

THE HOLOCAUST AND ITS CONTEXTS



The Holocaust and European Societies

Social Processes and Social Dynamics

Edited by Andrea Löw
and Frank Bajohr



The Holocaust and its Contexts

Series Editors

Olaf Jensen
University of Leicester, UK

Claus-Christian W. Szejnmann
Loughborough University, UK

Aim of the Series

More than sixty years on, the Holocaust remains a subject of intense debate with ever-widening ramifications. This series aims to demonstrate the continuing relevance of the Holocaust and related issues in contemporary society, politics and culture; studying the Holocaust and its history broadens our understanding not only of the events themselves but also of their present-day significance. The series acknowledges and responds to the continuing gaps in our knowledge about the events that constituted the Holocaust, the various forms in which the Holocaust has been remembered, interpreted and discussed, and the increasing importance of the Holocaust today to many individuals and communities.

More information about this series at
<http://www.springer.com/series/14433>

Frank Bajohr • Andrea Löw
Editors

The Holocaust and European Societies

Social Processes and Social Dynamics

palgrave
macmillan

Editors

Frank Bajohr
Institute of Contemporary History
Munich, Germany

Andrea Löw
Institute of Contemporary History
Munich, Germany

The Holocaust and its Contexts

ISBN 978-1-137-56983-7

ISBN 978-1-137-56984-4 (eBook)

DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-56984-4

Library of Congress Control Number: 2016956623

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s) 2016

The author(s) has/have asserted their right(s) to be identified as the author(s) of this work in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, express or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made.

Cover image © Heritage Image Partnership Ltd / Alamy Stock Photo

Printed on acid-free paper

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by Springer Nature

The registered company is Macmillan Publishers Ltd. London

The registered company address is: The Campus, 4 Crinan Street, London, N1 9XW, United Kingdom

CONTENTS

Part I	Introduction	1
1	Beyond the ‘Bystander’: Social Processes and Social Dynamics in European Societies as Context for the Holocaust <i>Frank Bajohr and Andrea Löw</i>	3
Part II	Jews in the German Reich After 1933	15
2	Fading Friendships and the ‘Decent German’. Reflecting, Explaining and Enduring Estrangement in Nazi Germany, 1933–1938 <i>Anna Ullrich</i>	17
3	Living in an Abnormal Normality. The Everyday Relations of Jews and Non-Jews in the German-Dutch Border Region, 1933–1938 <i>Froukje Demant</i>	33

4	Economic Trust in the ‘Racial State’. A Case Study from the German Countryside <i>Stefanie Fischer</i>	47
5	‘Life in Illegality Cost an Extortionate Amount of Money.’ Ordinary Germans and German Jews Hiding from Deportation <i>Susanna Schrafstetter</i>	69
Part III Case Studies from Eastern, South-Eastern and Central Europe		87
6	Collaborators, Bystanders or Rescuers? The Role of Local Citizens in the Holocaust in Nazi-Occupied Belarus <i>Olga Baranova</i>	89
7	Nationalizing the Holocaust. ‘Foreign’ Jews and the Making of Indifference in Macedonia Under Bulgarian Occupation <i>Nadège Ragaru</i>	105
8	Genocide in Times of Civil War. Popular Attitudes Towards Ustaša Mass Violence, Croatia 1941–1945 <i>Alexander Korb</i>	127
9	The <i>Pazifizierungsaktion</i> as a Catalyst of Anti-Jewish Violence. A Study in the Social Dynamics of Fear <i>Tomasz Frydel</i>	147
10	Slovak Society and the Jews. Attitudes and Patterns of Behaviour <i>Barbara Hutzelmänn</i>	167

Part IV Jewish Leadership and Jewish Councils	187
11 Leadership in the Jewish Councils as a Social Process. The Example of Cracow	189
<i>Andrea Löw and Agnieszka Zajączkowska-Drożdż</i>	
12 The Role of the Jewish Council During the Occupation of the Netherlands	207
<i>Katja Happe</i>	
13 Negotiating and Compromising. Jewish Leaders' Scope of Action in Tunis During Nazi Rule (November 1942–May 1943)	225
<i>Sophie Friedl</i>	
Part V Relations Between Jews and Non-Jews at a Local/Regional Level	241
14 Neighbours in Borysław. Jewish Perceptions of Collaboration and Rescue in Eastern Galicia	243
<i>Natalia Aleksium</i>	
15 Beyond the Bystander. Relations Between Jews and Gentile Poles in the General Government	267
<i>Agnieszka Wierzcholska</i>	
16 The Transformation of Jewish–Non-Jewish Social Relations in a Gendarmerie District of Hungary, 1938–1944	289
<i>Izabella Sulyok</i>	

Part VI The Aftermath. Post-War Returnees	305
17 Returning Home After the Holocaust. Jewish–Gentile Encounters in the Soviet Borderland <i>Diana Dumitru</i>	307
18 The ‘Aryanization’ of Jewish Property in Amsterdam and Its Consequences After World War II <i>Hinke Piersma and Jeroen Kemperman</i>	321
Place Index	337
Name Index	343

LIST OF FIGURES

- Fig. 9.1 The inhabitants of Podborze in front of their burned down homes (Photograph taken immediately after the war. Courtesy of Maria Przybyszewska) 161
- Fig. 9.2 ‘Pacification’ of Podborze on 23 April 1943 and its immediate aftermath 162
- Fig. 16.1 Ghettoization and deportation of the Jews in Hungary, April–July 1944 (*Source*: http://www.hdke.hu/files/imagecache/mapf/images/maps/3_terkep.jpg, last accessed 14 January 2012) 299

PART I

Introduction

Beyond the ‘Bystander’: Social Processes and Social Dynamics in European Societies as Context for the Holocaust

Frank Bajohr and Andrea Löw

At heart, the Holocaust—the mass murder of European Jews that took place in the course of World War II—was a political process originating in National Socialist Germany. It was essentially the result of political-ideological decisions made by the Nazi state leadership, who developed a practice of mass extermination that became increasingly radicalized. The murders were mostly carried out regionally or locally by the SS and the German-controlled police.

But the events of the Holocaust were also part of a social process. Raul Hilberg, the doyen of Holocaust studies, once formulated three basic categories that might apply to those involved, and these have attained wide usage: people might be ‘perpetrators’, ‘victims’ or ‘bystanders’.¹ These categories still have validity as rough differentiators—ultimately the Holocaust entailed one group of people murdering a larger group of ‘others’, while a majority of their contemporaries belonged neither to

F. Bajohr • A. Löw (✉)

Center for Holocaust Studies, Institute for Contemporary History,
Munich, Germany

e-mail: bajohr@ifz-muenchen.de; loew@ifz-muenchen.de

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s) 2016

F. Bajohr, A. Löw (eds.), *The Holocaust and European Societies*,

The Holocaust and its Contexts, DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-56984-4_1

the first group nor the second. But if we seek to analyse how the persecution and murder of the European Jews became possible, we have to see developments as a social process, and here Hilberg's three categories do not suffice. In societies where the political order expects citizens to endorse the exclusion of particular groups in the population, there *cannot* be any completely uninvolved bystanders. The persecution and murder of the European Jews would not have been possible without a multitude of people being somehow implicated.

In recent debates on the issue, the category of 'bystander' has, therefore, been shifting quite rapidly to the 'perpetrator' side. In Germany, for example, the term 'perpetrator society' is gaining ground (especially in the media) to describe the society of the Third Reich. We can observe a similar development in many other European countries, and an even more radical change of paradigms. In the earlier post-war decades, for example, the Dutch, the French and the Poles all chose to present their recent history by casting themselves as victims of German occupation, who, at the same time, put up a resistance to German rule—with a few exceptions dubbed collaborators. But in recent years this picture has changed. Now great numbers of the populations of these countries appear to have been co-perpetrators of the Holocaust, well-informed about the murderous practices that were going on.

However, there is a basic difference between acts of murder (or supportive actions directly leading to murder) and social behaviour that goes no further than contributing to social exclusion. The current de-differentiation of Hilberg's categories is, therefore, not without its drawbacks. Does it yield a useful solution to our problem of dealing with the various forms of social behaviour that accompanied or contributed to the Holocaust?

Of course it would be possible to replace the term 'bystander' with dozens of more subtly differentiated categories, such as 'beneficiaries', 'denouncers', 'opportunists', 'sympathizers with exclusionary practices', 'indifferent spectators' and 'helpers', 'supporters' or 'rescuers'. Undoubtedly these categories would enable us to take a more nuanced approach in the analysis of social behaviour. Yet a possible objection to their use is the static character of all these terms. Under the intense and ever-changing pressures of violence, war and occupation that prevailed in the Nazi era, people's positions could change from moment to moment: they were seldom fixed. So it seems more appropriate to analyse the complex social processes that influenced their choices than to invent and define ever more static categories. Between 1933 and the immediate post-war years, Europeans were caught up in developments that led to the social exclusion, persecution and wholesale murder of the continent's Jews.

There is much to be said for an analytical perspective that defines those involved as social actors who acted and reacted to these developments in manifold and highly differentiated ways.

In the analysis of social processes, it is helpful to define 'rule' as various forms of social practice. This applies to societies under Nazi, fascist or authoritarian rule as much as to others, for even dictatorial regimes cannot simply be reduced to a dualism of rulers and the ruled, the dominators and the dominated. Hence, some decades ago, scholars in the history of everyday life urged that 'rule' should be conceptualized as a social process—a dynamic and amorphous field of forces in which various actors stand in relation to one another.² In this view of things, the population itself participates actively in the system of rule, and in multifaceted ways. As historians, if we accept rule as a social practice, we do not look for a clear and unambiguous *attitude* of a society towards its rulers. Rather, we search out and examine the multifarious *forms of action and behaviour* in the society we are investigating. Through that prism, a whole range of human reactions comes into sight—extending from enthusiastic acceptance, complicity, opportunism, adaptation, acquiescence to self-distancing and resistance. Across this spectrum, hybrid forms of behaviour are more the rule than the exception: compulsion does not exclude consent and pursuing personal interests. Conversely, cooperation can also go hand-in-hand with friction and difference. Moreover, depending on the temporal frame and juncture, one and the same social actor can behave in very different ways in similar situations. Social practice and social processes are especially relevant when we attempt to understand how the persecution of the Jews came about. The Nazis and those allied with them did not persecute the European Jews solely by means of political-administrative measures and the exercise of brutal state force. As well as using these means, they established new social norms, in particular their hierarchy of race, and social models such as the ethnically homogenous ideal of a '*Völksgemeinschaft*' ('national community') which presupposed the exclusion of 'undesirable' minorities. Many of the persecuted Jews in Europe had grown up within a system of norms and values that conferred social status or merit on individuals according to their property, education and achievements. In the Nazi model of society, which gave 'racial status' a higher priority, these personal assets had only limited validity for the excluded. They could even be disadvantageous: respected dignitaries who had once belonged to the ruling social strata were often treated especially nastily if—hoping to be accorded some respect for their previous achievements in life—they referred to their former social status. Their world had been turned upside down.

The loss of social position that befell Jews opened up new and attractive opportunities for others, as the places the Jews had held in society were snapped up. Thus, when Jewish physicians and lawyers could no longer practise, non-Jews stepped in to inherit their patients and clients; and when Jewish businessmen were compelled to cease trading, non-Jews took over their companies and customer-bases, acquiring in this way a share in the market and a step upward in economic status. Many of those swept from the social periphery to the centre of power after 1933 savoured this inversion of the traditional social hierarchy with sadistic glee.

* * * * *

The systematic social exclusion of the Jews in Europe began in Germany after the Nazi rise to power. The complicated process of social exclusion within the German Reich is analysed in the first chapters of this volume. In contrast to the pattern seen in many European countries later occupied by the German Wehrmacht, the isolation, exclusion and eventual persecution of Jews in Germany did not occur suddenly; rather these practices evolved in a gradual, inconsistent and sometimes highly contradictory train of developments extending over more than six years. Social relations between Jews and non-Jews were not immediately ruptured in 1933: many Germans continued to visit Jewish doctors, shop at Jewish stores and engage in economic relations with Jews. The chapters demonstrate what a real problem it was for Jews to interpret the ambivalent behaviour of the non-Jews in their neighbourhoods. This conflicted situation made it even more difficult for Jewish Germans to realize how the tide was moving and to orient themselves amid a changing reality. On occasion, there was even some public objection to the persecution of the Jews, and many German Jews later recalled in their memoirs that they kept up with non-Jewish friends throughout the first years of Nazi rule.

Anna Ullrich analyses such memoirs written by German-Jewish émigrés after they had gone to live in America, and finds in them a remarkable focus on positive encounters with non-Jewish Germans. She argues that the writers wanted to retain a feeling of connection with Germany and the Germans, and that they used the recollection of positive encounters as a strategy to make sense of the shift after 1933. Froukje Demant calls the new social situation Jews found themselves in during the earlier years of Nazi rule an ‘abnormal normality’, and she examines the everyday relations of Jews and non-Jews in the German-Dutch border region up to 1938. The social contacts non-Jews had with Jews there were gradually cut off,

essentially because association with Jews could bring stigma, trouble and disadvantage to non-Jews. In many instances, Jews themselves were the ones who broke off contact so as to save their acquaintances difficulty or embarrassment and avoid personal disappointment at their own rejection. This vicious circle doubtless contributed to their gradual isolation. Little can be identified that countered this process and slowed it down.

Stefanie Fischer draws our attention to one counter-element in her analysis of the relations between Jewish cattle-dealers and non-Jewish farmers in the German countryside. These relations depended strongly on mutual economic trust, and neither political pressure nor anti-Semitic agitation could break them for quite a while. Many farmers needed the Jewish cattle-dealers out of economic self-interest. Nevertheless, these farmers could also exploit the situation for their own benefit, and this was one of the reasons why the Jewish cattle-dealers were finally pushed out of the market.

Besides the farmers, many Germans combined the pursuit of personal self-interest with adherence to the ideological goals of the Nazi regime. The 'Aryanization' of Jewish property, in particular, opened up a range of possibilities through which citizens could enrich themselves. Both profiting from the spoils and falling in with the regime, Germans 'learned' in the span of a few short years that Jews did not belong to the national community, the so-called *Volkgemeinschaft*. Moreover, there was a close link between the gradual acceptance of anti-Jewish norms and the popularity of the Nazi regime—and of Hitler in particular—which peaked in the first years of World War II.

Those German Jews who failed to emigrate in time found it especially difficult to go into hiding and remain undiscovered in a Germany that would no longer tolerate their presence. For nationalist reasons, most Germans felt a basic solidarity with the Nazi regime, and assistance in hiding Jews was not, for them, an act implicitly targeted against a foreign occupier as elsewhere in Europe. Susanna Schrafstetter provides us with a rather more complex picture than we are used to, when she discusses ordinary Germans' reactions to Jews' attempts to hide from deportation. The terms 'rescuer' and (more effusively) 'Righteous among the Nations' imply that active helpers of Jews were always extraordinary, altruistic people. However, a detailed look at stories of survival and rescue very often reveals a complex interchange in which money and valuables might well play a central role in the motivation of helpers. In some extreme cases, the initial rescuer or helper could turn into a denouncer or even murderer when the financial

funds of Jews in hiding became exhausted. As a rule, rescue attempts only took place if victimized Jews themselves asked others for help. When they did so, they were entering a chancy web of social processes and interactions.

* * * * *

The studies that come next in this book deal with developments in countries of Eastern and Central Europe beyond the borders of Germany. In a number of these countries, the social isolation of the Jews had begun before the German occupations and was not initiated under direct German influence. In the wake of the global economic crisis, there was a strong political shift to the right in Europe, and in many states, governments came to power, seeking—like the Nazis—to promote ethnically homogeneous national communities. As a consequence, in these states, the social status of Jews was subjected to certain limitations through special laws and decrees. So a process of anti-Jewish social exclusion had commenced even before the Holocaust. The anti-Jewish laws in Romania and the racial laws in Italy are striking examples of such legislation. It was characteristic of the anti-Jewish climate spreading through Europe that, in early 1939, the Polish government negotiated with the French government, sounding out the possibility of settling Polish Jews in French colonial Madagascar—an idea the Nazi regime itself adopted for a short time, later on.

However, the fundamental conditions for the full-blown persecution of the Jews in Europe were created by German occupation, as German troops took over one country after another. The occupation regimes put in place varied a great deal according to the states involved. Yet there were almost always specific forms of violence and the imposition of anti-Jewish norms to which the population of each occupied country had to adapt and conform. In a number of countries, there were anti-Jewish pogroms in the initial period of occupation, as for example in the Baltic states, in eastern Poland and in Ukraine. These pogroms had their roots in anti-Jewish hatred among the indigenous populations, which had been massively stoked by local perceptions of the preceding Soviet regime of occupation. The German occupiers consciously exploited this anti-Semitic mood in their own plans of action. Thus, in the spring of 1941, the Nazi party's chief ideologue, Alfred Rosenberg, wrote in his guidelines for German propaganda in the East that the 'Jewish Question [could] to a significant degree be solved by giving the population a free hand some time after occupying the country'.³ Especially in Ukraine, Rosenberg maintained, the 'Jewish Question' would 'move on to extensive pogroms against Jews and killings of communist functionaries'. All the Germans would then

have to do would be to mop up, 'to take care of the remaining oppressors', by which he meant murdering the remaining Jews and communists.

What was the real situation? Once the war was over, the official line in many European countries was selective recall of a straight dualism existing in the time of enemy occupation. This was a dualism between the occupiers and a stoically resistant population—only spoiled by a few 'collaborators' who were branded national traitors. But the reality was far more complex than this. Actual social practice was marked by diverse and multifaceted forms of cooperation between occupiers and the occupied. To apply the concept of 'collaboration' to these various forms is problematic, because that term does not cover all forms of cooperation and is imbued with the stigma of treason. People's motivations for cooperation with the occupiers often sprang from the exact opposite ground: a desire to protect the interests of the population or to safeguard personal and family interests under existing, near-impossible conditions.

The exclusion and persecution of the Jews presupposed that the population in the occupied countries would cooperate, because in many instances the German occupiers did not know who was Jewish and who was not. They depended on the assistance of the locals and these locals' readiness to distance themselves from the Jewish minority and accept the anti-Jewish norms imposed.

In her article on Belarus, Olga Baranova demonstrates that cooperation between the German occupier and the occupied could take many forms. Though there were few spontaneous pogroms and many Belarusians refused to engage in the murder of Jews, there was often a readiness to participate in different forms of persecution or to provide the Nazis with indirect forms of support. The reasons the author gives are a mixture of traditional anti-Semitism, jealousy, personal grudges, greed, opportunism, a desire for material advantages and a certain anxiety to show loyalty to the occupier.

As we have seen, ideas of an ethnically homogenous nation state had spread in Central and Eastern Europe long before the Holocaust and had contributed to the social isolation of the Jewish minorities who depended on a multi-ethnic social environment. However, not all states and allies of Nazi Germany intended to get rid of their Jewish citizens or join in the Nazis' 'Final Solution of the Jewish Question in Europe'. Bulgaria was one of the states that opted out: the authorities refused to let Bulgarian Jews be killed. At the same time the idea of a homogenous nation state was one dear to Bulgarians and strongly influenced their attitude towards Jews in the territories their troops had occupied. The Jews living there fell victim to the Holocaust, as is shown in Nadège Ragaru's article on

Macedonia under Bulgarian occupation. In this multi-ethnic region, Jews were thought to be pro-Serb, pro-Greek or pro-Albanian—but not pro-Bulgarian. They were thus regarded as ‘foreign’ to a nation trying to elevate itself in a time of war and mass violence.

Alexander Korb uses the example of Croatia to explain the connection between genocide and civil war. Popular participation in acts of mass violence constitute a key element in civil-war scenarios, and especially in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, many governments who promoted programmes of ethnic cleansing set in motion a social dynamic that was not easy to control.

While ideas of national homogeneity, anti-Semitism and mass violence in wartime are all features that stand out clearly on a macro level, they tend to retreat into the background when the focus is shifted to social behaviour at a local level, particularly in societies that were oppressed by German occupation. In the countries the Third Reich took over, the authorities clamped down on rescue activities made to help Jews who had gone into hiding. Their repressive measures set in motion a spiral of violence and created an atmosphere of terror that is meticulously analysed in Tomasz Frydel’s article on the dynamics of murder and killing in a cluster of Polish villages. He shows how an atmosphere of expected reprisals and the social dynamics of fear formed the structure of anti-Jewish violence in the Polish village of Podborze. In the spring of 1943, German ‘pacification’ actions generated extreme fear among the local Polish population, turning Polish rescuers into traitors, and even into murderers in several cases. The article demonstrates impressively how anti-Jewish violence was decisively shaped by the threats and barbarities of repressive occupation.

Greed and the race for riches also played an important role for local populations and served as motivation for anti-Jewish actions. Barbara Hutzelmann emphasizes that such material motives influenced social behaviour towards the Jews in Slovakia. A desire for personal enrichment and ambition to climb the social ladder readily combined with a long-existing impulse in that country to reject Jews and deny them an equal place in society. While the state and the state authorities were the main perpetrators, broad sections of the population also supported the expropriation of Jews.

* * * * *

The next difficult and delicate set of chapters deals with how Jewish communities themselves behaved in the time of the Holocaust. The German authorities forced patterns of cooperation on them through

institutions like the Jewish Councils, which took on many responsibilities in the ghettos. When, in the post-war period, Jewish people looked back on the actions of the Jewish Councils, they made harsh accusations against their leaders for cooperating with the Germans even after the start of deportations to the annihilation camps. Hannah Arendt even described this cooperation as the 'darkest chapter of the whole dark story'.⁴ Research in the past decades has overcome such simplistic interpretations and has revealed a multitude of strategies and differing forms of action the Council leaders tried to pursue. Nevertheless, the Jewish Councils are still sometimes treated as static entities rather than as ad hoc bodies whose workings were part of a dynamic and rapidly changing social process.

Examining this process, the case studies draw the reader's attention to the dramatic and unexpected changes in German anti-Jewish policy, and how these influenced the Councils' strategies, limiting the leaders' attempts to change the course of events. The Jewish Councils of three different cities are given individual studies here, and the comparative perspective this offers helps in distinguishing what was similar and what diverged in their modes of behaviour. Although the situations differed a lot between Western Europe and the East, there are interesting similarities in the examples of Cracow and Amsterdam.

However, this comparative focus should not obscure the stunning differences and rapid changes that can be identified in the history of the Councils in almost every place where they were formed. The history of the Jewish Council in Cracow, presented by Agnieszka Zajązkowska-Drożdż and Andrea Löw, provides a very good example of the multitude of strategies tried out in one city alone. It shows that we need to analyse the Jewish Councils as bodies working within occupied societies, subjected to intense pressures from the social processes that accompanied war conditions and an escalation in the anti-Jewish policies the Germans imposed. The developments in the Jewish Council of Cracow, which had three successive chairmen all acting quite differently, demonstrate that a static interpretation of its workings would be insufficient and misleading. Instead, we have to examine the different phases and ongoing changes that step-by-step transformed it from an institution representing the interests of local Jews (with considerable efficiency) to an instrument used in German persecution policies.

The same is true for the situation in Amsterdam. In her article, Katja Happe presents the Jewish Council there in the context of the German occupation of the Netherlands. As in many other places, this Council tried to serve the interests of Jews by fulfilling German orders while gaining small concessions. Even after the deportations had started, the Council in

Amsterdam tried to prevent the worst by continuing its strategy of cooperation—although differences of opinion among the Jewish representatives became more and more pronounced.

In Tunis the situation was very different. For a multitude of reasons, the Germans did not implement a policy of annihilation in this outpost, so deportation and mass murder did not take place, and the Jewish Council was not confronted with the agonizing dilemma of whether to help in organizing deportations or not. Nevertheless, as Sophie Friedl demonstrates, the Jewish Council's strategy in Tunis was similar to that adopted by some of the Councils in occupied Europe—a dual strategy of apparent obedience combined with secret sabotage. When it could, the Council delayed carrying out orders or, surreptitiously, it implemented them only partially. In Tunis, where the Germans could not implement a policy of mass murder, this strategy of 'reluctant cooperation' did indeed save the lives of Jews.

In all three examples we find a complex picture of differing strategies, roles and tactics the Jewish functionaries resorted to. They need to be analysed within a complex field of forces and with reference to the social interactions occurring at particular times.

* * * * *

Everyday social relations between Jews and non-Jews also need to be investigated as part of a complex and dynamic social process. For Jews social relations with others became highly unpredictable in German-occupied Europe. This made it difficult for them to interpret their situation and gauge which people they could trust and rely on in their struggle for survival. The dramatic changes in their position happened at a rapid rate—not as the creeping development that had been typical of the 'abnormal normality' in Germany after 1933, with its many elements of continuity. The wrenches in social relations also had a huge impact after the war was over.

As Natalia Aleksiu demonstrates for Borysław in Eastern Galicia, neighbours could become rescuers *or* perpetrators *or* both. The social dynamics under German occupation made everything unpredictable: roles could change, and even former friends could turn into perpetrators. Here, not only did the German occupiers act with brutal repression; at the same time, the indigent non-Jewish population could exploit the changed social situation and the absence of a rule of law for their own benefit and in the pursuit of personal self-empowerment. Jews, therefore, could no longer rely on pre-war social relations and hang on to expectations from the past.

The complicated interethnic relations in Eastern Galicia aggravated their situation, as was visible in periodic eruptions of violence.

As another microcosm displaying local relations and social dynamics at this time, Agnieszka Wierzcholska presents the Polish town of Tarnów. Half the population was annihilated in this community, and, in such circumstances, the term 'bystander' becomes hopelessly inapposite: *everybody* was involved in one way or another, *everybody* had to make choices. Competition for social and material benefit fuelled the anti-Jewish violence, but the role of sheer fear should also be taken into account: The experience of witnessing the massacres at such close range had a significant impact on the behaviour of local gentiles and led to a general brutalization of social relations.

Izabella Sulyok examines the anti-Jewish legislation passed in Hungary from 1938 onwards, and assesses its effects on social relations between Jews and non-Jews in one of the Hungarian Gendarmerie districts. Her article reminds us of the decisive effects legal norms and bureaucratic regulations had on everyday social processes. Even a high level of assimilation and integration was not enough to save Jews from falling rapidly into social isolation. The situation worsened dramatically after the German invasion in March 1944, and after this any help offered to persecuted Jews was limited to individual cases.

* * * * *

The tribulations of the Jewish people did not cease with the end of the war. The dramatic changes that had taken place within so many societies made the way back to 'normality' very difficult—indeed almost impossible. This was the case in most of Europe, but Diana Dumitru spotlights the specific difficulties experienced by Jews in the territories of Bessarabia, Bucovina and Transnistria. Jewish survivors came back to these areas on the Soviet borderland to face an economically disastrous and sometimes personally dangerous situation. The dismayed returnees learnt how their neighbours had participated in the despoliation of their property—or had, at least, shown indifference. In many instances these returning Jews struggled in vain to get housing and retrieve the things that were theirs. Many left their former communities, since they no longer felt 'at home'.

Comparable developments could even be observed in Western Europe, where Jewish survivors also met with a cold reception from non-Jews on their return. As a telling example, Hinke Piersma and Jeroen Kemperman focus on the 'Aryanization' of Jewish property in Amsterdam and the authorities' failure to address this issue properly after 1945. Although the

Germans had been the main beneficiaries of the ‘Aryanization’, Dutch individuals and institutions had participated in it as well, and the city of Amsterdam was one of these participants. Having purchased some of the buildings owned by Jews, the municipality was, of course, liable for the restitution of property after the end of the war. But, when returning Jews asked for their properties back, they were often faced not only with the old stereotype of being ‘money-grubbers’ but with a Dutch narrative of endurance during the German occupation which hardly recognised the specific suffering Jews had gone through.

