiries could in the beginning, due to lack of experience, unfortunately often be answered negatively only. After having instituted an intensive search and called upon collaborators proficient in languages, it was often possible to ascertain equivalence of the first names and to give a positive reply. At the beginning of the activity of the International Tracing Service, the identity of the different first names had not been explained to the indemnification authorities. This neglect unfortunately had the great disadvantage that some indemnification authorities doubted on account of the different first names that the information supplied referred to the applications on hand. The result was that further inquiries and also proceedings followed. It was of urgent necessity to clarify these regrettable cases. Especially for the indemnification

Third List

Arolsen

1974

INTERNATIONAL TRACING SERVICE

LIST

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FIRST NAMES

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Address

1914

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In the offices of the concentration camps the names of the prisoners were registered mostly by clerks (fellow prisoners) of various nationalities. The registers were confronted with first names mainly in their own language, which because of difficulty of comprehension, were often recorded only phonetically or in the German translation. A similar situation arose when foreign workers, mainly originating from Eastern European countries, were registered by health insurance, registry offices etc. Also here the possibilities for changes or misreading of names due to linguistic difficulties were manifold. For instance, instead of the Polish first name Jerzy, the German version Georg was entered, the Russian name Venjamins was changed into Benjamin and the Czech name Bedrich into Friedrich.

On account of the deviating first names in the factory and in the records of the International Tracing Service, inquiries could in the beginning, due to lack of experience, unfortunately often be answered negatively only. After having instituted an intensive search and called upon collaborators proficient in languages, it was often possible to ascertain equivalence of the first names and to give a positive reply. At the beginning of the activity of the International Tracing Service, the identity of the different first names had not been explained to the identification authorities. This neglect unfortunately had the great disadvantage that some identification authorities doubted on account of the different first names that the information supplied referred to the applications on hand. The result was that further inquiries and also protests followed. It was of urgent necessity to clarify these regrettable cases. Especially for the identification

authorities, the International Tracing Service considered it as its task to ascertain the different variations of first names in order to prove the identity of names and consequently to eliminate inconveniences for the applicants.

The discrepancies of the surnames could to a great extent be eliminated in that synonymous surnames, which in spite of deviations, were filed under one spelling in the Master Index. For this reason the alphabetical-phonetic system was adopted, taking into consideration especially the Slavonic names.

These measures were, however, not practicable with regard to first names. The only possibility existed in the making out of a list of first names and their derivations and variations. Hereby not only the identity of the various first names was to be established, thus clarifying doubtful cases, but the identical names were also to be entered in Certificates of Incarceration, Certificates of Residence and reports (for example: the Russian name Sacha = Alexander). Such indications lead to clarify a case which could otherwise be disputed by the indemnification authorities.

1st List of First Names

Already in 1949 a list was compiled in the Master Index of the International Tracing Service, with 110 main first names (this term will be explained on Page III) and their 599 variations which even in this relatively small proportion was of a certain help.

2nd List of First Names

Shortly after, Mr. M. THUDICHUM, the then Director, contacted the Central Agency for Prisoners of War of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Geneva - since the 1st of July 1960 Central Tracing Agency of the ICRC - from where he received the List of first names used there. This List, which comprises 6.098 first names was compiled on the basis of first names of separated family members, and contains besides information about their origin (country, province) also the French version. In those cases where a translation into French was not possible, the first name was merely repeated. The first names of men are marked with a "1", and the first names of women with a "2".

Example: Jean 1
 Andrée 2

This marking was adopted also by the International Tracing Service.

The List received from the ICRC as well as a further one put at disposal by the American Joint Distribution Committee, Paris, in 1950 and which contains 10.562 first names, rendered possible that the International Tracing Service could begin with the supplementation of the first List.

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1st List of First Names

Already in 1948 a list was compiled in the Master Index of the International Tracing Service, with 110 main first names which are explained on Page III) and their 599 variations which are in the Master Index. A small proportion was of a certain help.

2nd List of First Names

Shortly after, Mr. M. THURMANN, the then Director, contacted the Central Agency for Prisoners of War of the International Committee of Red Cross, Geneva - since the 1st of July 1950 Central Tracing Agency of the ICRC - from where he received the list of first names used there. This list, which comprises 8,088 first names was compiled on the basis of first names of separated family members, and contains besides information about their origin (country, province) also the French version. In those cases where a translation into French was not possible, the first name was merely repeated. The first names of men are marked with a "1", and the first names of women with a "2".

