

**The Meeting at Wannsee
and the Murder
of the European Jews**

Exhibition Catalogue

MEMORIAL AND
EDUCATIONAL SITE
**HOUSE OF THE
WANNSEE CONFERENCE**

Contents

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The meeting on 20 January 1942 demonstrates that many institutions and individuals are involved in the persecution and murder of the European Jews. Fifteen senior representatives of the Nazi regime, the SS and the Security Service of the SS (SD) meet for one and a half hours in the guest house for the police and the SS at Lake Wannsee. They discuss the organisation of the forced deportations and the plans for murder.

In order to understand the significance of the meeting at Wannsee for the process of persecution and mass murder, it is necessary to consider developments up to that point as well as the consequences of the meeting. It is also important to consider what happens to the participants in the period after the meeting and how people talked about the meeting after 1945.

Against this background, the exhibition of the Memorial and Educational Site places the meeting at Wannsee into the context of the process of excluding, defining and marking the Jews, a process that culminates in systematic deportation and mass murder. It records the legal proceedings against the participants and how society reflects on their actions under National Socialism. It explains what antisemitism is, how it develops prior to mass murder, and how it manifests itself today. It documents the experiences of Jews from different European countries.

The history presented in the exhibition is important for discussions on how we want to shape our society in the present. For this reason, we would like as many people as possible to visit the exhibition and to grasp its content: people who shape our present as part of this society or people whose professions give them political responsibility.

To make the exhibition accessible to as many people as possible, we have opted for “Design for All”. In planning the exhibition, we have taken the needs of various groups of people into account to make it interesting and understandable for them. Historians have worked on the exhibition in consultation with experts in their own field as a focus group. All of the content and design features are intended to offer added value to as many visitors as possible. For this reason, the exhibition features various levels of content. Much of the content is presented digitally at computer terminals. This catalogue reproduces a large part of the exhibition content.

Our thanks go to all those who have loaned us archive materials and given us permission to display them. We would like to thank the relatives of the persecuted for entrusting us with their testimony.

We are also grateful to the Federal Commissioner for Culture and Media and to Berlin’s Lottery Foundation for providing us with the financial support to produce this exhibition and catalogue.

We hope that you will find the catalogue informative.