* * * * *

Most of the contributions to this volume were presented during a conference, ‘The Holocaust and European Societies. Social Dynamics and Social Processes’, which was organized by the Centre for Holocaust Studies at the Institute for Contemporary History in Munich in October 2014. The basic ideas from this conference were revisited in another joint conference held in 2015, mainly organized by the Duitsland Instituut at the University of Amsterdam. This had the theme, ‘Probing the Limits of Categorization. The “Bystander” in Holocaust Historiography’. The editors would like to thank the participants, their language editor Jon Ashby; their colleagues Kerstin Baur, Giles Bennett, Mario Boccia, Konstantin Eder, Anna Raphaela Schmitz and Anna Ullrich at the Center for Holocaust Studies for their tireless assistance in proof-reading the manuscript; and Chris Szejnman, Olaf Jensen and Palgrave Macmillan for integrating this volume into the book series, ‘The Holocaust and its Contexts’.

NOTES

1. R. Hilberg (1992) *Perpetrators, Victims, Bystanders. The Jewish Catastrophe 1933–1945* (New York: Harper Collins).
2. A. Lüdtke (ed.) (1991) *Herrschaft als soziale Praxis. Historische und sozial-anthropologische Studien* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck); and his essay ‘Funktionseliten: Täter, Mit-Täter, Opfer? Zu den Bedingungen des deutschen Faschismus’ in the same volume, pp. 559–590.
3. J. Matthäus and F. Bajohr (eds) (2015) *The Political Diary of Alfred Rosenberg and the Onset of the Holocaust* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield), Document 7, p. 373.
4. H. Arendt (1963) *Eichmann in Jerusalem. A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Viking Press), p. 117.

PART II

Jews in the German Reich After 1933

Fading Friendships and the ‘Decent German’. Reflecting, Explaining and Enduring Estrangement in Nazi Germany, 1933–1938

Anna Ullrich

When Hitler was sworn in as German Chancellor on 30 January 1933, it brought decisive change not only in the political sphere but also in the social lives of Jews in Germany. The literature focusing on their personal experiences after this date and their own assessments of what was happening around them come to fairly consistent conclusions. The verdict Marion Kaplan reaches in her thoroughly researched book, *Between Dignity and Despair—Jewish Life in Nazi Germany* is representative. While analysing

Some of the considerations and conclusions presented in this article are part of the research for my dissertation, ‘What lies between “hope and disappointment”. Handling social anti-Semitism and managing expectations in the German-Jewish community 1914–1938’. This was submitted to the examination board of the Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich in April 2016.

A. Ullrich (✉)
Center for Holocaust Studies, Institute for Contemporary History,
Munich, Germany
e-mail: ullrich@ifz-muenchen.de

various autobiographical reports—mostly by women—on how relationships developed at this time, Kaplan concludes: ‘As Germans began to treat each other with reserve, they broke decisively with Jews.’¹ Needless to say, there were still certain acts of kindness and solidarity shown by non-Jewish Germans towards their Jewish friends and acquaintances. However, according to Kaplan, these actions tended merely to have a Janus-faced effect, since they ‘came as a great relief but also served as a false basis for optimism’.² This poignant comment sums up the fate that has befallen these small acts of solidarity in the course of historical research. On the one hand, they have been treated as mere footnotes to the process by which Jewish Germans became alienated from the rest of the population. On the other, the effects they may have had on individuals experiencing them have been reduced to two extremes—at best, momentary liftings of the burden of social and legal oppression; at worst, invitations to a false hope, luring Jews into the idea that life in Germany was still viable, and, in the long run, holding back decisions to get away.

In this chapter, I want to enlarge the set of possible interpretations and ascriptions Jewish Germans attributed to ‘friendly’ relations with gentiles. I will take a more detailed look at the often insular, but mutually corroborative reports and anecdotes Jews wrote about such threatened relations during the first years of National Socialist rule, when some friendships faded, some endured. My sources are ones frequently drawn on for insights into Jewish life during these years. They are the autobiographical accounts gathered by a group of scholars during the autumn of 1939 and spring of 1940, now known as the ‘Harvard Competition’ or *My Life in Germany* collection. Although it is often noted that these memoirs originated as submissions to a prize competition, the exact provisions and requirements the academic promoters laid down have seldom been explained. It is, however, necessary to understand these guidelines, as well as the people responding to them, to arrive at a fair critical interpretation of the assessments made in the accounts—especially the ones on Jews’ relationships with non-Jews.³

As a first step, I will take a closer look at what the organizers intended when they gathered these testimonies and what preconditions were set. I will then analyse some of the ways in which the writers of the accounts depicted relationships between Jews and non-Jews after Hitler’s rise to power and how they tried to make sense of the developments in Germany.

THE MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION *MY LIFE IN GERMANY*: HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

The initial idea of gathering people's testimonies in a collection can be traced back to three professors at Harvard University: the psychologist Gordon W. Allport, the historian Sidney B. Fay, and the sociologist Edward Y. Hartshorne. In August 1939, these three commissioned a one-page advertisement, which was published in the German exile press and in a couple of American newspapers.⁴ The appeal asked those 'who have known Germany well, before and since Hitler' to send in a written account of their recent experiences. As an incentive, the authors of the most insightful submissions were to be rewarded with prize money which ranged from \$500 (first prize) to \$20 (fifth). As for the formalities: the accounts were to be at least 20,000 words long (about 80 pages) and could be written in German or in English. The authors had to supply a short personal data sheet giving details of age, sex, religion, social position, and their last place of residence in Germany. The three professors made it quite clear what content they expected: their aim was to gather material for the 'purely scientific purpose' of assessing the 'social and emotional effects that National Socialism had on German society and the German people'. Therefore, they advised the following:

Your life-history should be written as *simply*, as *directly*, as *fully* and as *concretely* as possible. You should aim to *describe*, in so far as you can remember them: things which actually happened, things people did and said. The Judges are not interested in philosophical reflections about the past but in a record of personal experience. Quotations, wherever possible from *letters, notebooks and other personal documents*, will help to give your account the *authenticity* and *completeness* which are desired. Even if you have never written before, if you have a good memory, a good insight into human nature, you should try. Even if you do not win a prize, your manuscript will be of value as a source of information about modern Germany and National Socialism.⁵

In view of the similarities, it is reasonable to assume that the three scholars based the form of their appeal on the work of another professor, the Columbia-based sociologist Theodore Abel. In 1934, after travelling through Germany, Abel had promoted a similar open contest. However, he addressed a quite different pool of potential authors: his search was for 'the best personal life story of an adherent of the Hitler movement'.⁶ He got more than 600 responses and, in 1938, published them in his book *Why Hitler Came into Power*.⁷ The initial idea for the Harvard competition may thus be regarded as a supplement—maybe even a balance—to Abel's findings, since it was exclusively

addressed to people who had already left Germany and hence could hardly classify as supporters of Hitler. The competition probably had a personal purpose too: of the three Harvard scholars who initiated it, Allport and Fay were already established scholars with a tenure, but Hartshorne, who was Fay's son-in-law, was only at the beginning of his academic career. It seems likely that the evaluation and analysis of the material gathered—following Abel's research methods, which were well thought of at the time—was to be Hartshorne's break-through into academia.⁸

By the autumn of 1940, about 260 manuscripts had arrived at Harvard University, roughly two-thirds written by recently emigrated German and Austrian Jews. In social background, the contributors were doubtless a rather homogenous group. A clear majority came from the German upper-middle class: many were doctors or lawyers. About one-third of the manuscripts came from women. Though the ages of the contributors began at the mid-twenties, most of the accounts were written by women and men between 40 and 65. A large proportion of the contributors had only emigrated from Germany after the 1938 November Pogrom, so certain major public incidents are referred to in almost every account—the Boycott of April 1933, the 'Night of the Long Knives' (1934), and the passing of the Nuremberg Laws (1935). However, most contributors followed the guidelines and focused on descriptions of their *personal* experience of relationships with non-Jews—lasting, fading or broken.

The preconditions for an in-depth examination of the manuscripts seemed ideal: an interdisciplinary team of scholars, a pre-prepared questionnaire for a psychological and sociological analysis, and about 220 accounts complying with the formal guidelines, and offering the content required.⁹ However, ultimately, only one journal article appeared in which the accounts were used in the way the scholars seem to have planned when they set up the project. In their article, 'Personality Under Social Catastrophe: Ninety Life-Histories of the Nazi Revolution', Allport and two colleagues made a qualitative and quantitative analysis of responses from questionnaires applied to a selection of the manuscripts.¹⁰ They examined the contributors' reactions to oppression in Nazi Germany and how experiences of such treatment may have influenced the personality structures and political beliefs of the persecuted.¹¹ It remains unexplained why so few research results emerged from the project as a whole—an ambitious venture at its beginning—but it is likely that it was quietly abandoned when Hartshorne transferred from Harvard to the Office of Strategic Services (the OSS) in 1941.¹² Much later, in 1958, the manuscripts were deposited in the Houghton Library in Harvard's campus.

It is due to Monika Richarz, a German-based historian, that the manuscript collection gained renewed attention in the early 1980s. In her three-volume collection of sources, *Jüdisches Leben in Deutschland*, she included several excerpts from the manuscripts' accounts.¹³ Since then, a number of these writings have been edited and published in their entirety,¹⁴ while portions of others have appeared in source books.¹⁵ Starting from the mid-1990s, Detlef Garz and a group of sociologists and educational scientists around him applied a wider range of theoretical approaches to individual manuscripts. These ranged from exile studies to moral and recognition theory,¹⁶ and, based on this work, they established a general foundation for the analysis of processes of de-recognition.¹⁷ Less concerned with theory, historians have used the accounts in a more descriptive way, often quoting especially poignant examples to yield insights into personal aspects of the disintegration process, as seen through the eyes of the excluded.¹⁸

EXPLAINING FADING FRIENDSHIPS: BELIEVING IN THE 'DECENT' GERMAN

In the paragraphs that follow, I will approach the manuscripts from a different angle. I will focus initially on the way the contributors responded to one of the key requirements of the competition—relating, from personal experiences, impressions of the effects the National Socialist regime was having on the German people. The writers were not only encouraged to report on encounters with non-Jewish Germans, but were left free to interpret the behaviour of their former fellow citizens and assess their motivations. After presenting various recurring narratives and interpretations of non-Jewish behaviour, I will discuss the intentions the authors may have had in choosing to depict these incidents.

My central thesis is that, when the authors dwell on positive encounters with non-Jewish Germans and reflect on these, their perceptions and thoughts are an integral component of the explanations they strive to present—both to themselves and to outsiders—for the situation in Nazi Germany. They use reminiscences of the 'good German' as a strategy to make sense of the shift in the whole tone of German society that followed 1933. This strategy helped them uphold their own identification with Germany and with at least a portion of the German people. To understand the contributors' assessment and the interpretations made, the time when the manuscripts were written is important. Herein lies an additional peculiarity of the collection, since all of the autobiographical accounts were written well before the autumn of 1940. Dire experiences in Germany

after 1933 and, all too often, nerve-racking wheeling and dealing to get out of the country had left their mark on the authors,¹⁹ but they did not yet have any knowledge of deportations, death camps and the killing units of the *Einsatzgruppen*. In writings after 1945, knowledge of the sheer horror of the Holocaust necessarily coloured Jews' reassessments of their former lives in Germany.²⁰ The accounts and reflections in the *My Life in Germany* collection, written between 1939 and 1940, may sometimes sound strangely innocent. However, untouched by hindsight, they let us see how contemporaries perceived historical processes as they unfolded. We can gain a better understanding of the motivations and expectations shaping people's lives at the time.

When Albert Dreyfuss, a doctor from Franconia, gets to the day of Hitler's appointment as Reich Chancellor in his memoir, he is quick to point out that 'not only the relatively small group of Jews but, at least equally, the great mass of communists, social democrats, commoners, [people in] ecclesiastical circles, especially the Catholics, and the nobility were deeply troubled'.²¹ Harry Kaufman, who had been the manager of a shoe company in Essen, admits that a certain percentage of Germans were supporters of Hitler, but also stresses the fact that 'a higher percentage are opponents [of the regime], although they don't make an appearance in public'.²² These quite sweeping assertions bring out a point that recurs in the manuscripts, albeit with varying degrees of urgency: this point is that it was not only the Jews, but many non-Jewish Germans who found themselves adversely affected by the newly appointed Nazi government. Henriette Necheles-Magnus, who worked as a doctor in Hamburg, recalls a range of non-Jewish friends and acquaintances who were badly treated by the Nazi authorities. She includes them in her account because 'the fate of Jewish families is well enough known. But not the devastating effects on the Christian intellectual who was not a party member at the time of the breakdown [of democratic rule]'.²³ She cites examples of imprisonment, lay-offs and revocation of work permits. Non-Jewish Germans had to fear such reprisals as well as Jews.²⁴ Elaborating on this, the writers refer to a vast increase in surveillance as the most ubiquitous danger both Jews and non-Jews faced during the first years of National Socialism. The manuscripts describe in detail how next-door neighbours, the grocer, co-workers, or guests at the next table in a restaurant could turn out to be party informants. And it is repeatedly pointed out that, while Jews in Germany could at least speak their minds behind closed doors, even this level of privacy was often denied their non-Jewish friends and acquaintances. Mally Dienemann, wife of the rabbi of Offenbach, quotes friends who said: 'You

are better off: at least you can tell the truth among each other. We can't even speak an open word in our family. Our children, whom the Hitler Youth raises, are the best spies.'²⁵ A Catholic patient told Rafael Mibberlin, a doctor in Berlin, that she and her husband had decided to emigrate before completely losing their son to the National Socialist movement.²⁶ The recurring narrative of devoted members of the Hitler Youth spying on their parents is usually linked to a more general insistence that non-Jews too were disadvantaged under the National Socialist government.

Why did the writers feel the need to record such stories? Reference to the situation of non-Jews may well be understood as simple compliance with the rules of the competition, since the entrants were explicitly asked to write about social conditions in Germany as a whole. But I would argue that describing the hardships and struggles of non-Jews fulfils an important function for the writers themselves. With these examples they are able to show that it was not only Jewish Germans who suffered under the new government. Even more significantly, the examples indicate that others were opposed to Nazism. Although there is no doubting that Jews were the main targets of Nazi policy, a large number of the writers are eager to point out that it is not they alone who had to fear the new regime. Such knowledge gives them some relief and reassurance—at least temporarily.

Furthermore, this sharing of a sense of victimhood provides the writers with some kind of explanation for the increasing disintegration of relationships between Jews and non-Jews. This spared them from having to depict themselves as passive outcasts. In the memoirs, writers often refer to incidents where the decision to put relationships on hold were made by themselves. Martin Freudenheim, who had been a lawyer in Berlin, used to enjoy spending time at his favourite café on Kurfürstendamm where 'Aryans and Jews still played peacefully together'.²⁷ When Freudenheim, in his account, makes the decision not to go there any more, it is because of the way his leftist friends at the café speak out against the Nazi government. They do this quite openly. He does not want to cause them or himself potential trouble—trouble they 'could not foresee in their light-hearted and outspoken way'.²⁸ Fritz Goldberg, another Jew who deals with this theme, worked for a publishing company. One of his clients had written a play, which was to be premiered in 1934. Goldberg describes how the playwright repeatedly invited him to share his box at the theatre. Goldberg kept saying he could not do this. Incredulously, he writes that his client 'again and again repeated his invitation and would not realize that such a combination [the two of them seen together] could only have unpleasant consequences for both of us'.²⁹

There are two notable points about these examples. First, a decision to terminate friendships—though certainly not easy—could also demonstrate a degree of self-determination; and this challenges the commonly held view of the crestfallen German Jew passively standing by as non-Jewish friends turn away. Second, the ending of friendships as a precaution hints at a certain advance premonition Jewish Germans had, in which, they seemed to be ahead of their non-Jewish friends and colleagues in realizing what the nature of the Third Reich really was. This premonition did not necessarily lead to a rush to get out of Germany or even to Jews considering such a move. It did, however, provide one explanation of why non-Jewish friends behaved as they did: they had not yet grasped the dimension of injustice the new regime represented—and probably would not do so in the immediate future.

A writer known only as ‘Aralk’—very likely an anagram of the name Klara—sums up what happened to non-Jewish acquaintances who thought they could protect their Jewish friends: ‘Some courageous people tried to ease the acts of terror by vouching for Jews with their own person. But they went the same way, were either imprisoned or beaten. There was nothing left than to draw back silently.’³⁰ Klara speaks for many of the chroniclers, who make a similar point. It is reasonable to ask if she makes this statement because she truly believed that non-Jews could do nothing against the persecution, or if she uses it merely to excuse the behaviour of German people. However, I wish to argue that it is not only impossible, but also not essentially necessary, to distinguish between ‘believe’ and ‘excuse’. In almost every account, we find examples of non-Jews disagreeing with, suffering under, or underrating the new regime. The sheer quantity of these statements underlines the explanatory and justificatory meaning Jews drew from examples of fellow-suffering like the one Klara cites. The fact that their non-Jewish neighbours were—or could be—victims of Nazism, offered a psychologically acceptable explanation of why Jews could not rely on them for help. Although they were the main targets of the new regime, Jewish Germans were not the only ones to suffer.

When the Berlin-based professor and lawyer Max Kronenberg—who writes under the pseudonym Clemens Berg—informed his non-Jewish friends that he would emigrate, they responded, he says, with envy. Kronenberg is aware that these reactions were not to be taken ‘a hundred per cent seriously’, since non-Jews could emigrate too.³¹ Nevertheless he includes this information to show that his acquaintances loathed the new National Socialist government just as he did, and hoped for a quick ending

to Hitler's regime. Referring to such specific incidents, Kronenberg explains that the overall feeling in Germany under National Socialist rule—for Jews and non-Jews alike—was fear.

The knowledge that non-Jewish Germans feared the Nazis and the consequences they would have to face if they did not toe the line had another consequence for Jewish Germans. While it lowered expectations of what their non-Jewish friends could still do, it did make them more appreciative of '[s]uprising acts of simple ... decency', as Kaplan calls them.³² Indeed, in the manuscripts, the vague term 'decency' is used to describe people's behaviour in a quite broad variety of encounters. Leo Grünbaum, for example, applies the adjective not only to non-Jewish friends and acquaintances but also to members of the Gestapo and the guards at the Brauweiler Prison, where he was taken after the November Pogrom.³³ In Grünbaum's way of looking at things, one has to wonder if German decency knew any limits. Nevertheless, the belief enables him to process his experiences in Germany after 1933 without having to change his view on the German people.

However, the realization that people's behaviour and Jews' acceptance of certain situations and expectations—such as 'decency'—could alter quite rapidly could have a disturbing effect. When Wolf Elkan, a doctor working near Heidelberg, needed to talk to a staff member at the university, he was relieved that the conversation went so politely, though his counterpart knew he was Jewish. Only afterwards, did Elkan question his relief at the 'friendliness' this man showed: 'Why on earth should he not be friendly!! Why should I be pleased that he was friendly!! Had I already accepted the fact that I should be treated worse for being a Jew?'³⁴ In his manuscript, Elkan describes his realization that 'decency' was now considered surprising, instead of being something to take for granted; and this was the crucial moment when he finally decided to leave Germany.³⁵

Anecdotes about the Germans' 'decency' are often closely connected with stories of non-Jews expressing shame over what was happening to their Jewish friends, acquaintances and neighbours. These 'shameful encounters' often occurred during or after major anti-Semitic incidents that flared across the nation—incidents like the April Boycott and the November Pogrom. It is notable that there are fewer mentions of surreptitious solidarity of this kind after the declaration of the Nuremberg Laws. This may indicate that non-Jews could feel ashamed at the actions of what they saw as an anti-Semitic mob, but found it harder to apologize for laws legally enforced by the government.³⁶

After the night of 9 November 1938 (the November Pogrom which has come to be known as ‘Kristallnacht’), Mally Dienemann from Offenbach tried all the appeals she could to get her husband, Rabbi Dienemann, out of prison and, later, out of the concentration camp to which he was deported. While she hurried round the different immigration, police and Gestapo offices, her housekeeper, Mrs. Schäfer and her husband, whose ‘devotion and shamefulness knew no bound[s]’, busied themselves cleaning up the mess the *Sturmabteilung* (SA) had left in the Dienemann’s apartment. Mrs. Schäfer also brought Mally Dienemann food when Jewish families were not allowed to buy from the stores, a time which lasted several days after the pogrom. In Dienemann’s recollection, the Schäfers’ kindness was typical of a number of non-Jews: ‘Many Jewish families must have had such Schäfers in one way or the other because otherwise we all would have had to starve in those days.’³⁷ About to leave Germany for good, the Dienemanns said their farewells to the Schäfers, who pleaded with them to remember that not all Germans were bad and reminded them repeatedly of their personal innocence.³⁸

All of the accounts I have quoted offer manifold examples of the daily struggle and the hardship Jewish women, men and children had to endure under the uncompromisingly anti-Semitic regime. But they include the narratives I have singled out as essential elements. The writers wanted to describe the non-Jewish German who was—or easily could be—a victim of Nazism; who was unable to grasp the implications of Hitler’s ‘racially purified’ Germany; who expressed shame at what was happening, acted with ‘decency’, and might try to help Jewish friends in limited ways. I suggest that these examples were intended as arguments to show readers that Germany had not turned anti-Semitic overnight, and—equally important—to convince the authors themselves that this had not been the case. Experiencing, describing, and believing in ‘decent’ behaviour amongst their non-Jewish neighbours offered Jewish Germans the chance to retain a feeling of connection with Germany and with the German people. It was a useful coping strategy to help them come to terms with what had happened in their home country.

Admittedly, this was a strategy with an expiration date. While the term ‘decent’ continued to be used by non-Jewish Germans before and after 1945 to justify their own actions, there is rarely any mention of the ‘decent German’ in Jewish accounts written after 1945.³⁹ If they do occur, it is often in an attempt to explain in hindsight why Jewish Germans underestimated the full threat the National Socialist regime posed. Charlotte Hamburger,

for example, states in her memoir, written well after 1945, that in the early thirties, 'everyone knew a German with a "decent" disposition'.⁴⁰

In the closing remarks to his manuscript, Albert Dreyfuss picks up on a saying that circulated in Germany during the mid-thirties: 'If the German people [were] as anti-Semitic as their government, no Jew would be left alive anymore.'⁴¹ Against the monstrosities of the Holocaust, the acts of kindness and 'decency' portrayed in the accounts seem almost insignificant. But there was a time when these acts were received by Jewish Germans with a certain amount of relief and gratitude. Amid an increasingly menacing atmosphere, Jewish Germans imbued them with special meaning and used the sense of support they felt as a strategy to cope with their isolation.

NOTES

1. M. A. Kaplan (1998) *Between Dignity and Despair. Jewish Life in Nazi Germany* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press), p. 37.
2. Kaplan (1998) *Between Dignity and Despair*, p. 39.
3. I am thankful to Uta Gerhard and Nadège Ragaru for discussing the significant meaning both the background and the composition of the appeal had for the competition.
4. Cf. H. Liebersohn and D. Schneider (2001) 'My Life in Germany before and after January 30 1933'. *A Guide to the Manuscript Collection at Houghton Library Harvard University* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society), p. 3; D. Garz, S. Tiefel and F. Schütze (2007) "'An alle, die Deutschland vor und während Hitler gut kennen" Autobiographische Beiträge deutscher Emigranten zum wissenschaftlichen Preisausschreiben der Harvard University aus dem Jahr 1939', *Zeitschrift für Qualitative Forschung* No. 8, 179–88, 179.
5. G. W. Allport, J. S. Bruner and E. M. Jandorf (1941) 'Personality Under Social Catastrophe: Ninety Life-Histories of the Nazi Revolution', *Journal of Personality* No. 10, 1–22, 21.
6. For this endeavour he had also gained support from the Ministry for Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda, cf. Garz et al. (2007) "'An alle'", p. 179.
7. T. Abel (1938) *Why Hitler Came into Power. An Answer Based on the Original Life Stories of Six Hundred of His Followers* (New York: Prentice-Hall).
8. Cf. L. Weissberg (2013) 'East and West: Karl Löwith's Routes of Exile' in H. O. Horch, N. Mittelmann and K. Neuburger (eds) *Exilerfahrung und Konstruktion von Identität 1933 bis 1945* (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter), pp. 159–91, p. 161.