Example: Jean 1
Annie 2

This marking was adopted also by the International Tracing Service.

The list received from the ICRC as well as a further one put at disposal by the American Joint Distribution Committee, Paris, in 1950 and which contains 10,562 first names, rendered possible that the International Tracing Service could begin with the supplementation of the first list.

Throughout many years no possibility was neglected to complete this List. Besides numerous dictionaries, encyclopaedias and other publications which were consulted, even first names mentioned in newspapers, correspondence etc. served as supplements.

In 1958 the International Tracing Service could present a supplemented List of first names comprising three volumes consisting of 612 pages which contain 42.595 forms of first names.

It was presumed that in course of time a supplementary List would suffice. As years passed it became obvious that due to the large number of additional new first names, it was absolutely necessary to issue a new edition, especially in order to ensure a better and more exact processing of each case, as well as to avoid inaccuracy when examining two different Lists.

3rd List of First Names

After collecting additional material for sixteen years, an issue of two volumes comprising 841 pages is now available. It contains 48.096 variations.

Referring to the handling of this List with regard to the term "main first name", the following must be explained: The designation main first name refers in civil law to the first name generally used by a person, contrary to the second and third first names which, however, are not ordinarily used. In this List of first names the cardinal form of a first name is designated with this term from which the different variations derive. For the sake of simplicity the first names from the list of the ICRC were taken over as main first names. Under the main first name all variations - names in a foreign language, pet names, names in a shorter form etc. - are entered. The main first names under which the variations appear, are always underlined, as for example the most frequently used male first name:

- Jean 1
- Giovanni
- Iwan
- Jan
- Janos
- Johann
- John
- Wanja
- (etc.) (altogether 212 variations)

Main first names that are customary for men as well as for women and do not differ in the spelling, are entered as follows:

- I.) Dominique 1
Dominique = Dominique 2
- II.) Dominique 2
Dominique = Dominique 1

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3rd List of First Names

After collecting additional material for sixteen years, an issue of two volumes comprising 841 pages is now available. It contains 48,986 variations.

Referring to the handling of this list with regard to the term "main first name", the following must be explained:
The designation main first name refers in civil law to the first name originally used by a person, contrary to the second and third first names which, however, are not ordinarily used. In this list of first names the cardinal form of a first name is designated with the term "main first name" the different variations derive. For the sake of simplicity the first names from the list of the ICRC were taken over as main first names. The main first name all variations - names in a foreign language, names in a shorter form etc. - are entered. The main first names under which the variations appear, are always underlined, as for example the most frequently used male first name:

- Jean 1
 - Giovanni
 - Iwan
 - Jan
 - János
 - Johann
 - John
 - Wanja
 - (etc.) (altogether 312 variations)
- Main first names that are customary for men as well as for women and do not differ in the spelling, are entered as follows:
- I.) Dominique 1
 - II.) Dominique 2
 - Dominique = Dominique 1

There are also variations which may derive from two or more main first names, for instance:

Tina = Augusta 2 Christine 2 Martina 2

In cases where a main first name is at the same time a variation of another main first name, both have been underlined.

Example: Rose 2 Regine 2
 Rose = Regine 2 Regine = Rose 2

Mention must be made that Regine is in fact not identical with Rose. But it has been learned from experience that, for unknown reasons, Jewish prisoners changed their first names in this way.

An exception in this scheme is made when different variations concerning a main first name occur. These names were not underlined due to the large number, possibly resulting in unclarity (Johann = John 1).

A few examples in the various languages show the different difficulties.

A comparison of the variations of Polish first names and Hungarian first names leads without an explicable reason, from one extreme to the other. In the Polish language variations are rather rare. Not more than three or four deviations are customary, e. g.

Aleksander, Olek, Oles

In Hungary very many more deviations occur which even vary within the different districts. Alone of the name Erzsebet (Elisabeth) 79 variations exist of which the initial letters can be:

a B (e. g. Bettuska), a C (e. g. Csöri), an E (e. g. Erzsókocska),
an I (e. g. Irsa), an Ö (e. g. Örsécske), a P (e. g. Pöndzsi),
a S (e. g. Sebe), a V (e. g. Vétácska) and a Z (e. g. Zsizsi)

Not only in Polish but also in other languages only few variations occur. Of course among these, astonishing deviations can be noticed, as for instance in Russian:

Jevdokija (Greek origin) is equivalent to Avdotja (popular), Dunja (pet name) and Vjvdja (Ukrainian, pet name).

In the other Slavonic languages, such as Croatian, Serbian, Slovak, Slovenian and Czech, deviations of first names do not occur to such an extent. There are, however, variations of which the equivalence can be recognized. This is also applicable to Germanic languages, for instance Danish, Dutch, German and Norwegian, as well as to Romanic languages such as French, Italian, Rumanian and Spanish. In these languages of course the number of variations differs but is, however, not of great importance. For example, for the most common female first name Anne, 26 variations are known in the German version and 11 in the French. As only very few English names appear in the documents, no difficulties arise with variations.

There are also variations which may derive from two or more main first names, for instance:

Tina = Augusta 2 Christian 2 Martin 2

In cases where a main first name is at the same time a variation of another main first name, both have been underlined.

Examples: Rose 2 Regina 2
Rose = Regina 2 Regina = Rose 2

Mention must be made that Regina is in fact not identical with Rose. But it has been learned from experience that for unknown reasons, Jewish prisoners changed their first names in this way.

An exception in this scheme is made when different variations concerning a main first name occur. These names were not underlined due to the large number, possibly resulting in underlines (Johann = John 1).

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A comparison of the variations of Polish first names and Hungarian first names leads without an explicit reason, from one extreme to the other. In the Polish language variations are rather rare. Not more than three or four deviations are customary, e.g.

Aleksander, Osk, Ols

In Hungary very many more deviations occur which even exist within the different districts. A case of the name Elisabeth (Klára) is given, of which the initial letters can be:

A (e.g. Bettuska), a C (e.g. Csabi), an E (e.g. Erzsébet),
an I (e.g. Iras), an Ö (e.g. Örszék), a P (e.g. Poldas),
a S (e.g. Seb), a V (e.g. Vöröcske) and a Z (e.g. Zsuzsi)

Not only in Polish but also in other languages only few variations exist. Of course among these, astonishing deviations can be noticed, as for instance in Russian:

Levokija (Greek origin) is equivalent to Avdija (popular), Dunja (pet name) and Vudja (Ukrainian, pet name).

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With regard to Jewish first names either in German, Hebraic or in Yiddish (German-jewish language), the discrepancies are relatively easy to recognize, although the variations of some first names are quite numerous. That no great difference exists is shown by three examples given of typical Jewish first names:

<u>German</u>	<u>Hebrew</u>	<u>Yiddish</u>
Abraham	Avraham	Avrom (64 variations)
David	David	Dovid (40 variations)
Moses	Mosche	Mojsche (106 variations)

In this connection mention must be made that in numerous cases, when emigrations to Israel took place, the first names were changed into the Hebrew form. Thus, among others:

Bernhard was changed into Dov
Eva into Chava
Wolfgang into Seev

Final Remarks

For the processing of cases the List on hand is indispensable. It is furthermore a great help for the victims of persecution or for their relatives, as identity of names can be ascertained, which is made known to the competent authorities by the International Tracing Service.

One can imagine how much time, effort and work were necessary to establish this List of first names. It is to the credit of Mr. S. Osztroviczky, Chief of the Master Index II, that this immense task has been accomplished.

This List of first names is by no means a scientific work. It was compiled for internal use only and does not claim to be complete.

A. de Cocatrix
Director

With regard to Jewish first names either in German, Hebrew or in Yiddish (German-Jewish language), the discrepancies are relatively easy to recognize, although the variations of some first names are quite numerous. That no great difference exists is shown by three examples given of typical Jewish first names:

German	Hebrew	Yiddish
Abraham	Avraham	Avrom (84 variations)
David	David	David (40 variations)
Moses	Moshe	Moshe (108 variations)

In this connection mention must be made that in numerous cases when emigrations to Israel took place, the first names were changed into the Hebrew form. Thus, among others:

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