9. Cf. Garz et al. (2007) “‘An alle’”, p. 180; Weissberg (2013) ‘East and West’, p. 163.
10. Cf. Allport et al. (1941) *Personality*, p. 1; Weissberg (2013) ‘East and West’, p. 163.
11. Cf. Allport et al. (1941) *Personality*, pp. 2–3; D. Garz and H.-S. Lee (2003) “‘Mein Leben in Deutschland vor und nach dem 30. Januar 1933’”. Ergebnisse des wissenschaftlichen Preisausschreibens der Harvard University aus dem Jahr 1939—Forschungsbericht’ in I. Wojak and S. Meinl (eds) *Im Labyrinth der Schuld. Täter—Opfer—Ankläger. Jahrbuch zur Geschichte und Wirkung des Holocaust* (Frankfurt am Main, Campus-Verlag), pp. 333–57, p. 336. Apart from this article, some of the assessments made about the influence of National Socialism, especially on the younger generations, resurfaced in one of Hartshorne’s essays, cf. E. Harthorne (1941) *German Youth and the Nazi Dream of Victory* (New York: Edward Yarnall), especially pp. 18–19.
12. Cf. Garz and Lee (2003) “‘Mein Leben’”, p. 164.
13. Cf. M. Richarz (ed.) (1982) *Jüdisches Leben in Deutschland, Selbstzeugnisse zur Sozialgeschichte 1918–1945* (München: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt).
14. Cf. T. Dunlap (ed.) (2001) *Before the Holocaust: Three German-Jewish Lives, 1870–1939* (Philadelphia: Xlibris); K. Frankenthal, ed. K. M. Pearle (1981) *Der dreifache Fluch: Jüdin, Intellektuelle, Sozialistin* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus-Verlag); W. Gyßling, ed. L. E. Hill (2003) *Mein Leben in Deutschland vor und nach 1933 und der Anti-Nazi: Handbuch im Kampf gegen die NSDAP* (Bremen: Donat); K. Löwith (1986) *Mein Leben in Deutschland vor und nach 1933* (Stuttgart: Metzler); K. Vordtriede, ed. D. Garz (1999) ‘Es gibt Zeiten, in denen man welkt.’ *Mein Leben in Deutschland vor und nach 1933* (Lengwil: Libelle); E. Wysbar, ed. D. Garz (2000) ‘Hinaus aus Deutschland, irgendwohin ...’ *Mein Leben in Deutschland vor und nach 1933* (Lengwil: Libelle).
15. Cf. M. Limberg and H. Rübsaat (eds) (1990) *Sie durften nicht mehr Deutsche sein. Jüdischer Alltag in Selbstzeugnissen 1933–1938* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag); U. Gerhard and T. Karlauf (eds) (2009) *Nie mehr zurück in dieses Land. Augenzeugen berichten über die Novemberpogrome 1938* (Berlin: Propyläen).
16. Cf. S. Bartmann (2002) ‘Zwischen Autonomie und Heteronomie—Zwischen Individuum und Kollektiv. Biographische Erfahrungsaufschichtungen von Emigranten im Nationalsozialismus’ in S. Bartmann, K. Gille and S. Haunss (eds) *Kollektives Handeln. Politische Mobilisierung zwischen Struktur und Identität* (Düsseldorf: Der Setzkasten), pp. 191–208; U. Blömer (1999) ‘Dem Vaterland verpflichtet. Biographische Untersuchungen zu Lebensverläufen von emigrierten Pädagogen im Nationalsozialismus oder “über die Banalität der Entwicklung des Bösen”’,

- Pädagogische Rundschau*, No. 53, 577–96; W. Lohfeld (1998) *'Es waren die dunkelsten Tage in meinem Leben.'* *Krisenprozess und moralische Entwicklung. Eine qualitative Biographicanalyse* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang).
17. Cf. U. Blömer (2004) *'Im übrigen wurde es still um mich.'* *Aberkennungsprozesse im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland* (Oldenburg: BIS-Verlag); U. Blömer and D. Garz (2003) 'Aberkennungsverhältnisse und Aberkennungsprozesse. Über die Verfolgungs- und Konflikterfahrungen nicht-jüdischer Emigranten und Emigrantinnen zwischen 1871 und 1939' in G. Bierbrauer and M. Jaeger (eds) *Projektverbund Friedens- und Konfliktforschung. Ergebnisberichte aus Forschungsprojekten der Jahre 1998–2001* (Osnabrück: BIS-Verlag), pp. 127–73; D. Garz (2006) 'Weder Solidarität noch Recht noch Liebe. Grundzüge einer Moral der Aberkennung. Aberkennungstrilogie, Teil I' in H. Drerup and W. Fölling (eds) *Gleichheit und Gerechtigkeit. Pädagogische Revisionen* (Dresden: TUDpress), pp. 51–69; W. Lohfeld (2007) 'Aberkennung und historisches Bewusstsein. Das Beispiel Alice Bärgwald', *Zeitschrift für Qualitative Forschung* No. 8, 225–47.
 18. Cf. D. Blasius (1991) 'Zwischen Rechtsvertrauen und Rechtszerstörung. Deutsche Juden 1933–1935' in D. Blasius and D. Diner (eds) *Zerbrochene Geschichte. Leben und Selbstverständnis der Juden in Deutschland* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag), pp. 121–37, especially 136–7; M. Kaplan (2010) 'Changing Roles in Jewish Families' in F. R. Nicosia and D. Scrase (eds) *Jewish Life in Nazi Germany. Dilemmas and Responses* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books), pp. 15–46, especially 29–31 and 40–44; T. Maurer (2003) 'Kunden, Patienten, Nachbarn und Freunde. Beziehungen zwischen Juden und Nichtjuden in Deutschland 1933–1938', *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* No. 54, 154–66.
 19. Cf. W. Benz (ed.) (1994) *Das Exil der kleinen Leute. Alltagserfahrungen deutscher Juden in der Emigration* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuchverlag); W. Benz and M. Neiss (eds) (1997) *Die Erfahrung des Exils: Exemplarische Reflexionen* (Berlin: Metropol Verlag); W. Lohfeld (2004) 'Aberkennung als Kategorie sozio-historischer Forschung. (Über) Lebensstrategien jüdischer Emigranten in Shanghai. Eine qualitative Biografiestudie (Projektmitteilung)', *BIOS Zeitschrift für Biografieforschung, Oral History und Lebenslaufanalysen* No. 17, 280–4.
 20. For a general problematization of the alleged gap between contemporary experiences and memories based on hindsight, cf. W. Bergmann and J. Wetzel (1998) "'Der Miterlebende weiß nichts" Alltagsantisemitismus als zeitgenössische Erfahrung und späte Erinnerung (1919–1933)' in W. Benz (ed.) *Jüdisches Leben in der Weimarer Republik* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck), pp. 173–96.

21. Albert Dreyfuss, Harvard, MS Ger 91, p. 13. Here, and elsewhere, the author has translated from the German.
22. Harry Kaufman, MS Ger 91, pp. 7–8.
23. Henriette Necheles-Magnus, MS Ger 91, p. 21.
24. Pointing out the hardships non-Jewish Germans had to face, as well as Jews, was not a feature confined to private accounts. Jewish organizations did this to try to put the situation of German Jews into perspective. In 1935, one of the leading members of the Joint Distribution Committee questioned the need for Jewish emigration from Germany by emphasizing that other groups in Germany were suffering considerably more under the new regime. Cf. D. Michman (2015) ‘Handeln und Erfahrung: Bewältigungsstrategien im Kontext der jüdischen Geschichte’ in F. Bajohr and A. Löw (eds) *Der Holocaust. Ergebnisse und neue Fragen der Forschung* (München: Fischer Verlag) pp. 255–277, especially pp. 263–4.
25. Mally Dienemann, MS Ger 91, p. 21.
26. Rafael Mibberlin, MS Ger 91, p. 69.
27. Martin Freudenheim, MS Ger 91, p. 72.
28. Freudenheim, MS Ger 91, p. 72.
29. Fritz Goldberg, MS Ger 91, pp. 43–44.
30. ‘Aralk’, MS Ger 91, p. 42.
31. Max Kronenberg, MS Ger 91, p. 20.
32. Kaplan (1998) *Between Dignity and Despair*, p. 39.
33. Leo Grünbaum, MS Ger 91, p. 42.
34. Wolf Elkan, MS Ger 91, p. 95.
35. Elkan, MS Ger 91, p. 96. For general considerations on the meaning and significance of a ‘Nazi morale’, cf. R. Gross (2010) *Anständig geblieben. Nationalsozialistische Moral* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag), especially pp. 7–20; C. Koonz (2003) *The Nazi Conscience* (Cambridge and London: Belknap Press).
36. These results tally with the argument that Germans accepted—and to some extent eagerly anticipated—the implementation of a ‘lawful’ and ‘orderly’ anti-Semitism, cf. P. Longerich (2007) *‘Davon haben wir nichts gewusst!’ Die Deutschen und die Judenverfolgung 1933–1945* (München: Pantheon), pp. 96–100, especially pp. 97–8; Koonz (2003) *The Nazi Conscience*, especially pp. 182–189.
37. All quotes: Dienemann, MS Ger 91, p. 34.
38. Dienemann, MS Ger 91, p. 38.
39. Especially in the autobiographical accounts written by German Jews who emigrated to Palestine, there is a strong tendency to mention as little as possible about (positive) relationships with non-Jews. Cf. G. Miron (2004) ‘Ein Blick zurück. Judentum und traditionell-jüdische Erinnerungsmuster deutschstämmiger Juden in Palästina/Israel’ in Y. Hotam *Populäre*

Konstruktion von Erinnerung im deutschen Judentum und nach der Emigration (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht), pp. 197–224, especially p. 200.

40. C. Hamburger (n. d.) 'Die Familie und das Leben des Hans Hamburger 1854–1953', ME 1504, Leo Baeck Institute Archives, p. 33, also quoted in Kaplan (1998) *Between Dignity and Despair*, p. 67.
41. Dreyfuss, Harvard, MS Ger 91, p. 40.

Living in an Abnormal Normality.
The Everyday Relations of Jews and Non-
Jews in the German-Dutch Border Region,
1933–1938

Froukje Demant

In Ahaus, a provincial town in the Westmünsterland not far from the Dutch border, the Jewish cattle-dealer Adolf de Jong was beaten up by SA men in his own house. This was in 1934. As a result of this brutal attack, de Jong, who had lived his entire life in Ahaus and who was a member of the local veterans' club, would limp for the rest of his life.¹ Yet in the same year, his children Henny, Marga and Herbert de Jong took part in the *Kinderschützen* party organized in their neighbourhood without any trouble. Three years later, in 1937, they could still join in the festivities.²

In those same years, a teacher from the *Bernsmannkampschule*, the school for boys in Ahaus, let his pupils march in front of the houses of local Jews, while they sang the song '*Wenn's Judenblut vom Messer spritzt*' ('When the blood of the Jew spurts from the knife'). On a sign from the teacher, one of the pupils had to shout '*Juda*', after which the rest of the group cried '*Verreckel!*' ('Jew, die!').³ At the local school for girls,

F. Demant (✉)

Duitsland Instituut, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
e-mail: f.a.demant2@uva.nl

on the other hand, a school photograph could be taken, in 1937, showing the Jewish girl Marga Cohen sitting smiling on the lap of her non-Jewish friend Bärbel Sümmerrmann.⁴

How should these contradictions in the coexistence of Ahaus's Jews and non-Jews under Nazi rule be understood? This chapter examines the everyday relations and interactions between German Jews and non-Jews in the period between Hitler's takeover of power on 30 January 1933 and the pogrom of 9 November 1938 that has come to be known as Kristallnacht. The focus is on the relations between Jews and non-Jews in a specific region—the German-Dutch border region of the Grafschaft Bentheim, the Emsland, and the Westmünsterland.⁵ To support this exploration, oral histories have been combined with written sources. Interviews were conducted with contemporary witnesses from the border region, both Jewish and non-Jewish, and insights from these were interwoven with earlier oral histories and information from diaries, memoirs, local and regional *Stimmungsberichte* (Nazi reports on popular opinion) and local literature.⁶

The choice of everyday interactions as the subject of study yields insights into the social practices of exclusion that occurred in the concrete, everyday lives and encounters of Jewish and non-Jewish neighbours, classmates and acquaintances. The first years of the Third Reich were characterized not only by exclusion at the level of social interactions, but also by a transformation at the level of the existing moral order. While the coexistence of German Jews and non-Jews had been marked by clear boundaries, social anti-Semitism in the years before the establishment of the Third Reich and the status of Jews as equal citizens had long been a much-debated topic,⁷ Jews were still seen as being equal *human beings*. In Nazi Germany, however, they were deprived even of this level of acceptance. To interpret the social dynamics of how Jews and non-Jews lived together, and the ambivalences and contradictions that came with this coexistence, it is important to examine practices of exclusion in relation to these moral shifts.

EVERYDAY INTERACTIONS AND THE EXPERIENCE OF (AB-) NORMALITY

Central to this approach, in which social practices and moral shifts are studied in connection with each other, is the concept of 'normality'. When and why were the interactions of Jews and non-Jews experienced as normal or abnormal? How did the perceptions of normality shift through

time, and how did the perception of normality held by non-Jews relate to that held by Jews? In her study on the everyday life of Jews in Nazi Germany, Marion Kaplan describes very tellingly how quotidian existence became a bewildering amalgam of terror and habituation for them⁸: ‘their everyday life in Nazi Germany resembled an abnormal normality, but one to which they became accustomed.’⁹ The inherent contradiction in the notion of ‘abnormal normality’ is the key to interpretation of the everyday interactions between Jews and non-Jews in Nazi Germany; and it, therefore, requires some further attention.

Many historians have struggled with the question of whether there was any normality in the Third Reich and how that normality then related to the abnormality of persecution and mass murder.¹⁰ On the basis of Kaplan’s description, it becomes clear that, in essence, normality is a concept with two faces: it is used in a descriptive as well as in the more evaluative sense. In the descriptive approach, normality is considered as ‘the familiar and predictable’. This form of normality is based on the presence of patterns and predictability. These are the schemata, routines, and repetitions that logically order our world—things always happen thus, and, since they do, we may trust that they will do so next time round, and no longer need to reflect on them. Because the patterns and routines discussed here are fundamental to our understanding of the world, this form of normality can also be called ‘existential’.

An evaluative approach to normality is morally charged: normality in the sense of ‘good and appropriate’. What is at stake is not that something always happens thus, but that it *ought* to happen thus. This form of normality can also be called ‘moral’.¹¹ Moral normality is bound up with an existing moral order, that is, with values of good and evil and of appropriateness. When we live through experiences that do not fit in with our moral assumptions, the world starts to feel ‘abnormal’ in a moral sense. However, if such reprehensible experiences repeat themselves regularly, if a pattern or certain logic may be read into them, they become normal in an existential sense. One can function, then, in a world that is being experienced as ‘abnormal’ in the sense of despicable and yet ‘normal’ in the sense of ‘coherent and predictable’.

This distinction helps clarify a long-standing duality in the existing literature between descriptive and more evaluative approaches to normality. It also offers an opportunity to analyse the different experiences Jews and non-Jews had in different places and at different moments in time in a differentiated manner.

THE NON-JEWISH PERSPECTIVE: SHIFTING MORALITIES

From the moment the Nazis came to power, the Nazification of German society and the social exclusion of ‘non-Aryans’ began. Yet, as already shown in the example of relationships in Ahaus, the non-Jewish population responded quite variably and often ambivalently to the anti-Jewish measures; and this led to Jews having very diverse experiences with exclusion. The extent and course of the exclusion could vary according to city or town, but even within the same location exclusion might not conform to a set pattern. For example, while the economic boycott forced most Jewish entrepreneurs to close their doors within a few years of the Nazis coming to power, Jewish cattle-dealers continued trading for a relatively long time because the local farmers continued to trade with them in secret. Mrs. H. (1942), whose father had always traded in the area around Lingen, said that when the Nazis put a ban on farmers doing business with Jews, they responded: ‘We have traded all these years with Gustav, you cannot tell us what to do.’¹² In Ahaus at that time, Jewish cattle-dealers were still helped by non-Jewish boys with the management of cattle at the station. Ludwig Hopp (1928) recounts that he and his comrades could earn 10 pfennig through this work and were always very happy when ‘the Jews were back again’.¹³ The David brothers from Burgsteinfurt even enjoyed rising revenues in the years from 1933 to 1936, since local farmers were secretly trading with them,¹⁴ and even bought cattle on their behalf so that they could continue their trade.¹⁵

For part of the population in the border region, the exclusion of Jews meant little more than ‘watching from the sidelines’. Since Jews represented a very small minority of the population here, only a few non-Jews had personal contact with them. For those who sporadically visited the Jewish butcher in the nearby village or occasionally encountered a Jewish cattle-dealer, the exclusion of Jews was no more than a matter of passive isolation; Jews simply ‘disappeared’ from the public domain and were, therefore, out of sight. Many non-Jews could, therefore, be good *Volksgenossen* without having to apply actual exclusionary practices—though this certainly does not mean that everyone in this segment of the population distanced themselves from these practices.

However, the exclusion meant much more for the people who *did* maintain daily contact with Jews, such as the farmers who traded with Jewish cattle-dealers, the children who had Jewish classmates at school, and immediate neighbours who helped each other with daily chores. From the moment when

men appeared at the doors of Jewish establishments with signs saying ‘Do not buy from Jews’, they had to decide on their position in terms of interaction with their Jewish acquaintances. Do you ignore the SA-man on the doorstep of the Jewish butcher or would it be better to come back the next day? Do you start a conversation with your Jewish neighbour in the street or should you carry on quickly after a short greeting? An ‘undefined situation’ had arisen where everyone had to decide for themselves which stance to take.¹⁶

For those who enthusiastically embraced the new regime, this was not a problem. Within the German population there was a large group who eagerly and wholeheartedly participated in establishing a fundamental inequality between the ‘Aryan folk community’ and ‘enemies of the people’ as a norm. These were the people who, from Day One, were actively involved in the isolation, degradation and exploitation of the Jews. They redefined coexistence as a situation where they could highlight the new power imbalance between Jews and non-Jews and play on it. Sometimes, this went beyond power imbalance, to an overall power reversal. In Nordhorn, for example, the Jewish butcher, Isaac Cohen, had regularly supported a poor, non-Jewish family. During the boycott of 1 April 1933, the father of that family stood in front of the butcher’s shop in his SA uniform. When a customer reminded him that he had accepted help from Cohen but was now trying to harm him, the man announced loudly that he would like to drown Cohen in the nearby river. After this, he forcibly entered Cohen’s house and took him out into the street. Only with difficulty, and with the help of a neighbour, was Cohen able to escape.¹⁷

Yet, from the many uncomfortable and conflicting interactions that took place between Jews and non-Jews, it can be concluded that many non-Jews experienced what can best be described as moral dissonance: they realized that the way their Jewish acquaintances were now treated—by others and by themselves—would have been considered immoral and inappropriate in the past. At such times, these non-Jews became aware that changes were disrupting the existing moral normality, and that they themselves were playing a role in these changes. For these individuals, the exclusion of the Jews was far from being a smooth, unconscious process; it was accompanied by uneasiness and shame. This does not mean that they did not contribute to the exclusion; rather—especially in the early years of Nazism—that they reacted to their Jewish acquaintances in an ambivalent manner.

For many, an effective strategy was to avoid or ignore Jews they had been on good terms with, breaking existing contacts with a minimum display of power inequality. They simply kept out of the way, to avoid a confrontation;

or they tried to ease their termination of contact or even deny it. For example Hermann Zilversmit (1909) from Gildehaus experienced this during the boycott of 1 April 1933. He recognized one of the SA-men posted in front of his father's butcher's shop: he was from the soccer club they both played in. The man was standing at the door in uniform with a rifle over his shoulder, but he whispered, 'Hermann, you will be there at the football game tomorrow, won't you?'¹⁸ Similarly, the friends of Walter Steinweg (1926) from Horstmar were told by their families that they could not be seen with him. 'Often when I encountered them, they said: "Oh, Walter, you're not bad, but some of the Jewish people are really bad. But you, you're fine, you're okay"'.¹⁹ And Bernard Suskind (1921) from Fürstenau, whose father belonged to the local *Stammtisch*, recalled in an interview:

[T]he day came in 1935, when we had the hotel owner notifying my father personally. He says, 'I don't want you to come anymore every week, because then I have to tell you that you are not welcome here, and I don't want to tell you personally, we are good friends. So just stay away.'²⁰

Sometimes even a mutual joke could be used superficially to defuse a situation and hide the new power imbalance, as when, during a boycott in Neuenhaus, a Jewish entrepreneur called Van der Reis turned to the SA-man in front of his door and said: 'Isn't standing there taking a little too long for you?' 'Oh, I cannot say that, I can keep it up,' came the answer.²¹ With avoidance tactics like these non-Jews could contribute to the exclusion of Jews while keeping the moral dissonance they themselves felt to a minimum.

Relations between Jews and non-Jews were not only interlaced with ambiguities, but were also multi-layered, as a termination of relationships in the public sphere did not always mean the end of contact. Due to public exclusion, an increasing separation arose between the public and the private spheres, and some non-Jews remained secretly in touch with their Jewish acquaintances—in the dark in the backyard, or at home with the shutters closed. In interviews, Helge Domp (1915) recounted that her parents, who remained in Münster until 1937, maintained contact with some of their neighbours right up to that time, with secret visits to each other in the evenings²²; and Bernard Suskind described how his mother kept up regular chats with a neighbour at the back of the house in the dark; and he himself stayed in contact with his best friend and a girl-friend from school.²³ This means that non-Jews were inconsistent in their everyday relations with Jews: some who ignored their Jewish acquaintances during the day continued secret friendly contact at night.

THE JEWISH PERSPECTIVE: AN ABNORMAL NORMALITY

During this period, intensifying anti-Jewish regulations and laws had great influence on the daily lives of German Jews. Their physical and social mobility were increasingly restricted, as was their economic independence, so that their world grew smaller and smaller. Nevertheless, German Jews differed considerably in their assessment of the danger the Nazis posed, and in their considerations of whether it was necessary to leave their homeland, and, if so, when. Of some 500,000 Jews living in Germany before the rise of Hitler, approximately 37,000 emigrated in 1933. In subsequent years, some 23,000 Jews left Germany each year, with a new wave of 40,000 refugees in 1938 due to increased persecution. In all, about a quarter of the Jews in Germany had left their country by 1938.²⁴

So in 1938 about three-quarters of the German-Jewish population still lived in Germany. Given the many obstacles that had to be overcome to be able to emigrate, it is likely that a proportion of this group already wanted to leave the country, but that this objective could not (yet) be put into effect. Nevertheless, there were a large number who delayed the decision to leave, or who did not even consider it. This was so in the border region, where only a few left in the early years. In Ahaus, for example, there were 66 resident Jews in 1933 and 64 were still there at the time of the pogrom of 1938. In the years between, some Jews had indeed left, but others had moved to Ahaus, in particular parents of Jews already living in the town. It seems that most of the Jewish families considered themselves relatively safe.²⁵

Jews' widely varying estimates of the threat posed by the Nazis should be seen in the light of the gradual, often contradictory process of exclusion described earlier. Because of the ambivalences in attitude found among their non-Jewish neighbours, it was far from clear to many that a fundamental change in the moral order was taking place. In their experience the old established reality and the new reality constantly fluctuated and interchanged. At one moment an everyday interaction would occur as it always had, and everything seemed reassuringly normal; the next moment there would be some shockingly unexpected affront, showing that the world had completely changed. The unpredictability in the behaviour of their non-Jewish neighbours meant that Jews had to search time and again for some sort of explanatory logic, and that, repeatedly, they had to switch between different expectations. Meanwhile, more and more anchor points were swept from their existence. Certainties in terms of income, employment,

education and housing were taken away bit by bit, and it became increasingly difficult to rely on daily routines and to try to maintain them.

As exclusion increased and their world became more and more abnormal in a moral sense, many Jews tried their best to retain some existential normality. They continued to search for logic and consistency in the conduct of others; they tried to keep control over their own lives. Values and beliefs from the 'old' normality often formed a guiding principle in this search. For instance, many Jewish men clung to their patriotism and many could take pride in their status as war veterans. They were convinced that the Nazis would never harm men who had shown themselves to be 'true Germans' in the war and had made sacrifices for their country. References to fathers or husbands who had won the Iron Cross and who believed that that gave them immunity from Nazi persecution appear as a leitmotif in almost all of the stories of the Jewish interviewees. Wilhelm Heimann (1915) from Borghorst, for instance, recalled how 'my father being such a German, said, "There is nothing to fear. ... As an ex-soldier who has won the Iron Cross, nothing will happen to me and my family."' ²⁶

This clinging to a belief in immunity may be seen as a psychological reaction: these people were trying to shake off the sense of threat and humiliation advancing on them. Their trust, however, was not unreasonable: unable to take in how drastically the moral climate was changing, they were still judging their position according to the values they had always known. War veterans had traditionally enjoyed considerable status, and many Jews who had fought in the war were members of veterans' clubs. ²⁷ In the early years, it seemed only realistic to expect the Nazis to continue respecting their old status. Indeed, war veterans were initially exempted from certain measures, ²⁸ and could even be granted new awards for services rendered. ²⁹

Besides holding on to familiar values and logic, many Jews also looked for new moral benchmarks to interpret the changes in their environment. In this search, they 'stretched' their ideas of moral normality, finding new interpretations for the behaviour of their non-Jewish acquaintances and adjusting the moral standards they expected in an attempt to understand and adapt. This was especially so when they encountered rejection by non-Jews in which there was little display of power—be it avoidance, withholding of recognition or greeting, or seemingly 'friendly' termination of contact. By interpreting this kind of behaviour as a simple consequence of coercion and oppression by the Nazis, they were able to 'understand' why their former

neighbours and friends acted in this way: contact with Jews could bring them into great danger. Appreciating this, they mirrored the evasive behaviour of their non-Jewish acquaintances themselves. When they encountered those who suddenly failed to greet them, they silently withdrew and ignored them at subsequent meetings. Bernard Suskind, for example explained his own position vis-à-vis non-Jewish acquaintances like this:

The other fellow, who was once friends with you—you don't want to show anybody that you were friends. You want to protect him as much as he wants to not associate with you to protect himself. It was out of the question to go over to him and say, 'Hermann, how are you?', so he would have to say, 'Please go away, don't come near me.' You avoided the contact.³⁰

Sometimes the initiative in breaking contact even came from the Jewish side. Wilhelm Heimann, who grew up in Borghorst but moved to work in Hamburg in 1934, recounted: 'When I was in Hamburg, the Nuremberg Laws were introduced. At that time I had a non-Jewish girl-friend and the girl and I would have ended up in a camp if we had continued our relationship. So I wrote her a dramatic farewell letter.' He also described the isolation of his parents in his native village as a choice they had themselves settled on. 'When things started to become uncomfortable, my parents began to confine themselves to a few people—just those who had not joined the party.'³¹ In Neuenhaus, a non-Jewish villager tried to have a chat with his Jewish acquaintance, Jacob, whom he had not seen for a long time, but Jacob raised his hand and did not stop. He said: 'We must not speak to each other: it is dangerous for you and for me. Goodbye!'³²

The reasons the Jewish interviewees gave for personally putting an end to contacts mainly centred round a wish not to get another person into trouble. 'We did not look at each other in the street because it was too dangerous'; 'you wanted to protect the other man'; and 'you did not want to do that to people, not to yourself and not to others'—these are some of the statements made. With this 'understanding' of the delicate position their neighbours may have found themselves in, Jews could neutralize the nastiness of what exclusion really meant. By not opposing their exclusion—indeed by even anticipating it—they were protecting their friends from terrible harm. At least, that is what they told themselves.

This way of looking at things did not work when non-Jewish neighbours behaved in ways that emphasized the power imbalance between Jews and themselves. This could be in deliberate attempts to degrade or

in overt exploitation. Such offensiveness remained outside the stretched moral order; it was still perceived as morally abnormal. And, of course, there were some Jews who tried to defend their self-worth in open confrontation. Walter Steinweg, for instance, recounted that in his village, Horstmar, the milk distribution was provided by the brother of the Nazi mayor. Walter's family consisted of nine children, and now they were being denied milk. 'My father went there and confronted him with this, and said: "We are one big family and my children need milk." He made it very difficult for him. ... And they had an argument.' The result was that Walter's father was put in prison. He was lucky: after three weeks in captivity, he was released, since there was an amnesty on Hitler's birthday, which happened to fall at this time. Yet, it was now clear that the family no longer had a future in Horstmar.³³

CONCLUSION

The transformation in the moral order that took place in the years of National Socialism was embedded in the practice of mundane social relations. The macro changes in the existing moral order not only found their expression in the micro acts of 'ordinary' non-Jewish individuals, but became confirmed and established through these acts. In their everyday interactions with Jewish individuals, non-Jews were confronted with the implications of this moral transformation, and with their own role in the shifting morality. In such moments of encounter, non-Jews might feel sharply that their treatment of Jews did not accord with the moral standards they had adhered to in the past. But evasion and denial enabled them to contribute to the anti-Semitic exclusion with as little moral dissonance as possible: in this way, they could end relations with their Jewish acquaintances while pretending that nothing was really going on, that everything was 'normal'.

Ambivalence and inconsistency in the behaviour of non-Jews made it hard for Jews to orient themselves in a profoundly changing everyday reality—and even harder to decide how to react. Jewish people came to live in an 'abnormal normality' where they tried in every way to discover the logic in the morally abnormal positioning of their non-Jewish neighbours. For many, the attempt to adjust to this abnormal normality ended with the experience of the vicious pogrom of November 1938. The threats and violence towards Jews and the imprisonment of large numbers of them made that night a turning point in their perception of normality. And to those

who were hoping that better times might come, it became clear that there was no place for Jews in Nazi Germany any more. The social and moral order in which they had lived no longer existed; they would have to leave everything behind and start again somewhere else. From that moment, almost all German-Jews tried to flee Germany. Those unable to get away awaited an uncertain and fearful future.

NOTES

1. C. Spieker (1988) 'Ausgrenzung und Verfolgung jüdischer Mitbürger 1933–1938' in A. Bierhaus (ed.) *'Es ist nicht leicht, darüber zu sprechen'. Der Novemberpogrom 1938 im Kreis Borken* (Borken: Kreis Borken), pp. 27–44, p. 29.
2. The photos were published in 'Auf der Suche nach Henny de Jong. Brief an eine in Auschwitz ermordete 16-Jährige aus Ahaus' (2005) written by students from class 10a of the Anne Frank Realschule for the project 'Stolpersteine'. It is possible that the photos were taken in 1933 and 1938 rather than in 1934 and 1937.
3. 'Auf der Suche nach Marga Cohen und ihrer Familie. Tagebuch einer Annäherung', written by pupils of classes 9a, 10a and 10d of the Anne Frank Realschule, Ahaus, March 2009, pp. 23–4.
4. Published in 'Auf der Suche nach Marga Cohen und ihrer Familie' (2009).
5. In the first decades of the twentieth century, this region was characterized by agriculture and the textile industry. Social life was generally marked by clear lines of distinction between the different religious affiliations, but also by strong neighbourhood relations. Jews formed less than 1 per cent of the population: in most of the villages and small towns, the Jewish community consisted of 10–15 families. See, for the Grafschaft Bentheim: Z. Asaria (1979) *Die Juden in Niedersachsen: Von den ältesten Zeiten bis zur Gegenwart* (Leer, Ostfriesland: Rautenberg), p. 317; H. Voort (1990) 'Demografie, economisch leven en sociale positie van de Joden in de geschiedenis van de Grafschaft Bentheim' in D. Koldijk and H. Voort (eds) *De Joodse Gemeenschap in N-O Overijssel en de Grafschaft Bentheim/Die jüdischen Gemeinden in N-O Overijssel und der Grafschaft Bentheim* (Bad Bentheim: A. Hellendoorn), pp. 181–222 at 196–7.
6. This study was part of an investigation into the everyday relations of Jews and non-Jews living in the region of the Dutch-German border – on both sides – between the 1920s and 1950s. In this project, new interviews were conducted with 40 people, and a re-analysis was made of 63 interviews from the Visual History Archive and from previous research projects. See F. Demant (2015) *Verre bureu. Samenleven in de schaduw van de Holocaust*

- [Distant Neighbours. Jews and non-Jews in the Shadow of the Holocaust] (Enschede: Ipskamp Drukkers).
7. C. Hecht (2003) *Deutsche Juden und Antisemitismus in der Weimarer Republik* (Bonn: Dietz); D. L. Niewyk (1980) *The Jews in Weimar Germany* (Manchester: Manchester University Press).
 8. M. Kaplan (1998) *Between Dignity and Despair. Jewish Life in Nazi Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
 9. Kaplan (1998) *Between Dignity and Despair*, p. 10.
 10. See H. Gerstenberger and D. Schmidt (1985) 'Einleitung' in H. Gerstenberger and D. Schmidt (eds) *Normalität oder Normalisierung? Geschichtswerkstätten und Faschismusanalyse* (Münster: Westfälisches Dampfboot), pp. 9–13, p. 10. See also M. Broszat and S. Friedländer (1988) 'A controversy about the Historicization of National Socialism', *New German Critique* 44, 85–126; D. J. K. Peukert (1982) *Volksgenossen und Gemeinschaftsfremde. Anpassung, Ausmerze und Aufbegehren unter dem Nationalsozialismus* (Köln: Bund-Verlag); D. J. K. Peukert (1987) 'Alltag und Barbarei. Zur Normalität des Dritten Reiches' in D. Diner (ed.) *Ist der Nationalsozialismus Geschichte? Zu Historisierung und Historikerstreit* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag), pp. 142–53; F. Trommler (1992) 'Between Normality and Resistance: Catastrophic Gradualism in Nazi Germany', *The Journal of Modern History* 64, 82–101; A. S. Bergerson (2004) *Ordinary Germans in Extraordinary Times. The Nazi Revolution in Hildesheim* (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press).
 11. The sociologists Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann posit that everyday life consists of rituals and routines that connote underlying assumptions, but that these assumptions do not routinely emerge into consciousness. See P. Berger and T. Luckmann (1979/1966) *The Social Construction of Reality. A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Harmondsworth: Penguin). This study builds on this insight by differentiating between existential assumptions of consistency and coherence on the one hand, and moral assumptions about good and evil and about appropriateness and inappropriateness, on the other. People experience their daily lives as normal when their experiences fit within both their existential and their moral expectations. Hence we distinguish here between existential and moral normality.
 12. Interview with Ms. H., 3 October 2011.
 13. Interview with Ludwig Hopp, 18 June 2010.
 14. W. Feld (2008) *Mir ist, als tropfe langsam alles Leben aus meinem Herzen. Der lange Abschied der Familie Herz aus Burgsteinfurt. Eine Dokumentation – Die Juden in der Geschichte der ehemaligen Stadt Burgsteinfurt Teil III* (Münster: LIT Verlag), p. 86.

15. Local and regional reports on popular opinion show that the Nazis did not (yet) represent the views of the general population in the region. For example, in August 1934, the NSDAP *Kreisleitung* Ahaus wrote that a strong boycott against officials working actively for the party was noticeable, while sales from Jews were rising. In December of the same year, it was reported that the Jews were ‘decent people’ in the eyes of those who were not National Socialists. In June 1935, the *Stapostelle Regierungsbezirk* Münster reported that in Gronau the windows of the *Stürmerkast* had been smashed in. In the same month in Borghorst it was noted that the use of the Heil Hitler salute was decreasing, and that there were party members who greeted Jews by offering them a handshake. In December 1935, the *Stapostelle* wrote that people—especially the rural population—preferred to buy from Jews because their goods were cheap. In the following year, the *Stapostelle* kept complaining about the limited impact of the boycotts. STAM, Gauleitung Westfalen-Nord, Gauinspekteure, Nr.10; GStA; I. HA Rep. 90P, Bd. 14,6; GStA; I. HA Rep. 90P, Bd. 14,5, all in O. Kulka and E. Jäckel (2010) *The Jews in the Secret Nazi Reports on Popular Opinion in Germany, 1933–1945* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press); S. Brood and A. Grönefeld (1989) *Antisemitismus in Borghorst* (Steinfurt: Stadt Steinfurt), p. 11.
16. Undefined situations are interactions where no clarity or consensus exists on the norms, values, hierarchical relations and roles of the various parties involved in an interaction. According to Erving Goffman, who coined the term, interactions are always performances in which the actors play a certain, often predefined role. In undefined situations, these roles need to be re-determined to arrive at a coherent interaction. E. Goffman (1959/1956) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Doubleday Anchor).
17. A. Piechorowski (1976) *Der Untergang der jüdischen Gemeinde Nordhorn* (Nordhorn: Hausdruckerei der Stadt Nordhorn), p. 37.
18. Interview with Hermann Zilversmit, which appears in H. Titz (ed.) (2003) *Auf Spuren jüdischen Lebens in der Grafschaft Bentheim* (Nordhorn: Landkreis Grafschaft Bentheim), pp. 174–8.
19. W. Steinweg, ‘Interview 12693’ in USC Shoah Foundation: the Institute for Visual History and Education (1994–2014), <http://www.vha.fu-berlin.de>, date accessed 19 June 2012.
20. Interview with Bernard Suskind, 23 September 2011.
21. W. Sager (1982) ‘Ältere Bürger sagen aus. Jüdische Mitbürger in Neuenhaus bis zur Endlösung’ in A. Piechorowski (ed.) *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Juden in der Grafschaft Bentheim* (Bad Bentheim: Verlag Heimatverein der Grafschaft Bentheim), pp. 115–17, at 117.
22. Interview with Helge Domp, 21 March 2011.
23. Interview with Bernard Suskind, 23 September 2011.
24. Kaplan (1998) *Between Dignity and Despair*, pp. 72–3.

25. 'Auf der Suche nach Marga Cohen und ihrer Familie' (2009), p. 2 and pp. 24–5.
26. W. Heimann, 'Interview 9335' in the Visual History Archive of the USC Shoah Foundation: the Institute for Visual History and Education (1994–2014), <http://www.vha.fu-berlin.de>, date accessed 22 June 2012.
27. T. Grady (2011) *The German-Jewish soldiers of the First World War in History and Memory* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press).
28. For instance, Jewish veterans were exempted from the law of April 1933 that forced Jewish doctors, lawyers, judges and officials to resign or go into early retirement. See Kaplan (1998) *Between Dignity and Despair*, p. 24. During the boycott of 1 April 1933 many Jewish men turned up in their uniforms, wearing all their military decorations, and, instead of hatred and rejection, they received a lot of sympathy. See Grady (2011) *The German Jewish Soldiers of the First World War*, pp. 130–131.
29. In July 1934, on the initiative of Hindenburg, a new award was established for all German veterans. Many German-Jewish veterans applied for this award, and although some municipalities tried to block their applications, in 1937, 95 per cent of them were granted. See Grady (2011) *The German Jewish Soldiers of the First World War*, p. 132.
30. Interview with Bernard Suskind, 23 September 2011.
31. W. Heimann, 'Interview 9335' in the Visual History Archive of the USC Shoah Foundation: the Institute for Visual History and Education (1994–2014), <http://www.vha.fu-berlin.de>. date accessed 22 June 2012.
32. Sager (1982) 'Ältere Bürger sagen aus', p. 119.
33. W. Steinweg, 'Interview 12693' in the Visual History Archive of the USC Shoah Foundation: the Institute for Visual History and Education (1994–2014), <http://www.vha.fu-berlin.de>, date accessed 19 June 2012.

Economic Trust in the ‘Racial State’. A Case Study from the German Countryside

Stefanie Fischer

Recent research has shown that categorizing actors into a victim–perpetrator–bystander triad does not help us grasp the complexity of agency within genocidal settings. Holocaust studies have, instead, shifted towards understanding the Holocaust as a social process and have taken to examining the various nuances *in between* the categories of victim, perpetrator and bystander. These studies offer a view of the Holocaust as a multilayered process of actions performed by Jews and non-Jews alike at various times and places.¹ Such an approach casts the Holocaust as a history of relationships between members of both groups, all participating in very different ways. Specifically, it erases the black-and-white picture of Jews as passive victims and their Nazi tormentors as the sole executors of evil. This way of looking at the Holocaust allows us to see it as a social process mutually carried out by people with agency across Nazi-occupied Europe—in the streets, in schools, in pubs, in parks, in private homes, or simply wherever Jews and non-Jews met and communicated at different levels of engagement.

In order to understand the Holocaust as a social process, we must ask who the actors in the events that unfolded actually were, and what specific

S. Fischer (✉)

Chair for Modern History II (German-Jewish History), University of Potsdam, Potsdam, Germany

e-mail: stefanie.maria.fischer@uni-potsdam.de

roles these actors played in the exclusion, persecution and eventual murder of Europe's Jews. We also need to enquire into the social dynamics and changes influencing developments. What role did economic motivation, for example, play in decisions individuals made to participate in the genocide or to resist?²

In this chapter, I examine the social process by exploring some of the ambivalences in Jewish–non-Jewish relations at the micro level. I take a close look at the relationships between Jewish cattle-dealers and non-Jewish farmers in an area of the German countryside. Here, over generations, the interaction between Jews and non-Jews had traditionally been more intimate than in urban areas; yet in rural areas the level of anti-Semitic violence was often even worse than in the towns and cities. Various layers of interaction become evident when we examine the exclusion of Jews from the economic sphere. In rural trade, Jews and non-Jews cooperated in a trust relationship as accepted participants in business done to their mutual advantage, albeit not always on an equal footing. In many German states, there had been a strong Jewish presence in rural trade since the Middle Ages, and this was especially so in the cattle-dealing business, where relationships between dealers and farmers—in other words, between Jews and non-Jews—were particularly tight. The cattle-dealing business had been a predominantly Jewish domain in the German provinces from the beginning of Jewish settlement there and remained so until the destruction of this arrangement during the Nazi era.³ When the Nazis came to power and tried to disengage the relationships between 'Aryan' farmers and the Jewish cattle-dealers, their racist goals were challenged: the farmers wanted to safeguard their economic interests. This was well expressed in a statement by a member of the Nazi-dominated city council of Gunzenhausen, who, in 1934, complained: 'We need the Jews, because I'm still not able to sell my cattle without the Jews. Christian traders, in contrast, only offer overpriced cows, which Jews do not do.'⁴ This statement reveals a great deal about the relationships between Jews, non-Jews and Nazis in the German countryside, which I explore in this chapter. I suggest that the relationships between Jewish cattle-traders and non-Jewish farmers were built on economic trust which continued even after anti-Semitic violence had begun to make its impact.⁵ This applies even to such anti-Semitic regions as Julius Streicher's *Gau*, where staunch local Nazi leaders initiated anti-Semitic attacks even before racist laws were introduced at the Reich level.

JEWES IN THE CATTLE-DEALING BUSINESS

The strong Jewish presence in the cattle trade was a result of historical trade restrictions prohibiting Jews from owning land and thus confining them to trade. In the countryside, their activity was limited mostly to cattle-dealing and trade in agricultural products such as hops and corn. In 1933, especially in Bavaria, a large percentage of the Jewish population still lived in the countryside and most of them made their living in the cattle-dealing business.⁶ There were various reasons for this. One was the after-effect of the Bavarian *Judenedikt* (Edict on the Jews) of 1813,⁷ which prevented emancipation of the Jews for a longer time than was the case in Prussian areas.⁸ While many Jews left their villages for bigger German cities or emigrated to America during the process of emancipation, the rural Jews who remained continued to follow traditional patterns of living.⁹

For my case study, I have chosen the North Bavarian district of Middle Franconia, because it presents a number of characteristics important for this research. First, up to 1933, Middle Franconia was home to one of the largest rural Jewish communities in Germany. Some 1.37 per cent of the whole population there was Jewish—a much larger figure than the German average of 0.9 per cent.¹⁰ Second, Middle Franconia was a Nazi stronghold, where Julius Streicher, publisher of the weekly journal *Der Stürmer*, enjoyed great popularity, along with his followers, from the mid-1920s onward. In 1925, 69.25 per cent of the region's inhabitants were Protestant,¹¹ and historians like Manfred Kittel have argued that Middle Franconia's Protestant and middle-class population constituted the backbone of the early Nazi movement.¹² This is reflected in pre-1933 elections, where in some areas, such as the Rothenburg-Land district, the Nazi party had gained as much as 87.5 per cent of the free vote by April 1932.¹³ Due to these facts, Middle Franconia may in some aspects be an extreme case¹⁴; yet it seems to show general trends that can also be found—sometimes slightly later—in other German regions.

Previous research on the region has been predominantly perpetrator-focused,¹⁵ and very little has been written on its Jewish history.¹⁶ As for scholarship on the economic history of German Jews and the history of their persecution, studies have largely excluded rural Jewry, even though the rural Jews constituted one-third of the German Jewish population and were the group most severely targeted by Nazi attacks.¹⁷ Up to the late 1990s, the historiography on German Jews focused primarily on the urban and assimilated Jewry who represented the majority of the Jewish population on the eve of their destruction.¹⁸ Even when Jews outside the cities have been discussed, most scholarship has neglected Jews in rural *trades*—

such as Jewish cattle-dealers—and it has missed their significance for the rural economy and for rural society. Holocaust historiography has yet to put this group on its research agenda. But it is a group of great relevance. Jewish cattle-dealers were middlemen between farmers and urban market outlets, and, as such, they were essential both to the local economy and to the urban population.¹⁹ Until tractors became affordable for farmers in the 1960s, the majority of small-scale farmers in south-west Germany depended on cattle for farming. As a consequence, the number of livestock a farmer owned defined his status in the village community.²⁰ Traditionally, most farmers were unable to pay cash for their animals, and they, therefore, depended on the cattle-dealer's willingness to grant them loans. This put the cattle-dealer in a very sensitive position: on the one hand, he was the man who provided farmers with the cattle they needed; on the other, he was the one who would take the cattle away, should the farmers be unable to pay off their debts.²¹ Put another way, Jewish cattle-dealers depended on the farmers' ability to pay back their debts, and the farmers, in turn, depended on the dealer's willingness to grant them credit. Thus, the cattle-dealer-farmer business relationship was one based on mutual dependency.

Previous studies have explained the farmers' reluctance to fall in line with the Nazi anti-Semitic boycott policy by pointing to the high number of Jews in the cattle-dealing business. Without scholarly proof, many have argued that Jews held a monopoly in the cattle trade, so that farmers had no choice but to do trade with them,²² and anti-Semites used this argument to blame Jewish cattle-dealers for pooling stock, manipulating prices and controlling a market devoid of Christian competitors. At 37 per cent in the 1920s, the number of Jews in the cattle-dealing business was indeed much higher than in any of the other so-called 'Jewish professions' (it was 13 per cent in the Bavarian legal sector, for instance).²³ Nevertheless, it is extremely important to emphasize that Jews had no monopoly in cattle-dealing. The fact that 63 per cent of all cattle-dealers were non-Jews means that the obstinate disregard of some farmers towards the Nazi boycott policy cannot solely be attributed to the lack of Christian alternatives. This fact suggests that there were further non-structural bonds between Jewish cattle-dealers and farmers that could even endure the impact of anti-Semitic violence.

TRUST IN THE CATTLE-DEALING BUSINESS

In order to understand these non-structural bonds in the cattle-dealing business and their meaning for social processes, we need to have a grasp of the character and traditions of this business sector. The scholar Margot

Grünberg had already summarized the crux of the cattle-dealing business in a dissertation dating from 1932: 'The success of a cattle-dealing business results from the nature of the relationships between the cattle trader and the farmer.'²⁴ The business was indeed built upon the personal relationship between seller and buyer. It was conducted according to rituals that followed specific, long-established rules. Deals were sealed with a handshake, not a written sales contract. The lack of a written document created a very precarious situation, which could become even more precarious, due to the very uncertain nature of the livestock. There were no reliable or objective data on the cow available: the buyer had to trust the word of the salesman. In fact, each partner had to trust the other to keep his promise. Thus, the cattle-dealing business was based on mutual trust.²⁵

This trust was often shaken by anti-Semitic *distrust* which stigmatized Jews per se as untrustworthy, greedy business partners who aimed to exploit farmers. However, as sociological scholarship has shown, trust is a critical prerequisite of economic exchange and is essential for stable relationships; it is a binding factor in any social process. The sociologist Lynne Zucker has made it clear that trust first needs to be produced—she calls it a 'trust production' process. According to Zucker, gender, age and religion may work as obstacles in the trust production process, but they do not function as a complete barrier.²⁶ In other words, even if farmers had anti-Semitic resentments against Jews in general, it does not mean that they were prevented from building up a trust relationship with their 'individual cattle-dealer'. Moreover, I argue that trust was produced between farmers and cattle-dealers simply through doing business. For example, a cattle-dealer would prepare the ground for a trust relationship by dressing like a true man of honour, wearing a well-cut suit and a clean white shirt, and he would start the deal with a conversation on some common topic, asking the farmer's opinion on it, and, last but not least, validating both the farmer's livestock and his work.²⁷

From a sociological perspective, trust is defined as a set of expectations shared by all those involved in a social exchange. It is seen as an informal, interactive process operating through internalization or moral commitment. Formalization—through contracts, for example—is generally seen as necessary only when trust is disrupted.²⁸ Hence, the trust bonds between farmers and cattle-dealers were built up in their daily interactions, in the social experience they had with one another. Both cattle-dealers and farmers were equally responsible for the production and preservation of their trust relationship. Even so-called untrustworthy business techniques, such as the use of *Viehhändlersprache* (cow-dealer's argot)—

often believed to be a secret business language for fixing prices without the farmers' understanding—did not result in distrust.²⁹ Moreover, these business methods functioned in an inclusive rather than exclusive manner. Both farmers and cattle-dealers, Jews and non-Jews alike, went about deals in the same way.³⁰ The sharing of long-established business rituals in cattle-dealing that included all participating parties had created a trust community. Prejudices directed at the social or religious background of a business contact might hamper the trust production process, but daily interactions generally functioned as a stronger element.

ECONOMIC TRUST VERSUS ANTI-SEMITIC VIOLENCE, 1932–1939

The trust relationship was fairly fragile, however. Particularly in times of economic crisis, it could be shaken by waves of anti-Semitic agitation. For centuries, Jewish businessmen in the cattle trade had had a name for exploiting farmers and they were sometimes popularly referred to as *Bauernschlächter* ('farmer slaughterers') because they came to collect their money and, when there were defaulters, the Jewish dealers were the ones who, by law, carried out the sale of their farms. But it was only after the global economic crisis of 1930 that anti-Semitic feeling began to harm the cattle-dealer–farmer relationship in a really severe way. From that point on, the Jewish population in general, and Jewish cattle-dealers in particular, were subjected to anti-Semitic violence. Due to the catastrophic economic situation in the late 1920s and early 1930s, many farmers found themselves unable to pay back their debts to Jewish creditors. They went bankrupt and lost their homes and farms. Right-wing and Nazi propaganda put the blame on the Jews alone for this disastrous situation. From early on, the young Nazi party tried to rupture the strong economic ties between cattle-dealers and farmers, which were sometimes social ties as well, undermining the traditional trust bonds with racist hatred. For example, in 1932 in the Nazi stronghold of Rothenburg ob der Tauber, the local SA leader, Wilhelm Stegmann, struck out at an elderly Jewish cattle-dealer with a whip.³¹ In response to a complaint by the local Jewish community, Rothenburg's SA-*Standartenführer*, Michl Fleischmann, published an open letter to the Bavarian state government in the *Ansbacher Zeitung*, the newspaper for the city of Ansbach, arguing that 'no Jew has yet (!) been harmed and they are all well-off (*wohlernährt*) and they are happily alive.'³² At the same

time, Nazi supporters started handing out issues of the anti-Semitic weekly *Der Stürmer* to farmers in the local cattle markets.³³ The laws had not yet changed, but the actions of non-Jews towards Jews were preparing the ground for the official anti-Jewish policy that was to come.

TRUST RELATIONSHIPS IN THE 'RACIAL STATE'

The year 1933 witnessed an explosion of physical attacks against Jews, particularly in rural areas. Of course, National Socialist policy itself was essentially violent.³⁴ The young dictatorship established its power through open violence in the streets. Jews were no longer safe from physical attacks either outside or in their homes. For example, in Rothenburg, the SA occupied the house of the cattle-dealing Mann family for more than four weeks in March 1933. While the men were taken into 'protective custody' (*Schutzhaft*), the wife and his daughter remained in the house under an SA guard. After three weeks living in this way, the wife, Klara Mann, committed suicide. The men got out of 'protective custody' after a while, but, once released, Josef Mann had a nervous breakdown. Neither he nor his business ever recovered from the attack.³⁵ The case was not unique. In the Bavarian provincial town of Ellingen, local Nazis rioted in front of the house of a cattle-dealer.³⁶ The open violence against Jews continued for weeks. It had become a part of public life.

The violence affected both Jewish and non-Jewish society. After all, violence, if carried out in public, can be seen as an event. Naturally, it first affects the victim who experiences physical pain. However, violence against Jews also had an effect on 'Aryan' society as a whole. Since Jews were an ostracized group, people who maintained contact with such outcasts could all too easily become part of that group themselves: the Nazis called them *Judenknechte* (slaves of Jews). As Michael Wildt has shown, the racist German *Volksgemeinschaft*, or so-called people's community, was established by excluding the 'other' (the Jews) while including the 'we' (German 'Aryans').³⁷ The violence against Jews was intended to disengage the trust relationships between Jews and non-Jews, following this principle.

Even though the Nazis started harassing Jewish cattle-traders from 1930 onwards, their goal of undoing the Jewish-Gentile trust bonds was hindered by both sides. Farmers continued to do business with Jewish cattle-dealers regardless of the pressure the Nazis put on them. In this

business sector, the anti-Semitic policy of the Nazis was put to a halt,³⁸ as even avowedly Nazi farmers, like Johann Eiffert and Georg Ebert, put economic trust in the cattle-dealers they knew before any anti-Semitic distrust. In August 1934, Eiffert and Ebert rode their bicycles to the village of Colmberg to see the cattle-dealer Jakob Steinberger. While they were inside Steinberger's house, local Nazis threw their bikes into the village pond to punish them for doing business with an 'enemy of the state', namely a Jew. As an honourable businessman, Steinberger paid for his customers to have their bikes repaired. But Eiffert and Ebert themselves also took action against the humiliation. Although both of them were members of the Nazi party, they sued the local Nazi leader and insisted on continuing their business relationship with Steinberger, with whom they had been dealing for many years. Their claim against the local Nazi leader was upheld.³⁹ In fact, there were many Nazi farmers, like Eiffert and Ebert, who put trust in a good bargain with their 'individual cattle-dealer' before the anti-Semitic distrust the Nazis were pressing for. In these cases, the trust that had developed between Jew and non-Jew functioned beyond racially defined boundaries. Consequently, it acted as a partial brake on the progressive exclusion of Jews from the German economy.

Although Nazi party members had stringent instructions to boycott Jewish businesses, Nazi farmers complained to the Nazi authorities that this policy put them at a disadvantage relative to non-Nazi farmers. A letter of May 1933 from the Bavarian Farmers' Association to the Bavarian Agricultural Department expressed discomfort with the policy, stating that '(e)ven Nazi farmers complain that if they do not have their Jews, they cannot sell their livestock.'⁴⁰ In order to cut the trust bonds between the non-Jewish farmers and the Jewish cattle-dealers, the Nazi regime applied considerable pressure. The business records of farmer Andreas Auernhammer from the village of Oberhochstatt demonstrate how this pressure changed the relationships between Jews and farmers after 1933. Between 1924 and 1933, Auernhammer regularly purchased livestock from the Jewish firm Bermann & Oppenheimer—even after Hitler came to power. In the early months of Nazi rule, we find the following note: '16 March 1933: Sold two cows to Bermann, Ellingen, received 250 Marks.' By June 1934, fearing censure from the Nazi regime, Auernhammer had become more cautious in documenting his trade with the firm, and wrote only their initials: '13 June 1934: Sold 2 oxen to B..... E..... for 310 Marks.'⁴¹ Each week, farmers who continued to do business with Jewish cattle-dealers would find their names published in *Der Stürmer*, accused

of being 'enemies of the state'. Under the Nazi regime, business dealings with Jews were criminalized. Distrust among farmers increased steadily. Farmers who denounced a neighbour for selling a cow to a Jewish dealer participated in the Nazi policy of distrust.⁴² If they did not participate actively, they might gain emotionally by seeing the humiliation of their neighbour and the Jew. In other words, farmers could continue doing business with a Jewish merchant and at the same time participate in an anti-Semitic attack: cooperation, silent observation, and resistance often existed in close proximity.⁴³

Unlike Jewish civil servants (including teachers and judges), who had already lost their jobs by April 1933, Jewish cattle-dealers could officially continue doing business right up to June 1938. This absence of an official ban on Jews engaging in the cattle-dealing trade was quite frequently exploited by local Nazi leaders to show off their own power. This is what Michael Gerstner, hard-line mayor and Nazi leader, *Kreisleiter* of the Weissenburg district, did. From 1933 on, in his area of Bavaria, Gerstner initiated violent attacks against the inter-regionally operating Jewish cattle-dealing firm Bermann & Oppenheimer, which was based at Ellingen.

One of Gerstner's early attacks against a business partner in this cattle-dealing firm failed. This was in 1935. Gerstner tried to deprive this man of his trading licence on the pretext of a tax offence which lay quite far back in time. To Gerstner's dismay, the next highest administrative level quashed his endeavour because as yet no law had been introduced to allow the exclusion of Jews from business on racial grounds.⁴⁴ Most tellingly, farmers who had stayed in close contact with the firm testified in a letter to Gerstner that they wanted to continue doing business with it.⁴⁵ This was also expressed in another letter to Gerstner—this time from an officer of the gendarmerie in the village of Ettenstatt. The officer explained, 'This [Bermann] case shows that there are still farmers in Ettenstatt who think more of the Jewish cattle-dealers than of the Aryan cattle-dealers. Otherwise [Farmer] Link would not have ordered the Jew [Max Gutmann, business partner in Bermann & Oppenheimer] to buy an ox.'⁴⁶ So Gerstner's attempt to push the Jewish firm out of business failed at two levels: first at the administrative level and then at the social level. Despite huge anti-Semitic propaganda urging farmers not to do business with a Jewish cattle-dealing firm, farmers kept up the existing economic relations.

In response, Gerstner shifted to more stringent means of intervention, using physical violence against individual business partners. In July

1936, the Nazi major put Max Gutmann into ‘protective custody’ in the Weissenburg court prison. The accusation against Gutmann was that he had claimed that Gerstner had granted him permission to buy up livestock in the village of Kaltenbuch.⁴⁷ Ten days later, Gutmann was granted ‘conditional release’ from his ‘protective custody’ and was prohibited from setting foot in the village of Ettenstatt ever again.⁴⁸ Further, Gerstner lodged a complaint in the civil court, accusing Gutmann of libel and slander. After Gutmann made a public declaration that Gerstner had *not* granted him permission to do business in Kaltenbuch, the civil court dropped the complaint.⁴⁹ According to Gerstner’s own testimony at the public prosecutor’s office, his goal to push the Jewish firm out of the cattle-dealing business was developing into ‘cat and mouse play’.⁵⁰ The more Gerstner chose more and more radical methods, the more Bermann & Oppenheimer fought back and the more the farmers expressed their solidarity with the firm.

This kind of violence from vehement local Nazi leaders was directed not only against the Jewish cattle-dealers but also against farmers who continued to do business with them. In September 1936, the Nazi district head office in the neighbouring town of Hilpoltstein reported that it had taken farmers into ‘protective custody’ for continuing to sell livestock to Jewish traders despite the fierce propaganda circulating in this district.⁵¹ In retaliation for failure to heed the propaganda campaign, the Nazi party was treating farmers who continued doing business with Jews to this kind of punishment.⁵² The Hilpoltstein report explained: ‘The political leadership of the Hilpoltstein district had to make a regretful observation. The business relationships of the farmers with the Jews [of the Bermann & Oppenheimer firm] have expanded to such a degree that the political leadership saw itself forced to respond vigorously.’⁵³ To get on top of the situation and to reach a decision on how to react, the Nazi district leadership convened a meeting, summoning the mayor, the district leader of the local farmers (the *Ortsbauernführer*), ‘Aryan’ peasants, civil servants from the district administration, representatives of rural cooperative movements (*Raiffeisengenossenschaften*), and a spokesperson from the Agricultural Department of the Nazi party in Franconia.⁵⁴ In addition, farmers who wanted to sell their livestock for a ‘decent price’ were asked to put their names on a list so that a ‘competitive’ cattle-dealer could be sent to them—which, of course, meant a non-Jewish one.⁵⁵

One year later, in 1937, Gerstner had still not managed to push the Jewish firm out of business. He now adopted a new approach, taking the

other business partner of the firm, Bernhard Bermann, into 'protective custody' for a total of 108 days. Gerstner accused Bermann of promising 10,000 Marks to the farmer Leonhard Hübner from Hundsdorf if he were to kill Gerstner and the NSDAP *Kreisobmann* Maderholz.⁵⁶ The district attorney stopped the proceedings due to lack of evidence and contradictory witness statements. Regardless of the findings of the district attorney, the journal *Der Stürmer* took advantage of the fuss to publish a lurid front-page article on 'the Jew Bermann who offered money to a farmer to kill two Nazis'.⁵⁷ After being released from 'protective custody', 65-year-old Bernhard Bermann promptly left his hometown of Ellingen and found refuge at his son-in-law's house in Karlsruhe. From there, he prepared his flight from Nazi Germany and shortly afterwards escaped to London.⁵⁸

What we are finding is this: staunch local Nazi leaders like Gerstner had pushed many Jews out of cattle-trading even before the Reich government passed the laws excluding Jews from that business.⁵⁹ Actions like his demonstrate the radical dynamics between the 'normative state' and the 'prerogative state', to use the terms Ernst Fraenkel employed to exemplify the escalation dynamics of the Nazi order.⁶⁰ Michael Gerstner's constant badgering proved more effective in getting Jews excluded from the cattle-dealing business than the official anti-Semitic laws. What the Gerstner case also shows is that the economic trust between the Jewish firm and non-Jewish farmers existed beyond racially defined boundaries. It continued even after the anti-Semitic laws tried to destroy it. Indeed, it took the vehement Nazi leader, Gerstner, until 1937 to push the cattle-dealing firm out of business.

Hand in hand with the actions of local Nazi leaders came other restrictions in the daily lives of Jewish cattle-dealers, imposing enormous limitations on where they could go and what they could do. From 1933, villages started erecting signs at their boundaries with anti-Semitic warnings, such as 'JEWS ENTER AT THEIR OWN RISK'.⁶¹ Hugo Walz, who was a cattle-dealer from the small town of Gunzenhausen, recalls that, when entering a village with a sign like that, he would be chased out by Nazi supporters.⁶² In some places, public objections were raised against such anti-Jewish harassment, as reports from the *Kreisbauernschaft* of Weissenburg testify. There in 1934, for example, a person from the small town of Treuchtlingen complained to the district office about continuing anti-Jewish violence.⁶³ Admittedly, such objections may have been raised on the grounds that Jewish traders would stop coming to the villages—in other words, on economic rather than on humanitarian grounds—but I would

nevertheless argue that thuggish anti-Jewish actions and open violence in the streets also clashed with the bourgeois idea of public peace.⁶⁴

Another way for Jews to continue selling cattle was to do business at night, as Hugo Walz ended up doing. In the post-war de-Nazification hearings, Nazi farmers often testified to the court of arbitration that they had transferred livestock at night for Jewish cattle traders and that, for so doing, they had been defamed as *Judenfreunde* ('Jew friends'). For example, in one such hearing, the Nazi farmer Ludwig Hüttinger boasted that, in 1937, he had clandestinely driven a cow through the night all the 13 km from Markt Berolzheim to Ellingen for the cattle-dealer, Bermann.⁶⁵ Although many farmers still cooperated with Jewish cattle-dealers, many also took advantage of the situation by not paying back money they owed or even by physically attacking some of the traders.⁶⁶ Moreover, farmers who did not repay their debts could get away without suffering legal consequences, as Theodor Mann's lawyer recalls: 'There was huge anti-Semitic propaganda claiming that farmers did not have to pay back their debts to Jews, as they were supposed to be erased anyway.'⁶⁷ More and more farmers exploited the new political situation to their own benefit. The scale of this can be guessed from the example of the cattle-dealer, Hugo Walz, who, in a post-war compensation claim, sued 46 farmers for 75,084.85 RM which they still owed him.⁶⁸

Some Jewish cattle-traders, like Senta Bechhöfer's father, experienced physical violence from farmers. It was this that made the Bechhöfer family finally decide to flee the Reich. Senta Bechhöfer explains how, one day, her father came home crushed and full of fear: a farmer had come after him, stick in hand, threatening to beat him unless he left the farm immediately. Subsequently, the Bechhöfers began preparing their escape from Nazi Germany. This was as early as 1934.⁶⁹ Also among those who used violence against Jewish cattle-dealers were the 'Aryans' in the same trade, as a case from the village of Ettenstatt demonstrates. There, two of these rival dealers physically attacked the Jewish trader Max Gutmann, from Ellingen, when he tried to buy a cow from a farmer.⁷⁰

Like the Bechhöfers, many Jews desperately tried to get out of Germany after experiencing physical violence, even though some economic bonds survived. As a result of the harsh persecution, as many as 95.2 per cent of all rural Jews fled Middle Franconia between 1933 and 1939.⁷¹ In Julius Streicher's *Gau*, the only communities in which Jews remained were those in the cities of Nuremberg and Fürth. Between 1941 and 1944, the Nazis deported 4,700 Franconian Jews to death camps in occupied Poland. One

of them was the cattle-trader Theodor Mann from Rothenburg ob der Tauber.⁷² When the Nazis forced him to sell his business to an 'Aryan', Mann moved to Munich. In 1942, at the age of 78, he was deported, first to Theresienstadt and then, two months later, to the death camp at Treblinka, where all traces of him disappear.⁷³ After World War II, only a handful of rural Jews returned to their home towns in Middle Franconia.

Non-Jews, often former stable lads, took over the positions left open by the missing Jewish cattle-dealers. However, by this time, the days of the medium-sized cattle-dealing businesses had come to an end. Right-wing and conservative movements had been lobbying for rural cooperatives since the end of the nineteenth century, but up until the Nazi seizure of power they had failed to gain the trust of the farmers. Only after the Jews had been pushed out of the livestock trade did the number of rural cooperatives, such as the *Raiffeisen* movement, increase. By the end of the 1960s, hardly any privately operating cattle-dealers were left in Germany.

CONCLUSION

The farmers' response to Nazi policy in the Bavarian countryside brings out the significance Jewish cattle-dealers had in rural society and shows that the Nazi dictatorship was pushing too far when it tried to destroy Jewish involvement in the trade. Regional study demonstrates that everyday life under the Nazi tyranny was not only shaped by ideology and violence. This becomes particularly evident when we switch from a bird's-eye view to looking at grass-roots level: flaws and inconsistencies in the exclusion and persecution of Europe's Jews become transparent. The social dynamics at work in Nazi-occupied Europe are shown up in the farmers' response to Nazi policy. The Nazis created social conditions which first had to be adopted by the local population. This did not happen overnight; rather, as we can see in various places around Europe and here in this microstudy of relationships between Jewish cattle-dealers and farmers under Nazi rule, it was a complex process of adjustment accompanied by numerous responses ranging from cooperation with the new regime to collaboration, indifference, reluctance and an outright unwillingness to adapt to a new political, social and economic order.⁷⁴

The farmers' response to Nazi policy, therefore, only corroborates the assertion that the Holocaust developed from a history of relationships between Jews and non-Jews that had already come into being before racism became state policy. Further, it shows that farmers put their economic

interests first—they mattered more than racist ideas. Numerous other studies on the exclusion of Jews from the German economy in the 1930s have shown that the farmers' general response to interference in the cattle-dealing business was not unique; it was mirrored in other business sectors.⁷⁵ However, the present study shows more. By including social aspects—such as trust—rather than purely focusing on economic aspects, it has allowed more and more inconsistencies to emerge in the process of expelling Jews. For example, even if farmers put their economic interests first, why should one of them secretly sell a cow to a Jewish cattle-dealer in the late 1930s when the penalty would have been very severe? Archival sources suggest that the farmers were driven by some social motivation and not purely by economic interests: they and the Jewish traders had built up not only economic trust in the bargains they made with one another, but also social trust. Together these actors had created a trust community which existed beyond racially defined boundaries and which preceded the 'racial state'. This trust community existed in parallel with the largely imaginary but much propagated *Volksgemeinschaft*. Indeed, these cases expose the fake character of this Nazi invention. In fact, Jewish agency was an ongoing factor throughout the exclusionary process. Analysis of the Holocaust as a social process, therefore, requires consideration of developments from the perspective of Jewish history. The tone of relationships between Jews and non-Jews harked back to a centuries-old tradition of different levels of neighbourliness and conflict. Other than in the social sphere, Jews had played an integrated, but not always equal, part in rural business life since the beginning of Jewish settlement in Ashkenaz. Long-existing bonds and ambivalences went through changes but also continued under the influence of anti-Semitic violence. The inclusion of social categories such as trust thus helps us to shed new light on the Holocaust as a social process.

NOTES

1. T. Kühne (2010) 'The Holocaust and Local History: An Introduction', *Holocaust Studies. A Journal for History and Culture*, 16.1–2, 1–14, p. 5.
2. See A.-R. Schmitz (2015) 'Report on the Conference "The Holocaust and European Societies. Social Processes and Social Dynamics"', 23–25 October 2014', Institut für Zeitgeschichte München, in *H-Soz-Kult*, 24 January 2015.
3. Here, three crucial studies on Jews in the cattle-dealing business need to be highlighted: first, Monika Richarz's essay on Jewish cattle-dealers in the

- nineteenth century, which addresses important general questions but lacks an in-depth analysis of their business structure—M. Richarz (1990) 'Viehhandel und Landjuden im 19. Jahrhundert. Eine symbiotische Wirtschaftsbeziehung in Südwestdeutschland' in J. H. Schoeps (ed.) *Menora. Jahrbuch für deutsch-jüdische Geschichte* (München: Piper); second, Robert Kaufmann's study on Jewish and Christian cattle-dealers in Switzerland, where he has stressed the importance of the expanding railway system for the cattle-dealing business—R. U. Kaufmann (1988) *Jüdische und christliche Viehhändler in der Schweiz 1780–1930* (Zürich: Chronos); and third, Werner Teuber's regional case study on Jewish cattle-dealers in Ostfriesland which combines both Richarz's and Kaufmann's insights, but does not link the history of the cattle-dealing business to the history of the agricultural sector—W. Teuber (1995) *Jüdische Viehhändler in Ostfriesland und im nördlichen Emsland 1871–1942. Eine vergleichende Studie zu einer jüdischen Berufsgruppe in zwei wirtschaftlich und konfessionell unterschiedlichen Regionen* (Cloppenburg: Runge).
4. National Archives Nuremberg (StAN), BA Gunzenhausen 4241, report from the Heidenheim police station, 15 November 1934. Also cited in I. Kershaw, 'Antisemitismus und Volksmeinung. Reaktionen auf die Judenverfolgung' in M. Broszat and E. Fröhlich (eds) (1979) *Bayern in der NS-Zeit. Herrschaft und Gesellschaft im Konflikt* (München, Wien: Oldenbourg), p. 300.
 5. This article is based on the author's monograph: S. Fischer (2014) *Ökonomisches Vertrauen und antisemitische Gewalt. Jüdische Viehhändler in Mittelfranken, 1919–1939* (Göttingen: Wallstein).
 6. See F. Wiesemann (1992) 'Verborgene Zeugnisse der deutschen Landjuden. Eine Einführung in die Ausstellung' in F. Wiesemann (ed.) *Genizah, Hidden Legacies of the German Village Jews* (Gütersloh, München: Bertelsmann), pp. 15–32, p. 15; R. Mehler (2007) 'Auf dem Weg in die Moderne. Die fränkischen Landjuden vom frühen 19. Jahrhundert bis zum Ende der "Weimarer Republik"' in J. Hecht (ed.) *Juden in Franken 1806 bis heute* (Ansbach: Bez. Mittelfranken), pp. 67–98, p. 78.
 7. See F. Wiesemann (1979) 'Einleitung. Zur Geschichte der jüdischen Gemeinden seit 1813' in B. Z. Ophir and F. Wiesemann (eds) *Die jüdischen Gemeinden in Bayern, 1918–1945. Geschichte und Zerstörung*, veröffentl. im Rahmen d. Projekts 'Widerstand und Verfolgung in Bayern 1933–1945' (München: Oldenbourg); H. Heller (2007) 'Juden in Franken im 19. Jahrhundert' in J. Hecht (ed.) *Juden in Franken 1806 bis heute* (Ansbach: Bez. Mittelfranken).
 8. For more detailed information on Franconian Jewry, see J. Hecht (ed.) (2007) *Juden in Franken 1806 bis heute* (Ansbach: Bez. Mittelfranken);

- but also H.-P. Baum (1992) 'Jüdisches Leben in Franken' in Wiesemann (1992) *Genizah, Hidden Legacies*.
9. See Wiesemann (1979) 'Einleitung. Zur Geschichte der jüdischen Gemeinden', pp. 13–29.
 10. Kaiserliches Statistisches Amt (ed.), *Statistik des Deutschen Reichs für das Jahr 1925*, re-print (1978) (Osnabrück: Zeller).
 11. R. Hambrecht, R. (1976) *Der Aufstieg der NSDAP in Mittel- und Oberfranken, 1925–1933* (Nürnberg: Stadtarchiv Nürnberg), pp. 1ff.
 12. Hambrecht specifically focuses on the rise of the Nazi party in Franconia; see Hambrecht (1976) *Der Aufstieg der NSDAP*, but also compare with Kittel, who analyses not only the party but the mentality of the people of Middle Franconia in all its complexity: M. Kittel (2000) *Provinz zwischen Reich und Republik. Politische Mentalitäten in Deutschland und Frankreich 1918–1933/36* (München: Oldenbourg).
 13. Kittel (2000) *Provinz zwischen Reich und Republik*, p. 620.
 14. I. Kershaw (1981) 'The Persecution of the Jews and German Popular Opinion in the Third Reich', *Leo-Baeck Year-Book*, 26, 1, 261–89; and S. M. Lowenstein (1986) 'The Struggle for Survival of Rural Jews in Germany 1933–1938. The Case of Bezirksamt Weissenburg, Mittelfranken' in A. Pauker (ed.) *Die Juden im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland—The Jews in Nazi Germany 1933–1943* (Tübingen: Mohr), pp. 115–24.
 15. For example, T. Greif (2007) *Frankens braune Wallfahrt. Der Hesselberg im Dritten Reich* (Ansbach: Selbstverl. des Historischen Vereins für Mittelfranken); M. Urban (2007) *Die Konsensfabrik. Funktion und Wahrnehmung der NS-Reichsparteitage, 1933–1941* (Göttingen: V & R Unipress).
 16. Only very recently have local historians discovered Middle Franconia's Jewish history; see, for example, A. M. Kluxen and J. Hecht (eds) (2008) *Antijudaismus und Antisemitismus in Franken* (Ansbach: Bez. Mittelfranken) as well as Hecht (2007) *Juden in Franken*. But also see Christoph Daxelmüller's earlier volume on the religious and cultural history of the Franconian Jewry: C. Daxelmüller (1988) *Jüdische Kultur in Franken* (Würzburg: Echter).
 17. For example, Wolfgang Benz devoted only seven pages on the persecution of rural Jews in his volume *Jews in Germany 1933–1945*; see W. Benz (ed.) (1989) *Die Juden in Deutschland 1933–1945. Leben unter nationalsozialistischer Herrschaft*, 2nd edn (München: Beck), pp. 297–303.
 18. M. Richarz (1997) 'Ländliches Judentum als Problem der Forschung' in R. Rürup and M. Richarz (eds) *Jüdisches Leben auf dem Lande. Studien zur deutsch-jüdischen Geschichte* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck), pp. 1ff.
 19. See M. Richarz (1981) 'Emancipation and Continuity. German Jews in the Rural Economy' in W. E.-E. Mosse et al. (eds) *Revolution and Evolution: 1848 in German-Jewish history* (Tübingen: Mohr), pp. 95–116, p. 97.

20. Due to the fact that only around 1 per cent of all German small-scale farmers were able to afford a horse for farming, the majority still used productive livestock such as cattle and oxen in the 1920s; see Statistisches Reichsamt (1978) *Statistik des Deutschen Reichs 1929*, pp. 18 ff.; see also F.-W. Henning (1985) *Landwirtschaft und ländliche Gesellschaft. 1750–1976*, 2nd edn (Paderborn: Schöningh), p. 189; see also Kittel (2000) *Provinz zwischen Reich und Republik*, p. 337. Monika Richarz gives a few introductory remarks on Jewish horse-traders in the nineteenth century, in Richarz (1981) 'Emancipation and Continuity', pp. 95–116, pp. 107ff.
21. See Richarz (1990) 'Viehhandel und Landjuden', p. 81; R. U. Kaufmann (2008) 'Zum Viehhandel der Juden in Deutschland und der Schweiz—bisherige Ergebnisse und offene Fragen' in R. U. Kaufmann and C. Kohlmann (eds) *Jüdische Viehhändler zwischen Schwarzwald und Schwäbischer Alb* (Horb-Rexingen: Staudacher Verlag), p. 31.
22. This argument can be found in A. Barkai (1986) 'Die Juden als sozio-ökonomische Minderheitsgruppe in der Weimarer Republik' in W. Grab and J. H. Schoeps (eds) *Juden in der Weimarer Republik. Skizzen und Porträts* (Stuttgart: Burg), p. 340; and M. Richarz (1992) 'Die soziale Stellung der jüdischen Händler auf dem Lande am Beispiel Südwestdeutschlands' in W. E. Mosse (ed.) *Jüdische Unternehmer in Deutschland im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: Steiner), p. 276.
23. See Wiesemann (1979) 'Einleitung. Zur Geschichte der jüdischen Gemeinden', p. 18; and R. Weber (2006) *Das Schicksal der jüdischen Rechtsanwälte in Bayern nach 1933* (München: Oldenbourg).
24. M. Grünberg (1932) *Der deutsche Viehhandel* (Bottrop i. W.: Postberg) p. 7.
25. See also R. U. Kaufmann (1988) 'Die Beheimeshändler. Oder der Alltag der jüdischen Viehhändler in Zentraleuropa vor und nach der rechtlichen Gleichstellung und dem Ausbau des Eisenbahnnetzes', *Geschichtswerkstatt*, 15, 7–18, p. 11.
26. L. Zucker (1986) 'Production of Trust. Institutional Sources of Economic Structure, 1840–1920', *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 8, 53–111, p. 60.
27. U. Frevert (2009) 'Was haben Gefühle in der Geschichte zu suchen?', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 35, 2, 183–208, p. 197–8, see also Fischer (2014) *Ökonomisches Vertrauen und antisemitische Gewalt*, pp. 105–20.
28. See U. Frevert (2003) 'Vertrauen—eine historische Spurensuche' in U. Frevert (ed.) *Vertrauen. Historische Annäherungen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck); N. Luhmann (2000) *Vertrauen. Ein Mechanismus der Reduktion sozialer Komplexität*, 4th edn (Stuttgart: Lucius & Lucius), pp. 92–100.

29. Fischer (2014) *Ökonomisches Vertrauen und antisemitische Gewalt*, pp. 120–5.
30. Richarz (1981) ‘Emancipation and Continuity’, p. 100; Fischer (2014) *Ökonomisches Vertrauen und antisemitische Gewalt*, pp. 128ff.
31. *Ansbacher Zeitung*, No. 94, 19 April 1932, quoted in Hambrecht (1976) *Der Aufstieg der NSDAP*, p. 253.
32. Hambrecht (1976) *Der Aufstieg der NSDAP*, p. 253.
33. Municipal Archives Gunzenhausen, Stadtmagistrat Gunzenhausen: ‘Der Viehmarkt dahier und die diesbezügl. Vorschrift’. 1880.
34. M. Wildt (2007) *Volksgemeinschaft als Selbstermächtigung. Gewalt gegen Juden in der deutschen Provinz 1919 bis 1939* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition), p. 183 and pp. 115–37.
35. BayHStA, Reconciliation file Theoder M. and Klara M., EG 121828; K-2720.
36. F. Wiesemann (1981) ‘Juden auf dem Lande. Die wirtschaftliche Ausgrenzung der jüdischen Viehhändler in Bayern’ in J. Reulecke and D. Peukert (eds) *Die Reihen fast geschlossen. Beiträge zur Geschichte des Alltags unterm Nationalsozialismus* (Wuppertal: Hammer), p. 383.
37. Wildt (2007) *Volksgemeinschaft als Selbstermächtigung*, pp. 20ff.
38. This can be also found in other trust-based business sectors, such as the coffee trade. See D. Wierling (2015) ‘Mit Rohkaffee handeln. Hamburger Importeure im 20. Jahrhundert’ in C. Berth, D. Wierling and V. Wunderlich (eds) *Kaffeewelten. Historische Perspektiven auf eine globale Ware im 20. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: V&R unipress), p. 118ff.
39. StAN, LRA Ansbach, Abg. 1961, No. 2225, Schutzhaft, 1933.
40. Bavarian Farmers’ Association to the State Ministry for Economics, Department of Agriculture, 22 May 1933, in BayHStA, ML 3349.
41. Excerpt translated by the author: Andreas Auerhammer, ‘Business Records (1924–1935)’, private collection.
42. Robert Gellately calls such behaviour ‘compliance through pressure’: R. Gellately (1990) *The Gestapo and German Society. Enforcing Racial Policy 1933–1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), pp. 186 ff.
43. See also Gellately (1990) *The Gestapo and German Society*, pp. 186ff.
44. Copy of the resolution on ‘cleaning the cattle-dealing business of untrustworthy persons’, district of Weissenburg/Bay, 29 August 1935; also letter from lawyer Landenberger to the district of Weissenburg/Bay., Nuremberg, 10 September 1935, both from State Archives of Upper Bavaria, StAnW 3277.
45. Lawyer Landenberger to the district of Weissenburg/Bay., Nuremberg, 10 September 1935; see also lawyer Landenberger to the public prosecutor Munich, Nuremberg, both from State Archives of Upper Bavaria, StAnW 3277.

46. Etenstatt police station to the district of Weissenburg/Bay., 'Subject: Prevention of riots against Jews', 14 July 1936, in StAN, LRA Wbg., Abg. 1996, Titel IV, No. 225.
47. Order of the district of Weissenburg/Bay. on 'protective custody', 25 July 1936, in StAN, LRA Wbg., Abg. 1996, Titel IV, No. 225.
48. Bavarian Political Police to the director of the district of Weissenburg/Bay., Munich, 31 July 1936, in StAN, LRA Wbg., Abg. 1996, Titel IV, No. 225.
49. Lawyer Landenberger to the district of Weissenburg/Bay., Nuremberg, 27 April 1937, in StAN, Rep. 270, Regierung, K.d.I, Abg. 1978, No. 3420.
50. Testimony of Michael Gerstner to the public prosecutor, Munich, no date [probably January 1938], in State Archives of Upper Bavaria, StAnW 3277.
51. Note from the district of Hilpoltstein, 1 February, 1937, in StAN, LRA Hilpoltstein, Abg. 1971, No. 1253.
52. StAN, LRA Hilpoltstein, Abg. 1971, No. 1253. In the village of Oberwurmbach farmer Georg Reichardt was excluded from service to the community after being accused of buying a calf from a Jewish cattle-dealer called Gutmann; taken from monthly report of the NSDAP, Gau Franconia, local division of Unterwurmbach, 2 October 1936, in StAN, Sprk. Gun-Land, K-30.
53. Excerpt from the activity report of the *Gauamtsleitung* for communal politics, Gau Frankonia, to the main office for communal politics, Munich, Nuremberg, 7 September 1936, in: Federal Archives (BArch), NS 25/218, Bl. 343.
54. BArch, NS 25/218, Bl. 343.
55. BArch, NS 25/218, Bl. 343.
56. Treuchtlingen police station to the public prosecutor of the regional court district Munich I, Treuchtlingen, 19 November 1937; lawyer Landenberger to the public prosecutor Munich, Nuremberg, 10 December 1937, both in State Archives of Upper Bavaria, StAnW 3277; Max Gutmann to lawyer Dr. Josef Kern, 15 July 1950, in BayHStA, EG 92225, K-2242; see also B. Z. Ophir and F. Wiesemann (eds) (1979) *Die jüdischen Gemeinden in Bayern, 1918–1945. Geschichte und Zerstörung* (München: Oldenbourg), p. 172.
57. 'Attempted Murder by a Jew. The Jew Bärmann of Ellingen offered 10,000 Marks for the murder of district leader and Kreisbauernführer', *Der Stürmer*, vol. 16 (1937), No. 49, pp. 1–4.
58. Lawyer Landenberger to the Gestapo, Headquarters of Bavaria, Munich, Nuremberg, 19 November 1937, in State Archives of Upper Bavaria, StAnW 3277.

59. Paragraph 1 of the decree on excluding Jews from the German economy officially prohibited Jews from selling at markets, 12 November 1938, RGSBl I, p. 1580. See J. Walk, D. C. Brecher and R. M. W. Kempner (eds.) (1996) *Das Sonderrecht für die Juden im NS-Staat. Eine Sammlung der gesetzlichen Maßnahmen und Richtlinien; Inhalt und Bedeutung*, 2nd edn (Heidelberg: Müller), p. 254.
60. E. Fraenkel (2001) *Der Doppelstaat: Recht u. Justiz im 'Dritten Reich'*, 2nd edn (Hamburg: Europ. Verlags-Anstalt).
61. I. Kershaw (1979) 'Antisemitismus und Volksmeinung. Reaktionen auf die Judenverfolgung' in M. Broszat and E. Fröhlich (eds) *Bayern in der NS-Zeit. Herrschaft und Gesellschaft im Konflikt* (München, Wien: Oldenbourg), p. 302; Wiesemann (1981) 'Juden auf dem Lande', p. 383.
62. BayHStA, Reconciliation file of Salomon W., BEG 77461; K-018.
63. A. Goppelt to the district of Weissenburg/Bay., Treuchtlingen, 27 April 1934, in StAN, LRA Wbg., Abg. 1996, Titel IV, Nr. 217. The central agency for Jewish economic support reports in 1934 that cattle markets experienced a drastic slump in sales: see G. Plum (1989) 'Wirtschaft und Erwerbsleben' in W. Benz (ed.) *Die Juden in Deutschland 1933–1945. Leben unter nationalsozialistischer Herrschaft* (München: Beck), p. 297.
64. See Kershaw (1981) 'The Persecution of the Jews', pp. 261–89, p. 268.
65. Georg Meyer to the court of arbitration Gunzenhausen, 3 January 1947, and affidavit of Ludwig Hüttinger for Georg Meyer to the court of arbitration Gunzenhausen, no date [around 1947], in StAN, Sprk. Gun-Land, M-43. Kaufmann also refers to this kind of clandestine cow business in the state of Hesse: see Kaufmann (2008) 'Zum Viehhandel der Juden', p. 40.
66. Lawyer Dr. Bayer mentioned such a case in a letter to the Bavarian reconciliation office, Ansbach, 12 September 1957, in BayHStA, reconciliation file of Hugo Walz, BEG 77459, A-16. In the state of Hesse, Jewish cattle-dealers were arrested because a farmer had accused them of usury: see K. Wünschmann (2015) *Before Auschwitz. Jewish Prisoners in the Prewar Concentration Camps* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press), pp. 48ff.
67. Affidavit of lawyer Dr. Bayer to the Bavarian reconciliation office, Ansbach, 12 October 1954, in BayHStA, EG 121828, K-2720; see C. Hoffmann (1997) 'Verfolgung und Alltagsleben der Landjuden im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland' in R. Rürup and M. Richarz (eds) *Jüdisches Leben auf dem Lande. Studien zur deutsch-jüdischen Geschichte* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck), p. 377.
68. BayHStA, Reconciliation file Hugo W., BEG 77459; A-16.
69. Interview by Stefanie Fischer, 4 August 2008, New York, NY, USA.
70. Report from Ethenstatt police station to the district of Weissenburg/Bay., 14 July 1936, in BayHStA, LRA Wbg., Abg. 1996, Titel IV, Nr. 225.

71. Wiesemann (1979) 'Einleitung. Zur Geschichte der jüdischen Gemeinden', p. 24.
72. Wiesemann (1979) 'Einleitung. Zur Geschichte der jüdischen Gemeinden', p. 28; see also B. Meyer (2004) 'Handlungsspielräume regionaler jüdischer Repräsentanten (1941–1945)', in B. Kundrus and B. Meyer (eds) *Die Deportation der Juden aus Deutschland. Pläne—Praxis—Reaktionen, 1938–1945* (Göttingen: Wallstein), pp. 63–85.
73. BayHStA, Reconciliation file Theoder M. and Klara M., EG 121828; K-2720.
74. See also H. Zukier (2013) 'Diversity and Design: The "Twisted Road" and the Regional Turn in Holocaust History', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 27, 3, 387–410, p. 387.
75. Most recently, M. Janetzko (2012) *Die 'Arisierung' mittelständischer jüdischer Unternehmen in Bayern 1933–1939. Ein interregionaler Vergleich* (Ansbach: Selbstverl. des Historischen Vereins für Mittelfranken); B. Nietzel (2012) *Handeln und Überleben: jüdische Unternehmer aus Frankfurt am Main 1924–1964* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht).

‘Life in Illegality Cost an Extortionate Amount of Money.’ Ordinary Germans and German Jews Hiding from Deportation

Susanna Schrafstetter

The woman who hid Marie Jalowicz Simon, a young Jewess from Berlin, for over a year in her apartment did not like Jews. Luise Blase, as she was called, had been an enthusiastic supporter of the Nazi Party, and on the first day of each month she expected the rent to be paid for the insect-ridden chamber that Jalowicz Simon shared with a foreign worker. Once the landlady had received the rent in cash, she would often gleefully remark how she had squeezed some money out of the rich Jewess.¹ Luise Blase obviously did not see the rescue of Jews as an act of resistance, and she would not qualify for recognition as a ‘Righteous among the Nations’, the honour bestowed by Yad Vashem on gentiles who helped save Jews without asking for any kind of reward.² Marie Jalowicz Simon nevertheless owed her life to a woman who had been motivated largely by greed.

In German academic literature, assistance to Jews attempting to escape deportation has widely been treated as a form of resistance, as *Rettungswiderstand* (rescue as resistance). This term, coined by the Holocaust survivor and historian Arno Lustiger, has become well established

S. Schrafstetter (✉)

Department of History, University of Vermont, Burlington, USA

e-mail: susanna.schrafstetter@uvm.edu

in the field.³ By comparison, cases like the one described above have undergone little academic scrutiny. This chapter seeks to redress this imbalance by situating the multifaceted social interactions between ordinary Germans and Jews who had gone into hiding within the wider history of German popular responses to the Holocaust.

ORDINARY GERMANS AND JEWS IN HIDING: HISTORIOGRAPHY AND CONCEPTUAL QUESTIONS

To begin with, it is useful to review a number of reasons that may explain the past focus on the concept of *Rettungswiderstand*. First, in the immediate post-war period, some Jewish survivors felt that those few ‘good’ Germans who had stood by Germany’s Jews deserved to be honoured.⁴ Yad Vashem’s programme of identifying and honouring the ‘Righteous among the Nations’, which started in 1963, is the best known among various initiatives to recognize rescuers from across occupied Europe. Second, following Raul Hilberg’s provocative argument that Jews, by and large, had not resisted their destruction,⁵ several historians have sought to refute Hilberg’s argument by examining various forms of Jewish resistance, including the refusal of Jews to let themselves be deported. For example, in their study *Selbstbehauptung und Widerstand*, Konrad Kwiet and Helmut Eschwege have addressed flights into illegality as a form of nonconformist behaviour.⁶ Third, the initiation of the research project *Solidarität und Hilfe für Juden während der NS-Zeit* (Solidarity and Aid for Jews during the Nazi Period), at the *Zentrum für Antisemitismusforschung* (Centre for Research on Anti-Semitism) in Berlin was accompanied by the creation and maintenance of a database of all known ‘*stille Helden*’ (‘silent heroes’), which is housed at the *Gedenkstätte Deutscher Widerstand* (German Resistance Memorial Centre).⁷ While some of the recent historiography has referred to issues such as the denunciation of hidden Jews, and described several cases of non-altruistic help,⁸ much of the work has focused on presenting cases of successful rescue, and of ordinary Germans providing ‘solidarity and aid’ (as the title of the project indicates).⁹ There is a good reason for this—which is a fourth reason why the topic has been covered mainly within the framework of resistance. Most of the source material recounts successful rescue efforts in which there were Jewish survivors who could testify, and in which the survivors felt comfortable speaking about their experience and about Germans who had helped.

However, the emphasis on resistance has somewhat obfuscated the fact that not all helpers were heroes or rescuers motivated by altruism or poli-

tics,¹⁰ and that, aside from these helpers, many more non-Jewish Germans in one way or another came into contact with these 'submarines' (as the hidden Jews referred to themselves). Quite often, the willingness to help Jews did not depend on sheer kindness, but was rather the result of emotional dependencies, the desire to convert Jews to Christianity, and other self-serving factors. One Jewish woman was rescued by a family friend whom she also suspected of having been her husband's 'Aryan' lover. The friend had promised the man on his deathbed that she would look after his widow and son.¹¹ Attempted conversions were common, as in the case of Lilly Neumark, who was pressured to convert repeatedly while being hidden by members of the Confessing Church in various locations in northern Germany.¹² Many Germans did offer help to Jews, but often only casually and occasionally, slipping food into the pockets of 'submarines' or warning neighbours, employees or fellow workers about impending Gestapo searches and raids.¹³ Such interactions were in many cases never again mentioned after the war, thus erasing small gestures of help from collective memory.

The exploitation of hidden Jews took various forms. Non-Jewish Germans denounced or blackmailed hidden Jews and their helpers, preyed on them, or offered help in exchange for money, sex or labour. Life underground often depended on a black market of commodities such as fake papers, ration cards, accommodation, clothes, guides and weapons. Some of the black marketers functioned as honest dealers, while others did not. Many more seized a spontaneous opportunity to exploit another person's plight. Survivors may have been reluctant to talk about awkward or nasty circumstances of their rescue, including humiliation, violence, and sexual exploitation at the hands of persons to whom they owed their lives.¹⁴ Few Jewish survivors wrote as frankly about sexual favours and abuse as Marie Jalowicz Simon or Michael Degen.¹⁵ Sometimes Jewish survivors were not proud of what they had been forced to do in order to survive. Those who had fallen victim to robbery and betrayal at the hands of their 'helpers' did not want to talk about such experiences afterwards.

There are, of course, many well documented examples of Germans who helped bravely for entirely altruistic reasons.¹⁶ But if one looks at the entire spectrum of Germans who came in contact with fleeing Jews, a rather complex picture emerges. This chapter argues that there needs to be more systematic work in this direction, even if the sources are comparatively scarce.¹⁷ The conceptual emphasis on *Rettungswiderstand* has narrowed our analytical perspective on social interactions that need to be considered within a wider framework of German reactions to the Holocaust and the systematic plunder of the wealth of German Jews.

To demonstrate this broader approach I am suggesting, this chapter will examine the economic exploitation and betrayal of Jews who were on the run inside Germany during World War II. This sort of plundering may be regarded as a late phase of ‘individual Aryanization’, which continued until the very end of the war. Obviously, there is a broad spectrum of actions ranging from paid help to fraud, to robbery, and to betrayal. Clearly, not all paid help was fraudulent, and sometimes payment from Jews was necessary to enable non-Jews to assist someone in hiding—for example to pay for ration cards or food acquired on the black market. But many interactions involved extortionate payments, as well as various forms of fraud and robbery. These issues will be explored as part of a comparative analysis of the situation of hidden Jews in Berlin and Munich. This approach will show regional differences and particularities in the possibilities and conditions for hiding and escaping deportation in different parts of the Reich.

JEW IN HIDING: BERLIN

On the eve of the mass deportations of German Jews in the autumn of 1941, around 70,000 Jews were living in Berlin; by February 1943 around 33,000 still remained in the capital.¹⁸ In other German cities most Jews had been rounded up and deported by the autumn of 1942, leaving only a small number of certain categories of Jews—mainly those living in so-called mixed marriages. In Frankfurt, around 10,600 Jews were still present on the eve of the deportations, whereas by the end of 1942, only around 800 were left.¹⁹ Some 3,200 Jews were living in Munich in November 1941, while one year later their number had dwindled to 645.²⁰ As thousands of Jews were deported, an estimated 7,000 Berlin Jews fled. More than 50 per cent of these flights occurred before or during the notorious *Fabrikaktion* (‘factory raid’) in February/March 1943, in which many Jews were arrested at the factories where they performed forced labour, and were subsequently deported en masse.²¹

In Berlin, the large number of Jews still present and the relatively late date of the deportations enabled networks of helpers to develop and provide some degree of organized support for hiding Jews. Given that many more Jews were present in Berlin than in other German cities, more non-Jewish Germans were confronted with their plight. Some decided to help, some decided to profit, and some did both. When more than 4,000 Jews suddenly took to flight at the end of February 1943, the result was the emergence of networks of helpers and spontaneous offers of altruistically motivated assistance. But financially motivated assistance, fraud, and exploitation occurred

as well.²² Ludwig Brummer, a Berlin Jew who went into hiding in January 1943, wrote later: 'At the time, the so-called Jew-friendly Germans exploited the situation in a way that they demanded to be generously compensated for their "humanity".'²³ The following examples of economic exploitation of hidden Jews, and in some cases their betrayal, show that most 'submarines' encountered both altruistic and pragmatic helpers, in addition to fraud, greed and blackmail. Even if, in some cases, the sources rely on anecdotal memory and the claims are difficult to verify, the number of stories that refer in one way or another to experiences of exploitation is remarkable.²⁴

Many people rented rooms and apartments (without asking for official registration), often at extortionate prices.²⁵ Larry Orbach and his mother paid 125 marks per week for a miserable, squalid room. The landlord wanted two weeks' rent in advance. Shortly after they moved in, the landlord claimed that the police had knocked on the door while Orbach and his mother were out and that they were likely to return. The landlord tried to persuade Orbach and his mother to turn themselves in voluntarily, suggesting that they could leave their belongings with him. During the conversation, it became clear to Orbach that the landlord had stolen one of his best shirts—he could see, under his sweater, that he was wearing it.²⁶ In other cases, landlords accepted large deposits from Jews but then reneged on the offer of accommodation and kept the deposits.²⁷ The blackmail of Jewish 'submarines' was not unusual. Susanne Holländer had to pay generous sums of money to make sure that the relatives of her non-Jewish boyfriend refrained from making a denunciation.²⁸ In late 1941, Lotte Bamberger was asked by an acquaintance whether 'she had enough money to pay for her name being removed from the list of deportees to Poland'. This acquaintance told her that there was an official in the Speer Ministry 'who needed money and had enough influence' to cross her off the list. She paid and thereby evaded transportation to Riga. Later, when she went into hiding, her helper had to bribe the concierge to remain silent about Bamberger's presence in his apartment.²⁹ Lilly Neumark had to pay a large sum of money to a woman who provided her with the names and addresses of members of the Confessing Church willing to help her live illegally. The woman who supplied the information also stole some of Neumark's remaining possessions, and later, visiting her in a hiding place, forced Neumark to hand over her watch. In one of her hiding places, Neumark had to work from seven o'clock in the morning to eleven at night.³⁰ Ilse Rewald and her husband were promised false identity cards at 300 marks apiece. After they had paid the money, they realized that they had been the victims of a swindle.³¹

There were Germans whose actions were solely designed to rob and betray Jews trying to flee the deportations. An officer's wife in Berlin ran a scam that promised escape routes to Switzerland. As soon as the victims had paid the hefty sums of money demanded, they were denounced to the Gestapo and arrested. As a way of advertising her services and attracting more victims, the woman even provided fake letters of gratitude from Jews who had supposedly made it across the border.³² Two friends of the victims of this scam, who had lent them money and who subsequently became aware of the swindle, were kept quiet by threats that they would be denounced to the Gestapo as *Judenfreunde* (friends of Jews).³³ A married couple living in illegality paid a lot of money for an opportunity to be brought to the Swiss border hidden in large ammunition cases transported by Wehrmacht vehicles. The couple arrived at the meeting point in the Oranienburg forest late, but saw the lights of cars leaving with some other Jews who had signed up for the deal. As they tried desperately to catch up with the convoy on their bicycles, they realized that the convoy was heading directly towards the Sachsenhausen concentration camp.³⁴ Many more swindlers took money for the organization of fictional escapes to Switzerland, but did not denounce their victims to the Gestapo.³⁵

Numerous individuals offered to store valuables. Colloquially known as *Verwarier* or *Aufbewarier*,³⁶ these people promised not only to store valuable possessions till the end of the war, but offered Jewish 'submarines' the safekeeping of their valuables until they needed to sell them in order to finance life in illegality.³⁷ Before going into hiding, one couple stowed a suitcase containing their last belongings with 'Aryan friends'. They had hidden some precious jewellery in the handle of an umbrella in the suitcase. While they were still living underground, they desperately needed money, and so they knocked at the door of their 'friends' to collect the umbrella from the suitcase. They were chased away by the Aryan couple, who pretended not to recognize their Jewish acquaintances and to be upset at the claim these 'strangers' were making that they were hiding Jewish property. The friend of the Jewish couple who recalled the story later concludes her account with the observation that 'similar cases happened quite frequently. But to save the honour of humanity, I should also say that there were more than a few honest depositaries.'³⁸ Some *Verwarier* had attics full of goods, boasting that with the property they had 'inherited' from Jews, they could provide the 'dowry of seven daughters'.³⁹ Those Germans were just one subspecies of what the Berliner sarcastically called *Judenfledderer*, meaning people who deprived Jews of their last possessions. The fact that a

new word could be coined for this activity is itself a clear indicator that it was a widespread practice.⁴⁰ The choice of term is interesting as well, as the verb *fleddern* is often used with one very specific connotation, namely the despoiling of dead bodies. Sometimes Germans even used the term *Leichenfledderer* (strippers of corpses) when they talked about people who looted Jewish property.⁴¹

In Berlin, Jews wanting to go into hiding had various options if they had managed to hold on to some money or valuables or had a source of income. Not all of these options were good ones, but there were individuals and places where they could seek help. Many 'submarines' in the Reich capital depended on a combination of altruistic helpers who did not demand compensation, and of hiding places or escape routes for which they had to pay. Accommodation needed to be changed frequently; ration cards and food had to be organized; and false papers had to be acquired that would stand up to close scrutiny. Access to money was a decisive advantage. Lotte Hessel sums it up as follows: 'life in illegality cost an extortionate amount of money.'⁴² Another Berlin 'submarine', Susanne Veit, even recalls that wealthy Jews were able to live in hiding quite comfortably: 'Certainly there were people who—mostly because they had a lot of money at their disposal—survived in relatively pleasant and secure ways, but at the same time others had to struggle much harder and in much more uncertainty, from one hiding place to the next, from one swindle to the next.'⁴³ Her observation that money made a difference is valid, while her impression of 'pleasant and secure ways' of hiding was clearly misperceived.

TRYING TO HIDE IN MUNICH

In other German cities, the situation was different from that of Berlin in several important respects. In Munich only about 40 Jews went into hiding between 1941 and the end of 1944—an insignificant number compared with the thousands in Berlin. Yet, it is worth looking at these cases in some detail. In Munich the great majority of 'submarines' relied exclusively on altruistic helpers—family friends, lovers, and protégés who organized hiding places (often outside the city). No organized structures emerged to aid Jews going underground, nor was there a market for necessities like fake papers or hideouts.⁴⁴ Most Munich Jews were deported early—between November 1941 and April 1942—and since their overall number was small, structures for assistance were not formed. The early ghettoization

of the Jews in *Judenhäuser* ('Jew houses') and in two *Judenlager* (detention camps) on the outskirts of the city contributed to this failure of an underground organization to develop.⁴⁵ Contact with the non-Jewish population had been severed much more rigidly than in Berlin, where the ghettoization of Jews into *Judenhäuser* and *Judenlager* had not been implemented to the same degree.⁴⁶

A growing sense of isolation and a lack of people and places to turn to may have discouraged some of the Munich Jews from trying to hide. In Berlin access to money proved to be a significant advantage; in Munich, what counted most were close long-standing bonds to non-Jews who were determined to help.⁴⁷ Money was not crucial for a successful rescue. While access to money helped many Berlin 'submarines' survive, many also fell victim to robbery and subsequent betrayal. But even in Munich, where the number of Jews was comparatively small—those on the run were just a few dozen—ordinary Germans exploited spontaneous opportunities to seize valuables and money. The two cases that follow would not normally have left any witnesses or any paper trail, because the victims would have been deported and murdered. But there are a few instances in which the victims of *Judenflederei* survived the war.

In January 1944 Eva Kobler, a 25-year-old Jew from Hamburg, received her order for deportation to Theresienstadt. She fled to Munich, where a friend of her mother, a half-Jewish woman living in a mixed marriage, had made a promise to hide Kobler should this become necessary. However, this woman had committed suicide in the meantime, and her husband, Eduard Wolf, had remarried: he now had a non-Jewish wife. When Kobler showed up at the couple's doorstep, they invited her in and provided her with shelter. But, in the following days, they took Kobler's belongings on the pretext that they needed storing in a safe place because of the bombing raids. They then tried to encourage Kobler to follow the example of Eduard Wolf's late wife and commit suicide so as to avoid the inescapable fate of arrest and deportation. When Kobler refused to do so, they denounced her to the Gestapo. Eva Kobler survived the war in a Gestapo prison and later pressed charges against Eduard and Anna Wolf.⁴⁸

Margot S. was on the run when she met a woman called Wally Cremer in a restaurant in Munich. Cremer was lonely and looking for company. She invited Margot S. into her home for tea. Margot S. gladly accepted, and after a while she felt comfortable enough to confide to Cremer that she was Jewish, asking whether she might be able to stay for a while. Cremer agreed, and the next day Margot S. moved in with all of her belongings.

Living in Wally Cremer’s villa, Margot S. spent her time organizing a more permanent hiding place for herself. After a couple of weeks, she told her host that she would be leaving, and that a friend of hers would come to collect her and her things. Shortly before the friend arrived, the police knocked on the door. Wally Cremer had denounced her guest. Margot S. was taken to the Gestapo headquarters in Munich. From there, she was sent to the Milbertshofen *Judenlager*, but she managed to escape and survive in hiding in Berlin.⁴⁹ After the end of the war, she returned to Munich, and when Wally Cremer refused to return her belongings to her, she pressed charges against her former host. In 1947, a Munich district court (the *Amtsgericht*) sentenced Cremer to three months in prison. In the opinion of the court ‘the defendant seems to have calculated that Ms. S., as Jewess, would probably sooner or later be arrested again and possibly disappear so that no questions about the whereabouts of her belongings would be asked.’⁵⁰ The sentence was confirmed by a higher court in 1949.⁵¹

These kinds of cases usually ended with the deportation and death of the Jewish person, and consequently there would be no evidence of the theft and deception. Germans like Wally Cremer and Eduard Wolf could safely assume that the Jews they denounced would not be coming back, and this made robbery all the more tempting. Wally Cremer had probably not had any advance plan to rob a Jew, but when she was given the opportunity, she could not resist it. She led a comfortable bourgeois existence and she generously shared the riches she had taken from Margot S. with her sister and daughter-in-law. She was neither a member of the Nazi party nor a Nazi sympathizer. This was also true of the Wolfs. What they had come to believe, however, was that Jewish property was fair game and that Jews like Margot S. and Eva Kobler were living in Munich on borrowed time.

‘JUDENFLEDDEREI’ AND ‘ARYANIZATION’

Judenfledderei was the final stage of a long and multifaceted process of individual initiative on the part of ordinary Germans furthering the ‘Aryanization’ of Jewish property. People who could not afford to buy a house or a business from a Jew under duress could plunder Jewish stores during the November Pogrom. Plunder was much more widespread in the aftermath of the pogrom than was acknowledged for many years.⁵² In Berlin, Wolf Gruner has recently referred to ‘*systematische Raubzüge*’

(systematic robbery) taking place in the immediate aftermath of the pogrom.⁵³ During the war, Germans stole from the sealed apartments of deported Jews.⁵⁴ Others developed scams. Jews were sold fake emigration visas or were given promises that their names would be removed from deportation lists.⁵⁵ Nazi propaganda, claiming that Jewish wealth had been acquired illegitimately at the expense of the German people, may have helped assuage some Germans' moral qualms.

And, like the process of 'Aryanization' in the years up to 1941, these forms of 'individual Aryanization' coexisted with the 'Aryanization' of Jewish property promoted by the state.⁵⁶ In a scheme codenamed *Aktion 3*, the possessions of deported Jews were auctioned off to the population. Clothes, kitchen utensils, pieces of furniture—all of these could be acquired cheaply. These auctions continued until 1945, but the majority took place in 1941–1942, before Germans were bombed out of their dwellings and desperately needed to replace household goods that had been destroyed. But even as late as March 1945, only weeks before the end of the war, Germans lined up to purchase the possessions of Jews who had been deported.⁵⁷ These auctions allowed broad sections of the population to benefit from the process of 'Aryanization' and removed any lingering inhibitions people may have had about the acquisition of Jewish property.⁵⁸ In some instances, Germans wrote to officials on their own initiative to enquire about taking specific items of Jewish property for themselves.⁵⁹ Even courageous helpers, who hid Jews without asking for money, shopped at these auctions. Marie Jalowicz Simon experienced this situation with a woman who had been hiding her for weeks. She recalls how her host came home from shopping at one of these auctions, having bought some furniture, and how the following conversation ensued: "Are you bothered by it?", she asked a little uneasily, and continued: "These people were deported. If I don't buy the furniture, somebody else will." I agreed with her but strangely, I was struck rather deeply.⁶⁰ It is hardly surprising that some Germans felt justified in cutting out the middleman, especially as many people suspected, quite rightly, that in a system rampant with corruption, the best pieces were reserved for party officials and civil servants in the tax offices.⁶¹

Rescue efforts and attempts to flee were complex social processes that unfolded within the context of the expropriation and deportation of German Jews. A close analysis of the interactions between Jews and non-Jewish Germans reveals a multitude of responses and significant regional particularities. While much recent research has focused on what ordinary

Germans knew about the fate of deported Jews, on successful rescue efforts involving altruistic helpers, and on the process of ‘Aryanization’ before the beginning of the deportations in the fall of 1941, it is important to note that enrichment, plunder and robbery by ordinary Germans continued until the very end of the war and that those who sought to avoid the fate of deportation were key targets.⁶² The almost mantra-like post-war German response ‘*Davon haben wir nichts gewußt*’ (‘we did not know anything about it’)⁶³ was often a cover for a bad conscience—a bad conscience not only about what people knew but also about what they took.

NOTES

1. M. Jalowicz-Simon (2014) *Untergetaucht. Eine junge Frau überlebt in Berlin 1940–1945* (Frankfurt: Fischer), pp. 265, 268 and 271.
2. On Yad Vashem’s programme of ‘Righteous among Nations’, see <http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/righteous/>, accessed 3 September 2015.
3. W. Wette (2011) ‘Vorwort’ in A. Lustiger, *Rettungswiderstand. Über die Judenretter in Europa während der NS-Zeit* (Göttingen: Wallstein), p. 13.
4. Most important, among them was Kurt Grossmann. His book *Unbesungene Helden* (Unsung Heroes), aimed at publicly recognizing helpers of Jews, provided the impetus for a programme of the same name initiated by the West Berlin City Council to honour citizens of Berlin who had come to the aid of Jews. K. Grossmann (1957) *Die Unbesungenen Helden. Menschen in Deutschlands dunklen Tagen* (Berlin: Arani Verlag). On the West Berlin initiative, see D. Riffel (2007) *Unbesungene Helden. Die Ehrungsinitiative des Berliner Senats 1958 bis 1966* (Berlin: Metropol), pp. 21–102. On Kurt Grossmann, see L. Mertens (1997) *Unermüdlicher Kämpfer für Frieden und Menschenrechte. Leben und Wirken von Kurt R. Grossmann* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot).
5. R. Hilberg (1961) *The Destruction of the European Jews* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books), pp. 14–15 and pp. 662–3.
6. K. Kwiet and H. Eschwege (1984) *Selbstbehauptung und Widerstand. Deutsche Juden im Kampf um Existenz und Menschenwürde, 1933–1945* (Hamburg: Christians), pp. 150–9.
7. Between 1996 and 2004 seven regional studies were published as part of this series. W. Benz et al. (eds) (1996–2004) *Solidarität und Hilfe für Juden während der NS-Zeit* (Berlin: Metropol), 7 Vols. Vol. 5 covers the German Reich: B. Kosmala and C. Schoppmann (eds) (2002) *Solidarität und Hilfe für Juden während der NS-Zeit, Band 5: Überleben im Untergrund. Hilfe für Juden in Deutschland, 1941–1945* (Berlin:

- Metropol). On the *Gedenkstätte Stille Helden*, see B. Kosmala (2012) ‘Gedenkstätte Stille Helden, ein Erinnerungsort in Berlin’ in I. Pill (ed.) *Helfer im Verborgenen. Retter jüdischer Menschen in Südwestdeutschland. Laupheimer Gespräche 2009* (Heidelberg: Univ.-Verlag Winter), pp. 167–189. See also: <http://www.gedenkstaette-stille-helden.de/>, accessed 3 September 2015.
8. See for example M. Neiss (2003) “‘Herr Obersturmbannführer lässt daran erinnern, dass die Rate noch nicht da ist.’ Eine Rettung auf Abzahlung’ in W. Benz (ed.) *Überleben im Dritten Reich: Juden im Untergrund und ihre Helfer* (Munich: Beck), pp. 198–204 and W. Benz (2003) ‘Gegenleistungen. Stationen eines Kirchenasyls zwischen Weserbergland und Lausitz’ in W. Benz, *Überleben*, pp. 220–8.
 9. The research project *Solidarität und Hilfe für Juden während der NS-Zeit* has focused on ‘solidarity and aid’, and this is also reflected in the publications resulting from the project. See Kosmala and Schoppmann (2002) *Überleben*. Some of the general accounts on survival in hiding discuss mainly successful rescue stories but also refer to fraud and exploitation, see W. Benz (1988) ‘Überleben im Untergrund 1943–1945’ in W. Benz (ed.) *Die Juden in Deutschland 1933–1945. Leben unter nationalsozialistischer Herrschaft* (Munich: Beck), pp. 660–700; Kwiet and Eschwege (1984) *Selbstbehauptung*; Benz (2003) *Überleben*. Some of the more recent scholarship on ‘unsung heroes’ was motivated by the perception that, in Germany, the helpers of Jews had not received the attention they deserved. See, most importantly, Lustiger (2011) *Rettungswiderstand*, p. 29. A number of book titles explicitly refer to the helpers as heroes. See for example: I. Deutschkron (2012) *Sie blieben im Schatten. Ein Denkmal für ‘stille Helden’* (Kvelaer: Butzon & Bercker); W. Wette (ed.) (2005) *Stille Helden. Judenretter im Dreiländereck während des Zweiten Weltkriegs* (Freiburg: Herder); E. Silver (1994) *Sie waren stille Helden. Frauen und Männer, die Juden vor den Nazis retteten* (Munich: Hanser).
 10. On the problems with the terminology and the complexity of some interactions between Jews and helpers, see I. Enzenbach (2002) ‘Zur Problematik des Begriffs “Retter”’ in Kosmala and Schoppmann (eds) *Überleben*, pp. 241–56.
 11. M. Degen, (1999) *Nicht alle waren Mörder. Eine Kindheit in Berlin* (Munich: Econ), pp. 9, 27, 79–80.
 12. Benz (2003) ‘Gegenleistungen’, p. 221.
 13. For example, B. Lewyn and B. Saltzmann Lewyn (2009) *Versteckt in Berlin. Eine Geschichte von Flucht und Verfolgung 1942–1945* (Berlin: Metropol), p. 106; I. Deutschkron (1978) *Ich trug den gelben Stern* (Köln: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik), p. 87, and Archives of the Wiener Library,

London (hereafter AWL), Archives Unbound, Database: Testaments to the Holocaust, Anna Drach, *Deportations from Berlin. The ‘Final Solution’ (September 1939–May 1945): Deportations and Transports. Eyewitness Accounts*. 10 February 1933 to 1945, p. 1, <http://go.galegroup.com/gdsc/i.do?&id=GALE%7CSC5106929379&v=2.1&u=ocd&it=r&p=GDS C&sw=w&viewtype=fullcitation>, accessed 3 September 2015.

14. On postwar conflicts between Jewish ‘submarines’ and their helpers, see A. Grossmann (2007) *Jews, Germans, and Allies: Close Encounters in Occupied Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), pp. 243–6 and Riffel (2007) *Unbesungene Helden*, pp. 23–4.
15. Jalowicz Simon (2014) *Untergetaucht*; Degen (1997) *Nicht alle waren Mörder*.
16. D. Fraenkel and J. Borut (eds) (2005) *Lexikon der Gerechten unter den Völkern: Deutsche und Österreicher* (Göttingen: Wallstein); Kosmala and Schoppmann (2002) *Überleben*. Lustiger (2011) *Rettungswiderstand*.
17. For example Wolf Gruner used Berlin police logbooks to explore interactions between Jews and non-Jews in the capital. While his analysis focuses on Jewish resistance, the body of documents he cites reveals a complex set of interactions between Jews and non-Jews. W. Gruner (2011) “‘The Germans Should Expel the Foreigner Hitler ...’ Open Protest and Other Forms of Defiance in Nazi Germany’ in *Yad Vashem Studies* No. 39, 13–53.
18. C. Schoppmann (2005) ‘Die “Fabrikaktion” in Berlin. Hilfe für untergetauchte Juden als Form humanitären Widerstandes’ in *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 53, 138.
19. B. Meyer (2011) *Tödliche Gratwanderung. Die Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland zwischen Hoffnung, Zwang, Selbstbehauptung und Verstrickung 1939–1945* (Göttingen: Wallstein), p. 288 (figure for 1941); and P. Bonavita (2009) *Mit falschem Paß und Zyankali. Retter und Gerettete aus Frankfurt am Main in der NS-Zeit* (Stuttgart: Schmetterling Verlag), p. 7 (figure for 1942).
20. M. Strnad (2011) *Zwischenstation ‘Judensiedlung’. Verfolgung und Deportation der jüdischen Münchner 1941–1945* (Munich: Oldenbourg), p. 178.
21. For the *Fabrikaktion*, see W. Gruner (2005) *Widerstand in der Rosenstraße. Die Fabrik-Aktion und die Verfolgung der ‘Mischeben’ 1943*, (Frankfurt: Fischer); Schoppmann (2015) ‘Die “Fabrikaktion”’.
22. Jewish ‘submarines’ depended on and participated in a thriving black market. Unfortunately, this dimension of the black market is not really addressed in M. Zierenberg (2008) *Stadt der Schieber. Der Berliner Schwarzmarkt 1939–1950* (Göttingen: Wallstein).

23. AWL, Archives Unbound, Database Testaments to the Holocaust, Ludwig Brummer, 'My Illegal Life In Germany. The "Final Solution" (September 1939–May 1945)': *Illegal Life and Escapes. Eyewitness Accounts. 1941 to 1945*, p. 2, <http://go.galegroup.com/gdsc/i.do?&id=GALE%7CSC5106929888&cv=2.1&u=ocd&it=r&p=GDSC&sw=w&viewtype=fullcitation>, last accessed 3 September 2015.
24. On the problems of reliability and verification in some of the cases, see also Benz (2013) 'Gegenleistungen', p. 224; and on the problems with the testimony of Jews who survived in hiding, A. Seligmann (1992) 'An Illegal Way of Life in Nazi Germany', *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* No. 37, 330–2.
25. See for example AWL, Archives Unbound, Database: Testaments to the Holocaust, Lotte Heskell, 'Our Underground Life in Berlin during the War. The "Final Solution" (September 1939–May 1945)': *Illegal Life and Escapes. Eyewitness Accounts. 1941 to 1944*, p. 6, <http://go.galegroup.com/gdsc/i.do?&id=GALE%7CSC5106929895&cv=2.1&u=ocd&it=r&p=GDSC&sw=w&viewtype=fullcitation>, last accessed 3 September 2015. Lewyn and Saltzmann Lewyn (2009) *Versteckt in Berlin*, p. 96; Z. Aviram, ed. B. Kosmala and P. Siegele (2015) *Mit dem Mut der Verzweiflung. Mein Widerstand im Berliner Untergrund 1943–1945* (Berlin: Metropol), p. 124, and L. Orbach and V. Orbach-Smith (1998) *Soaring Underground* (Berlin: Kowalke), p. 88.
26. Orbach and Orbach-Smith (1998) *Soaring Underground*, pp. 84–8.
27. AWL, Archives Unbound, Database Testaments to the Holocaust, Ida Gassenheimer, 'My Underground Life in Berlin. The "Final Solution" (September 1939–May 1945)': *Illegal Life and Escapes. Eyewitness Accounts. 1938 to 1945*, p. 10, <http://go.galegroup.com/gdsc/i.do?&id=GALE%7CSC5106930104&cv=2.1&u=ocd&it=r&p=GDSC&sw=w&viewtype=fullcitation>, last accessed 3 September 2015.
28. Gedenkstätte Deutscher Widerstand, Database Stille Helden, file of Susanne Holländer. For further cases of blackmail see files of Gertrud Badura and Heinz Plonski.
29. L. Bamberger (1955) 'Erinnerung ans Dritte Reich. An der Oberfläche untergetaucht', *Frankfurter Hefte* No. 10, 803–8.
30. AWL, Archives Unbound, Database: Testaments to the Holocaust, Lilly Neumark, 'Survival with the Help of the Bekenntniskirche. The "Final Solution" (September 1939–May 1945)': *Illegal Life And Escapes. Eyewitness Accounts. 1943 to 1945*, p. 2, <http://go.galegroup.com/gdsc/i.do?&id=GALE%7CSC5106929902&cv=2.1&u=ocd&it=r&p=GDSC&sw=w&viewtype=fullcitation>, last accessed 3 September 2015. On Lilly Neumark's story. See also Benz (2003) 'Gegenleistungen'; and Benz (1998) 'Überleben im Untergrund', pp. 670–671.

31. I. Rewald (1975) *Berliner, die uns halfen, die Hitlerdiktatur zu überleben* (Berlin: Gedenkstätte Deutscher Widerstand), p. 8.
32. AWL, Archives Unbound, Database: Testaments to the Holocaust, Marcella, Herrmann, 'Aus "Berliner Erinnerungen 1940/1944". The "Final Solution" (September 1939–May 1945)': General. Eyewitness Accounts. 1940 to 1945, pp. 8–9, <http://go.galegroup.com/gdsc/i.do?&id=GALE%7CSC5106928144&v=2.1&u=ocd&it=r&p=GDSC&sw=w&viewtype=Manuscript>, last accessed 3 September 2015.
33. Marcella Herrmann, 'Berliner Erinnerungen 1940/1944', pp. 8–9.
34. Aviram (2015) *Mit dem Mut*, p. 130.
35. See for example AWL, Testaments to the Holocaust, Gassenheimer, 'Mein Untergrund-Leben in Berlin', p. 6.
36. The term *Verwarrier* or *Aufbewarier* combines the noun for 'Aryan' and the verb to store (*verwahren* or *aufbewahren*). On the *Aufbewarier*, see Deutschkron (1978) *Ich trug den gelben Stern*, p. 60, and K. Kwiet (1988) 'Nach dem Pogrom: Stufen der Ausgrenzung' in Benz, *Juden*, pp. 573–4.
37. See: AWL, Testaments to the Holocaust, Heskell, 'Our Underground Life in Berlin', p. 6 and Drach, 'Deportations from Berlin', p. 1.
38. AWL, Testaments to the Holocaust, Herrmann, 'Aus "Berliner Erinnerungen"', p. 7.
39. AWL, Testaments to the Holocaust, Gassenheimer, 'Mein Untergrund-Leben in Berlin', p. 6.
40. On *Judenfledderer*, see also W. Benz (2003) 'Juden im Untergrund und ihre Helfer' in Benz, *Überleben im Untergrund*, p. 24.
41. C. Kuller (2008) *Finanzverwaltung und Judenverfolgung. Die Entziehung jüdischen Vermögens in Bayern während der NS-Zeit* (Munich: Beck), p. 74.
42. AWL, Testaments to the Holocaust, Heskell, 'Our Underground Life in Berlin', p. 7.
43. AWL, Archives Unbound, Database: Testaments to the Holocaust, Susanne Veit, 'Non-Jews Helping Jews. The "Final Solution" (September 1939–May 1945)': Non-Jews Assisting Jews. Eyewitness Accounts. Jan.-57, p. 5, <http://go.galegroup.com/gdsc/i.do?&id=GALE%7CSC5106974609&v=2.1&u=ocd&it=r&p=GDSC&sw=w&viewtype=fullcitation>, last accessed 3 September 2015.
44. On these issues see S. Schrafstetter (2015) *Flucht und Versteck. Untergetauchte Juden in München: Verfolgungserfahrung und Nachkriegsalltag* (Göttingen: Wallstein), p. 101.
45. See Strnad (2011) *Zwischenstation*, pp. 29–76.
46. W. Gruner (2011) 'Die Berliner und die NS-Judenverfolgung' in R. Hachtmann, T. Schaarschmidt and W. Süß (eds) *Berlin im Nationalsozialismus. Politik und Gesellschaft 1933–1945* (Göttingen: Wallstein), p. 79.

47. Schrafstetter (2015) *Flucht und Versteck*, pp. 288–9.
48. Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Archiv, GM 07.146/1–2, Urteil, 20 Jan. 1953.
49. Staatsarchiv München, (hereafter StaM), AG 58094, Urteil, 7 July 1947 and 14 Sept. 1949.
50. StaM, AG 58094, Urteil, 7 July 1947.
51. StaM, AG 58094, Urteile, 7 July 1947 and 14 Sept. 1949. For more details on both cases, see Schrafstetter (2015) *Flucht und Versteck*, pp. 152–7.
52. A. Steinweis (2009) *Kristallnacht 1938* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press), pp. 78–82.
53. Gruner (2011) ‘Die Berliner’, p. 74.
54. Gruner (2011) ‘Die Berliner’, pp. 81–2; Benz (1998) ‘Überleben im Untergrund’, p. 670.
55. O. Dov Kulka and E. Jäckel (eds) (2004) *Die Juden in den geheimen NS-Stimmungsberichten, 1933–1945* (Düsseldorf: Droste), Doc. 617, RSHA Amt IV Meldung wichtiger staatspolizeilicher Ereignisse, 12 Jan. 1942, pp. 484–5. This case, together with a similar case, is also mentioned in Kwiet and Eschwege (1984) *Selbstbehauptung*, pp. 156–7.
56. On ‘Aryanization’ see among others: F. Bajohr (1997) ‘Arisierung’ in *Hamburg. Die Verdrängung der jüdischen Unternehmer 1933–1945* (Hamburg: Christians); I. Wojak and P. Hayes (eds) (2000) ‘Arisierung’ in *Nationalsozialismus. Volksgemeinschaft, Raub und Gedächtnis* (Frankfurt: Campus-Verlag); C. Kreutzmüller (2015) *Final Sale in Berlin. The Destruction of Jewish Commercial Activity 1930–1945* (New York: Berghahn).
57. For example: StaM, OfD 9513, Auktion des Besitzes von Edith S., 6 March 1945. Edith S. had lived in hiding, but was denounced, arrested and sent to Theresienstadt in February 1945.
58. For *Aktion 3*, see C. Kuller (2013) *Bürokratie und Verbrechen. Antisemitische Finanzpolitik und Verwaltungspraxis im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland* (Munich: Oldenbourg), pp. 402–26.
59. Kuller (2008) *Finanzverwaltung*, pp. 129–31.
60. Jalowicz Simon (2014) *Untergetaucht*, p. 252.
61. Kuller (2013) *Bürokratie*, p. 425; Kuller (2008) *Finanzverwaltung*, p. 74. On fraud and corruption surrounding Jewish emigration, see J. Wetzel (1988) ‘Auswanderung aus Deutschland’ in Benz, *Die Juden*, pp. 427–8. On corruption and plunder of Jews, see also F. Bajohr (2001) *Parvenüs und Profiteure, Korruption in der NS-Zeit* (Frankfurt: Fischer), pp. 105–36.
62. For a discussion of what Germans knew about the Holocaust, see F. Bajohr and D. Pohl (2006) *Der Holocaust als offenes Geheimnis. Die Deutschen, die NS-Führung und die Alliierten* (Munich: Beck); F. Bajohr and D. Pohl (2008) *Massenmord und schlechtes Gewissen. Die deutsche Bevölkerung, die*

NS-Führung und der Holocaust (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer); P. Longerich (2006) '*Davon haben wir nichts gewusst!*' *Die Deutschen und die Judenverfolgung, 1933–1945* (Munich: Siedler) and B. Dörner (2007) *Die Deutschen und der Holocaust. Was niemand wissen wollte, aber jeder wissen konnte* (Berlin: Propyläen-Verlag).

63. On the phrase, featuring in the title of Peter Longerich's book, see Longerich (2006) '*Davon haben wir nichts gewusst!*'.

PART III

Case Studies from Eastern,
South-Eastern and Central Europe

Collaborators, Bystanders or Rescuers? The Role of Local Citizens in the Holocaust in Nazi-Occupied Belarus

Olga Baranova

INTRODUCTION

The complete physical annihilation of Soviet Jews—described in Nazi propaganda as the main supporters of the Bolshevik regime and the worst enemies of the German nation—was one of the major objectives of the war in the East. This meant that the German campaign against the Jews in the occupied areas of the Soviet Union was much harsher than the campaigns in Western Europe. While the atrocities committed by the German *Einsatzgruppen* and the Wehrmacht and the complicity of all levels of the Nazi bureaucracy in the pursuit of the ‘Final Solution’ have been extensively analysed by historians, the collusion and participation of ordinary citizens in the persecution of Jews in occupied areas of the Soviet Union still remains relatively understudied. Indeed, it is a controversial

This chapter benefited from the EURIAS Fellowship at the Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen in Vienna.

O. Baranova (✉)
Modern and Contemporary European History, Gonzaga University,
Florence, Italy
e-mail: baranova@gonzaga.edu

subject.¹ This chapter aims to assess the role of the local population of Nazi-occupied Belarus in the Holocaust there. Most studies of collaboration in the Holocaust in Belarus have focused on the roles of the local auxiliary police and the indigenous administration²; little has been done on the attitudes and roles of the general public.

In Belarusian territory the death rate among Jews during the Holocaust was among the highest in Europe: about 80 per cent of the pre-war Jewish population was wiped out.³ Exact figures are hard to determine. According to the *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust*, there were about one million Jews living in the two parts of Belarus on the eve of the German-Soviet war; but in the first post-war census only 150,000 could be counted.⁴ The statistics provided by the German historian Bernhard Chiari are fairly similar: he estimates that of some 820,000 Belarusian Jews, a much reduced number between 120,000 and 150,000 survived the war.⁵

The Israeli scholar Leonid Rein highlights the fact that Belarus became the graveyard not only of local Belarusian Jews, but also of Jews transported there from other parts of Europe. These came mainly from Germany, Austria, the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (Czechoslovakia), the General Government (Poland) and the Warthegau (the Polish territories annexed by the Third Reich).⁶ Given the sheer number of victims, Rein argues that the Germans alone could not have accomplished the atrocities in Belarus so swiftly, so efficiently and on such a scale without relying on assistance from the local population. He maintains that local cooperation was indeed an important aspect of the Holocaust and that the role played by Belarusians was more than that of being just bystanders.⁷

It cannot be denied that Belarusians were aware of the Nazi genocide and that they witnessed Nazi atrocities against Jews. However, it is scarcely possible to assess with any accuracy how far the local population may have been complicit in the Holocaust. Cooperation in the persecution of Jews took many forms and was expressed in different ways. These included: silent approval and even justification of German policies against the Jews; refusal to assist Jewish neighbours with food and shelter; denunciations and disclosure of information to the German authorities about Jews in hiding; theft and misappropriation of Jewish property; participation in the rounding up of Jews; and acting as guards of ghettos and concentration camps. What is more, there were cases when local auxiliary policemen were involved in mass shootings. An additional difficulty in estimating the extent of involvement of local Belarusians in the Holocaust lies in the fact

that attitudes among the local populations of the occupied territories were not static: they changed over the course of the war as different events and factors cast their influence. Besides, it is not always possible to trace the true reasons and motivations that made Belarusians cooperate with the Germans and turn against the Jews.

THE ROLE OF ANTI-SEMITISM IN EASTERN EUROPE

Specialists on the Holocaust have argued that in parts of Eastern Europe, especially Poland and the western territories of the Soviet Union (such as Belarus, Ukraine and Lithuania), anti-Semitic feelings and traditional hostility towards the Jews and their culture played an important role. It is said that these led many non-Jews to take advantage of the Nazi occupation and turn against their Jewish neighbours.

The leading historian of the Holocaust, Raul Hilberg, has remarked that in Western Europe the process of extermination of Jews developed over a relatively long period of time. Several years elapsed between the various stages. The Nazis started with restrictions on Jews' civil rights and expropriation of their property; deportations to the extermination camps and the physical elimination of Jews came later. In the occupied Soviet territories, by contrast, the process was condensed: sometimes it was only a few months or even weeks that passed between the removal of Jews from society and their murder.⁸ Leonid Rein explains this difference by pointing to the fact that, in Western Europe, Jewish civic equality had been an accepted fact before the Nazi rise to power, while in Poland and the Russian Empire, anti-Semitism was an integral part of official policy, and pogroms against the Jews were fairly frequent right up to the time of World War I. Thus in Western Europe the Nazi leadership had to convince the general public that Jews were alien elements before they could set about their physical extermination; while, in the East, where there was already deep hostility and Jews were seen as second-class citizens, the Nazis could easily skip the stage of persuasion and move directly to outright murder.⁹

This argument notwithstanding, it is important to take into account the special circumstances in the East. The territories there were subject to Nazi occupation, which was driven not only by geopolitical goals but also by an extreme racial ideology. This certainly contributed to the accelerated unfolding of the Holocaust, and the intense, harsh way in which it was unleashed.

GERMAN ATTEMPTS TO INCITE LOCAL POGROMS

In the initial stage of the occupation of Belarus, when Soviet authority had collapsed, the German administration sought to intensify anti-Semitic feelings among the indigenous population. It tried to encourage spontaneous local pogroms against Jews. To achieve this, Nazi propaganda held Jews and the commissars to blame for Stalin's political repressions—forcible Russification, the liquidation of national autonomy and the church, deportations from the newly incorporated western territories in 1939 and 1940, and other violent measures.

Alfred Rosenberg, the Reich minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories, was the first to propose exploiting anti-Semitic sentiments among the peoples of the occupied Eastern territories for German purposes. The propaganda guidelines issued from his ministry in the spring of 1941 assessed that 'the Jewish Question' could 'be solved to a significant degree by giving free rein to the population for some time after the occupation'. Especially in Ukraine, locals were expected to 'proceed to large-scale Jewish pogroms and murders of Communist functionaries'. Thereafter, the propaganda maintained, the only task left to the Germans would be 'to leave the reckoning with the Bolshevik-Jewish oppressors in the hands of the population itself in the initial phase, and attend to the remaining oppressors after further appraisal'.¹⁰

In his instructions to the *Einsatzgruppen* who followed the Wehrmacht troops into the Soviet Union in June 1941, Reinhard Heydrich, Chief of Nazi Security Police and the *Sicherheitsdienst*, wrote that 'no obstacles should be put in the way of strivings for self-cleansing (*Selbstbereinigungsbestrebungen*) on the part of anti-communist or anti-Jewish circles in the newly occupied territories. On the contrary, they are to be incited, of course imperceptibly, intensified, and directed into the right course.'¹¹ Walther Stahlecker, the commander of *Einsatzgruppe A*, confirmed in a report that it was a deliberate policy in the initial days of German rule to incite local pogroms.¹² However, the Nazi leadership was always very careful to present every step it took against the Jews as the spontaneous expression of a 'popular will to self-cleansing', and special care was taken to ensure that the Germans were not seen as the main instigators and coordinators of these actions.

Moreover, the German agencies responsible for 'cleansing operations' operated in unfamiliar territory, where they could not know who was a Jew and who was not. They had to rely on assistance and information from

local inhabitants. The Germans tried to encourage the locals to betray Jews by providing material rewards such as provisions, or by promising to give them a share in confiscated Jewish property. They were not very selective in applying their extermination policies and sometimes ethnic Belarusians were executed just because they looked like Jews.¹³

In addition, attempts by locals to rescue Jews, hide them or supply them with food was highly risky, since, on 20 July 1941, the Field Command issued a special order announcing the death penalty for anyone who offered any kind of support to Jews. Here the Germans imposed the principle of collective responsibility, so that entire families could be executed and villages be razed to the ground as a reprisal for individual acts of disobedience or resistance. These measures instilled terror in the local population, who sometimes believed that, if they delivered Jews over to the Germans, they might increase their own chances of survival, as well as those of family and friends. By demonstrating loyalty to the occupation authorities, they might improve their economic situation.

BELARUSIAN ATTITUDES TOWARDS JEWS AND THE GERMAN POLICIES

Of course, it would be misleading to use an apologetic approach and to suggest that German instigation and intimidation were the only motivators for local cooperation in the Holocaust. There were a multitude of other factors, and they should not be overlooked.

From German reports and interviews with Holocaust survivors in Belarus, it becomes obvious that relations between Jews and Belarusians during the German occupation were quite tense. In fact, there were some localized pogroms during the first months of the occupation, especially in the western Belarusian towns of Grodno, Novogrudok and Ivje.¹⁴ In addition, there was looting of Jewish property and denunciations of Jews were quite common. The Germans set up information posts (*Anzeigestellen*) where non-Jews could report information on the whereabouts of Jews and communists. Negative stereotypes of Jews and complaints about the trouble they caused local residents could often be heard. Non-Jewish civilians grumbled that, in the pre-war years, Jews had tried to obtain more profitable positions for themselves, had established mutual guarantees among their own kind, did not work hard but preferred to live at the expense of others, and were often tactless in their dealings with

non-Jews.¹⁵ Belarusians also made numerous complaints about presumed connections the Jews had with Bolshevism and wrongs suffered under pre-war Soviet rule.

Several discriminatory measures were introduced by the Nazis at the very beginning of the occupation: Jews were forbidden to use public transport and they were obliged to wear identifying yellow patches on the breast, back and right sleeve of their clothes. Then came the establishment of ghettos and the removal of Jews to these quarters. It appears that these Nazi measures against Jews did not arouse significant opposition on the part of the local non-Jewish population of Belarus. In their testimonies Holocaust survivors from Belarus observe that ‘with the transfer into the ghetto, all changed in the course of one day: our friends and neighbours pretended not to recognize us; in mixed families wives sometimes denounced their Jewish husbands and vice versa. ... The fear of supporting us and the hostility of surrounding society left us feeling helpless.’¹⁶

If we look more deeply at these popular attitudes towards Jews, we see that many Belarusians perceived the situation as a return to the old times when Jews were naturally a humbled and persecuted minority, allowed to live only in the Pale of Settlement. Hence they did not oppose the isolation of the Jews.

However, anti-Semitism alone does not suffice to explain why all the Belarusians who turned against the Jews chose to do so. In addition, it seems that strong anti-Semitic feelings were not widespread among the majority of the civil population of Belarus. The sense of national consciousness in this region was quite weak, and Jews were not generally perceived as ethnic or political enemies.

The *Einsatzgruppen* reports on Belarusian attitudes towards the Jews and towards the Nazis’ anti-Jewish policies are somewhat contradictory. On the one hand, they refer to a ‘friendly’ attitude amongst Belarusians toward the German policies and speak of an intensification of local cooperation in tracking down ‘undesirables’.¹⁷ On the other hand, the Germans complain in their daily and monthly reports that, for the most part, none of the Nazi attempts to inspire spontaneous pogroms on Belarusian territory have met with much success: the Belarusians lack willingness to commit acts of physical violence against their Jewish neighbours. For example, a report on the situation in the occupied territories dated 5 August 1941 notes that ‘there is practically no Belarusian national consciousness left in that area, a pronounced anti-Semitism is also missing ... In general, the population harbours some feelings of aversion and even hatred towards

the Jews and approves of the German measures ... but it is not able by itself to engage in the treatment of the Jews.’¹⁸ Further German reports confirm that, although the local populations of Belarus as a whole complain about the ‘villainies’ of the Jews in the pre-war period, speak of the terror they suffered under the Soviet regime, and even silently approve the establishment of ghettos and the employment of Jews as forced labour, they still seem incapable of taking the initiative in regard to ‘the Jewish Question’.¹⁹ Analogous comments about Belarusian attitudes towards the Jews can be found in a Red Army intelligence report from the summer of 1941, where Soviet officer Komarov, temporarily in occupied Belarus, reports: ‘on 23 July 1941 in the village of Rubezhevichi the Germans gathered thirty-six Jews, men and women, aged seventeen to seventy, led them to the edge of the hamlet and ordered them to dig a trench. After this, they ordered the Jews to lie down on the bottom, and the Belarusians to bury them alive, but the latter refused. Then the officer in charge ordered them to change places with the Jews, and the Jews to bury the Belarusians. The Jews in their turn refused and were gunned down by the executioners.’²⁰ Discussing the unwillingness of the Belarusians to participate in violence against the Jews, the Russian émigré scholar Nicholas Vakar wrote that, despite all the Nazis’ attempts to intimidate or pressure the local population, the majority considered ‘the Jewish Question’ the affair of the Germans, a matter that did not concern them.²¹ In the autumn of 1941, the German command complained in its appeal ‘To the Workers, Peasants, and Intelligentsia of Belarus’ that ‘even though most Belarusians recognized the Jewish-Bolshevik danger and accepted some of the German policies, part of the population continued to support the “criminal bandits”—the partisans, communists, and the Jews, who were disturbing the life of peaceful citizens.’²² From this, the German command concluded that they themselves would have to enact all the ‘necessary’ punitive measures against Jews and communists.

Jan Zaprudnik, an American historian of Belarusian descent, quotes Hersh Smolar, one of the leaders of the Minsk ghetto underground movement, who said that, during the years of war, the predominant attitude of the Belarusians to the Jews was ‘empathy’.²³ Such statements, together with the fact that it was largely Lithuanian and Ukrainian police battalions that participated in the Jewish massacres—not Belarusian ones—have given rise to an ‘apologetic’ interpretation of the Belarusians’ role in the Holocaust. Some Belarusian historians have attempted to explain the unwillingness of their compatriots to participate in violent actions against

the Jews as being due to a traditional ethnic and religious tolerance typical of the area. There had been a long history of coexistence and cooperation between ethnic Belarusian and Jewish communities, living side by side since medieval times.²⁴

The Polish-Belarusian historian Jerzy Turonek considers it especially remarkable that Wilhelm Kube, the *Generalkommissar* for White Russia, argued in his letters to Berlin that the genocide of the Jews in Belarus alienated the local population and should be limited. Kube was against physical extermination, but advocated a wider employment of Belarusian Jews to work for the economic needs of the German occupying authorities. Turonek states that this put Kube in a dangerous position: in the eyes of Rosenberg and Himmler, he was considered the ‘friend of Jews’.²⁵ However, Kube’s attitude towards ‘the Jewish Question’ appears to be the result of pragmatic considerations rather than personal sympathies for Belarusian Jews. While Rosenberg and Himmler were more ideologically driven, Kube seems to have been a more pragmatic politician who had the practical task of governing the territory. He had to maintain a coherent strategy of control and preserve order, and he knew that the public execution of Jews alienated the population, created disorder and could provoke the growth of the resistance.

COOPERATION IN THE HOLOCAUST

The fact that in most of Belarus there were few mass spontaneous pogroms against the Jews—as occurred in Poland, Lithuania and Western Ukraine during the initial stage of the war—and that many Belarusians refused to engage in the outright murder of their Jewish neighbours does not necessarily mean a lack of readiness to participate in other forms of persecution or to provide indirect support to the Nazi policies of genocide. Apart from direct physical elimination, cooperation in the Holocaust took many other forms. People might refuse to grant shelter, provide food or render other assistance to Jews who had managed to escape from the ghettos, thus condemning them to certain death. They might denounce neighbours to the German authorities, telling them who were Jews and where they were hiding or they might engage in plunder of Jewish property. And there were those who acted as guards to Jews in the numerous ghettos and concentration camps the Nazis had established. Of course, many of these actions had more of a mundane, opportunistic character, rather than being directly anti-Semitic or inspired by some political grudge such as

avenging presumed Jewish support for the Soviet regime and involvement in NKVD crimes. The Germans offered material rewards for the denunciation of Jews, such as granting the informants a piece of land or part of the Jews' confiscated property, while service in the auxiliary police or as a guard in a ghetto or concentration camp was seen as employment that could provide social advancement and improve a family's economic situation and chances of survival.

Cooperation in the persecution of Jews involved not only denunciations, but also misappropriation of Jewish property. One of the traditional stereotypes of Jews, widespread in Belarus (as in other territories of Eastern Europe), was that they were undeservedly wealthy. German propaganda made every effort to strengthen this stereotype, putting it out that, while the non-Jewish population went hungry in the cities, the Jews still had large stores of food.²⁶ Undoubtedly, the desire to gain Jewish property influenced the attitude of the local population.

It is also important to highlight that these forms of cooperation took place both in the Western (formerly Polish) part of Belarus that had been incorporated into the USSR only in 1939 and which, during the occupation, was placed under civilian administration (the *Generalkommissariat Weißruthenien*), and in the Eastern (Soviet) part, which was under the military command of the German Army Group Centre.

In order to explain the readiness of non-Jewish Belarusians to turn Jews over to the Germans, the Israeli researcher Daniel Romanovsky has advanced an interesting hypothesis. He argues that, after experiencing Tsarist authority, the Revolution, civil war, and then Bolshevik, Polish and again Soviet rule, the people were only too used to frequent changes of regime. In this context, they saw the Germans merely as the latest in a series of new authorities. The Soviet period had been characterized by an incessant struggle against real or imaginary enemies of the Soviet people such as 'counter-revolutionary, bourgeois or anti-Soviet elements', kulaks, and so on. Now new masters had arrived with a new list of enemies, this time with Jews at the top of the list. Therefore, it is not difficult to imagine that those who, only a couple of years earlier, had participated in the denunciation and elimination of kulak neighbours in their villages were now prepared—possibly even eager—to participate in the elimination of the Jews from their midst.²⁷ Moreover, in the years preceding the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union, particularly after the annexation of the eastern Polish territories, the persecution of 'anti-popular elements' had proceeded not only along class lines, but also along national and ethnic lines.²⁸

Of course, the reasons why the Belarusian population might join in the persecution varied from case to case; but, in trying to explain the main motives, we may assume that it was a mix of traditional anti-Semitism, jealousy, personal grudges, greed, pure opportunism, a desire to gain material reward and anxiety to show loyalty to the occupation authorities.

RESCUE

Not all Belarusians, however, were ready to betray the Jews or engage in shabby actions towards them. Despite a notorious order threatening a death penalty for those who rescued and hid Jews, and the families of these rescuers too, there were cases where ordinary Belarusians were prepared to offer altruistic help to their Jewish neighbours, schoolmates, co-workers, friends or relatives. They supplied provisions, clothes, medical aid and forged documents. Sometimes they even hid them if they had escaped from the ghetto, though this was extremely dangerous and people rarely got away with it. The relatively few Jews who survived were able to do so only because the local population had helped them.

Although, traditionally, generalization is seen as a central aim of the social sciences, intended to aid the formulation of theories for further application, it can have its drawbacks when analysing social behaviour. It is not always illuminating to use static generalized categories like ‘collaborator’, ‘bystander’ and ‘rescuer’, nor to limit people’s motivations for anti-Semitism, anti-Bolshevism, opportunism or heroism. Individuals in occupied countries tended to behave in highly erratic ways and no one particular behaviour pattern predominated. Under the circumstances of war and occupation, decisions and reactions were often situational. They depended on the interaction of many unexpected factors and did not necessarily follow any specific logic. There were many ‘grey zones’ and contradictions. In addition, people’s attitudes changed over time.

As a solution, I feel it would be more rewarding and revealing to use the approach of social history, exploring individual stories and examining social actions in everyday life. For this reason, it is well worth citing the memoirs of the Jewish Holocaust survivor Georgij Elper, who describes his experience as a child in the Minsk ghetto and his rescue by a Belarusian woman:

After the establishment of the ghetto in Minsk all Jews were ordered to wear yellow stripes for the purpose of identification. Apart from Belarusian Jews in the Minsk ghetto there were also Jews sent from Germany. They had stars

of David sewn on their sleeves. Even before the establishment of the ghetto, the Germans imposed special indemnities and started to extract contributions: this meant that Jews had to collect an amount of gold and other valuables and hand it over to the Germans for their needs. The members of the Jewish self-governing body, the *Judenrat*, urged us not to resist but to give away all we had so as to avoid trouble. Very soon the Germans started to arrest Jewish men. We heard that many Jews in the countryside around Minsk had been exterminated by death squads, and those who were left alive were sent to the city ghetto—so it became quite crowded in our place. ... Once I managed to leave the ghetto unnoticed and went to visit our old apartment in the city centre because I wanted to take some warm clothes that I had managed to hide there before our departure. When I arrived I was surprised to see that our apartment was already occupied by our neighbours from the parallel street—the Belarusian Voitovich family. All the furniture remained as it was before, but our neighbour Ledia told me that all our property was distrained and we could not take it away. I took my clothes, but then I realized that I had grown and they did not fit me any more, so I asked to exchange them for food. When I came next time, I was told that the Voitovichs had moved to a bigger apartment because their father had been appointed chief accountant in the local administration. I went to see them; they were polite and sympathetic, fed me and gave me some food to bring to the ghetto, but asked me not to come any more because, unfortunately, they were not able to help us regain our property and were afraid that my visits could attract unnecessary attention from the German authorities and bring trouble.²⁹

This testimony demonstrates how contradictory the behaviour of local Belarusians was towards their Jewish neighbours. They had taken over Jewish property and were occupying a Jewish apartment, but they were still ‘polite and sympathetic’ and even gave some food to the Jewish boy. At the same time, they wanted to be sure that the Jews would not return and not reclaim their possessions or their old life.

Elper recalls how the Jews of the Minsk ghetto hid and tried to come up with survival strategies:

Once, by chance, I heard how a Belarusian policeman told a Jewish girl about the coming pogrom. We had a secret storeroom in our apartment without windows and a door; the entrance to this room was concealed by an old sideboard. This room saved the lives of many Jewish men. They hid inside, leaving only my old and ill grandmother in the apartment, with Harina, our neighbour in the ghetto who had worked in the Minsk hospital

before the war; she was sitting next to grandmother's bed with a Red Cross armband. The Germans feared the spread of diseases and epidemics and respected doctors.³⁰

This testimony mentions a Belarusian policeman who should officially fall under the category of 'collaborator', but for some reason he unexpectedly warned a Jewish girl about the forthcoming *Aktion*, thus saving the lives of many Jews. In fact, there were several instances when individuals accepted appointment by the Germans to positions in the local administration—such as village elders, mayors, policemen or guards—with the intention of protecting 'their own people' or of saving the community from complete destruction. While holding these positions, they might simultaneously provide secret aid or information to the resistance, notifying Jews about German clamp-downs, and provide them with forged documents so they could escape the ghetto.

Elper continues:

The term 'pogrom' could not be applied to our case since in previous times anti-Semites entered Jewish houses, destroying and taking away their property, cutting beards and beating Jews; but such systematic extermination of Jews never happened before the Second World War. The Germans called them '*Aktion[en]*'. They encircled a certain ghetto quarter, killed all the inhabitants and issued a decree that from that day the borders of the ghetto were changed (narrowed) and indicated the exact streets where the border was to pass. As time passed the tension and fear in the ghetto grew. ... One Belarusian woman, a colleague of Harina, a doctor from Minsk hospital, Eugenia Emelianova, used to come from time to time to bring us some food and clothes. Her husband had been mobilized to the front. During the bombing, her only son, who was with some other relatives, left Minsk and fled to the forest. So she remained alone. Once Eugenia persuaded my grandmother to take me away from the ghetto; she liked me because I looked pretty much like her son Volodya (Vladimir) and was of the same age. From that day, I never returned to the ghetto. Eugenia's situation at home was not easy. She was a doctor, quite a well known person in the area, and many people came to her place to ask for medical help. It was not easy to explain the sudden appearance in her house of a new child—'a nephew from the village' nobody had ever seen before. So, in order to avoid denunciation, she forbade me to talk with the neighbours. According to the official documents, I was Vladimir Emelianov (her son) of Belarusian nationality. She worked the whole day in the hospital and I stayed at home taking care of the housekeeping and looking after a goat—our only source of milk.³¹

From this testimony, it is evident that the Belarusian woman rescued the Jewish boy partly because she wanted to have a substitute for her own son and also needed somebody to help her with household duties while she was working in the hospital. Moreover, the Jewish boy bore a physical resemblance to her son and was of the same age. This made things easier for her, as she had her son's official documents and could conceal the Jewish identity of the boy and present him as Belarusian. Another important factor was that she was alone and, rescuing the Jewish boy, could not put anybody else in danger. She had only her own life to lose and was therefore more inclined to take the risk.

In practice we see a multitude of sometimes unexpected factors, all interacting with each other, that determined people's decisions to take certain actions. Looking at social action rather than static categories seems to offer a better perspective on what drove the population's behaviour in Belarus.

NOTES

1. J. T. Gross (2001) *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press). This book, which deals with the massacre of the Jews of Jedwabne by their Polish neighbours, opened the discussion on the issue of local collaboration in Poland and challenged the representation of the Holocaust as a purely German crime. However, the issue of collaboration in the occupied territories of the Soviet Union, especially Belarus, has not been comprehensively examined and re-evaluated.
2. See, for example, A. Litvin (2003) 'Местная вспомогательная полиция на территории Беларуси, июль 1941–июль 1944' ('Local Auxiliary Police in the Territory of Belarus, July 1941–July 1944') in Y. Basin (ed.) *Беларусь у XX стагоддзі* (Belarus in the 20th century), vol. 2 (Minsk: International Humanities Institute); M. Dean (2000) *Collaboration in the Holocaust: Crimes of the Local Police in Belorussia and Ukraine, 1941–44* (New York: St. Martin's Press); and A. J. Munoz and O. Romanko (2003) *Hitler's White Russians: Collaboration, Extermination and Anti-Partisan Warfare in Byelorussia, 1941–1944* (New York: Europa Books).
3. See L. Rein (2006) 'Local Collaboration in the Execution of the "Final Solution" in Nazi-Occupied Belorussia', *Holocaust Genocide Studies*, vol. 20, No. 3 (Winter 2006), p. 387.
4. See 'Weißrußland' in I. Gutman (ed.) (1993) *Enzyklopädie des Holocaust*, vol. 3 (Berlin: Argon), pp. 1559–62.

5. B. Chiari (1998) *Alltag hinter der Front. Besatzung, Kollaboration und Widerstand in Weißrußland 1941–1944* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag), p. 231. The statistics on the number of Belarusian Jews who perished in the Holocaust varies considerably. The difficulty in providing more exact numbers can be explained by the fact that, until recently, many historians treated Eastern (Soviet) and Western (formerly Polish) Belarus separately, and often Jews from the eastern part of the country were counted as Russian or Soviet Jews while western Belarusian Jews were considered to be Polish Jews. An additional difficulty lies in the fact that some Jews left Belarus, for various reasons, immediately after the war and many others returned after the Soviet evacuation.
6. Rein (2006) ‘Local Collaboration’, p. 387.
7. Rein (2006) ‘Local Collaboration’, p. 381.
8. R. Hilberg (1985) *The Destruction of the European Jews* (New York: Holmes & Meier), p. 53.
9. Rein (2006) ‘Local Collaboration’, p. 388.
10. J. Matthäus and F. Bajohr (eds) (2015) *Alfred Rosenberg. Die Tagebücher von 1934 bis 1944* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag), p. 557.
11. ‘Fernschreiben Heydrichs an die Einsatzgruppenchefs vom 29.6.41’ in P. Klein (ed.) (1997) *Die Einsatzgruppen in der besetzten Sowjetunion 1941–1942, Die Tätigkeits- und Lageberichte des Chefs der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD* (Berlin: Edition Hentrich), p. 319.
12. See Dean (2000) *Collaboration in the Holocaust*, p. 21.
13. C. Gerlach (1999) *Kalkulierte Morde. Die Deutsche Wirtschafts- und Vernichtungs Politik in Weißrußland 1941–1944* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition), p. 518.
14. With regard to evidence of anti-Jewish pogroms in the former Polish areas of Belarus, see A. Zbikowski (1993) ‘Local Anti-Jewish Pogroms in the Occupied Territories of Eastern Poland, June–July 1941’ in L. Dobroszycki and J. S. Gurock (eds) *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union* (New York: M. E. Sharpe), p. 177; and S. Cholawsky (1998) *The Jews of Bicolorussia during World War II* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers), pp. 81–82 and 271. See also BA-MA RH 22/227; and BA R 58/214 EM 13, 5 July 1941, cited in Dean (2000) *Collaboration in the Holocaust*, p. 21.
15. Dean (2000) *Collaboration in the Holocaust*, p. 52.
16. Cited in Rein (2006) ‘Local Collaboration’, p. 390.
17. The reports also note a difference in attitude toward the invaders in Western Belarus, which was only annexed to the Soviet Union in 1939, and that found in the old Soviet Eastern territories. See ‘Tätigkeits- und Lagebericht (TLB-L. R.) № 1, der Einsatzgruppen der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD in der UdSSR, 31 July 1941’ and ‘TLB No. 2, 29 July–14 August 1941’ in Klein (1997) *Die Einsatzgruppen in der besetzten*

- Sowjetunion*, p. 125, pp. 136–7 and p. 146; see also ‘Operational Situation Report No. 1, 2 July 1941’ in Y. Arad et al. (eds) (1989) *The Einsatzgruppen Reports* (New York: Holocaust Library), p. 2, cited in Rein (2006) ‘Local Collaboration’, p. 389.
18. Arad (1989) *The Einsatzgruppen Reports*, p. 68.
 19. See also *Ereignismeldungen*, No. 43, 1941, cited in L. Smilovitsky (2000) *Катастрофа евреев в Белоруссии, 1941–1944* (The Holocaust in Belorussia, 1941–44) (Tel Aviv: Biblioteka Motveya Chernogo), p. 302.
 20. National Archive of the Republic of Belarus (henceforth NARB), fond 3500, opis 4, delo 346, p. 19: ‘Report to the head of the Central Headquarters of the Partisan Movement Ponomarenko from comrade Komarov, 12 August, 1941’.
 21. N. Vakar (1956) *Belorussia: The Making of a Nation* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press), p. 156.
 22. YVA (Yad Vashem Archives), file m-41-112, p. 29. *Menskaya gazeta*, Minsk, 5 October 1941, cited also in Smilovitsky (2000) *Катастрофа евреев в Белоруссии*, p. 302.
 23. J. Zaprudnik (1993) *Belarus at a Crossroads in History* (Boulder CO: Westview Press), p. 97.
 24. Perhaps the most extreme example of such views is to be found in V. Ostrovsky (1960) *Antisemitism in Byelorussia and its Origins: Material for Historical Research and Study of the Subject* (London: Belarussian Central Council), p. 65. It is important to remember that Viktor Ostrovsky was a son of Rodislav Ostrovsky, a Belarussian nationalist and head of the Belarussian Central Council—a collaborationist organization created under the German occupation.
 25. J. Turonek (1993) *Беларусь пад нямецкай акупацыяй* (Belarus under the German Occupation) (Minsk: Belarus), pp. 80–1.
 26. Klein (1997) *Die Einsatzgruppen*, p. 308.
 27. D. Romanovsky (1997) ‘Soviet Jews under Nazi Occupation in Northeastern Belarus and Western Russia’ in Z. Gitelman (ed.) *Bitter Legacy. Confronting the Holocaust in the USSR* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), p. 242.
 28. I. Altman (2002) *Жертвы ненависти. Холокост в СССР, 1941–1945* (Victims of Hate: The Holocaust in the Soviet Union 1941–1945) (Moscow: Fond ‘Kovcheg’), p. 217.
 29. NARB, fond 359, opis 1, delo 19: ‘Memoirs of Georgij Elper about the occupation period and life in Minsk ghetto’.
 30. NARB, fond 359, opis 1, delo 19: ‘Memoirs of Georgij Elper’.
 31. NARB, fond 359, opis 1, delo 19: ‘Memoirs of Georgij Elper’.

Nationalizing the Holocaust. ‘Foreign’ Jews and the Making of Indifference in Macedonia Under Bulgarian Occupation

Nadège Ragaru

INTRODUCTION

During World War II, Bulgaria was an ally of Nazi Germany but, resisting German pressure, it decisively postponed the deportation of about 48,000 Bulgarian Jews. However, in the territories under Bulgarian occupation—Vardar Macedonia and the Pirot region in Yugoslavia; and Western Thrace (the eastern part of Aegean Macedonia) in Greece—11,343 Jews were rounded up and deported to Nazi extermination camps. Only a handful survived.¹ How can we account for what might appear to be an utterly two-faced policy from the Bulgarian regime? Several historians have suggested that the discrepancy between the fates of Jews in the ‘old’ and in the ‘new’ kingdoms needs to be viewed in the light of citizenship policies. In the ‘new territories’, following the adoption of an ordinance on nationality in June 1942, Jews were not granted Bulgarian citizenship. As the historian Richard Crampton puts it, ‘depriving the Jews in the occupied

The author wishes to thank Roumen Avramov, Liliana Deyanova, Katja Happe and Andrea Löw for their comments on an earlier version of this chapter.

N. Ragaru (✉)

Sciences Po, Centre de Recherches Internationales, Paris, France

e-mail: nadege.ragaru@sciencespo.fr

territories from their citizenship ... was a decision which was to cost most of these Jews their lives.² The present chapter is based on an assumption that the analytical scope for studying the contrast between the fates of the Jews in the 'old' and 'new' kingdoms needs to be widened beyond a mere survey of citizenship laws and practices. Taking Vardar Macedonia as a case study, it argues that anti-Jewish policies, and the diversity of local responses to these policies, must be set against the history of competing Serb, Bulgarian, Greek and (to a lesser extent) Albanian nation-building ambitions in a multi-ethnic region that had long been part of the Ottoman Empire.

European Jewish communities were often enmeshed in complex interethnic relations. Examples include their positioning in the rivalry between Poles and Lithuanians in Lithuania;³ in the tripartite relationships between Estonians, Germans and Russians in Estonia,⁴ and in the Hungarian-Romanian dispute over Transylvania.⁵ Rather surprisingly, the interplay between the 'national question(s)' and the 'Jewish question' in Macedonia has remained on the periphery of Holocaust scholarship until recently. There are several explanations that could be suggested for this silence.

First, although Bulgarian and Macedonian mainstream discourses uphold opposing views on responsibility for the deportation of Macedonia's Jews, they share one common trope: they both tend to underline the strength of solidarity that existed between Jews and non-Jews. While historians in Bulgaria have insisted that citizens in the 'old' kingdom lacked the time and opportunity to mobilize against deportations from the occupied lands,⁶ their Macedonian counterparts have constructed a narrative of shared suffering and of the people's powerlessness to confront Bulgaria's anti-Jewish measures.⁷ Such a perspective has not encouraged the development of scholarship attentive to changing national dynamics, rivalries and alliances.

Second, although the historiography on the 'Macedonian question' is huge, this body of scholarship has mainly focused on rival attempts to shape the national consciousness of the Orthodox majority into being Serbs, Bulgarians *or* Greeks, with a Macedonian national identity emerging in this context. The Jews, a small minority perceived as a side contender in the confrontations between national causes, have remained outside the analytical frame. Scholarship on the Holocaust and studies on nation-building in Macedonia have remained largely separated, and this leaves us ill-equipped to assess the impact of conflicting nation-building

enterprises on relations between Jews and non-Jews there, and on possible ties between these 'greater' nation-state projects and the destinies of the local Jewish communities living amid them.⁸ As Holly Case has justly noted in a recent article, it may well be worthwhile studying the legacies of the 'Macedonian question' and the 'Jewish question' in Vardar Macedonia in tandem.⁹

Against this background, the present chapter focuses on one moment, one site and a limited set of issues.¹⁰ In its time frame it covers just the first months of Bulgarian occupation—from April to December 1941. This was before the creation of the Commissariat on Jewish Affairs, the special body charged with the enforcement of anti-Jewish measures, formed in the wake of a decree issued in August 1942 and before the subsequent appointment of the Delegates on Jewish Affairs in Bulgarian-controlled Macedonia. At the time we look at, the implementation of anti-Jewish laws was in the hands of the regional and local bureaucracies. The case study presented here concerns Bitola (*Bitolj* in Serb, *Bitolja* in Bulgarian), then a significant centre of Sephardi Jewish life in Macedonia. The city occupied a key strategic location, as it bordered Greece to the south (including German-occupied Salonika) and some contested Italian zones of occupation to the west. In Bulgarian national imagery, Bitola also had a strong symbolic significance, as it had been an important locus of Macedonian revolutionary activity since the late nineteenth century. Under these circumstances, how did the officials who had been sent from Bulgaria to administer the area understand the nature of their mission? How did they frame the 'Jewish question' as they set about their work, and what was the impact of this framing on the disenfranchisement of the Jews? These are among the questions this chapter addresses.¹¹

In discussing them, the chapter puts forward two arguments. First, in the initial phases of national 'unification', the small Jewish minority in Vardar Macedonia was of only limited concern to the civil servants deployed there. In their endeavour to confer meaning upon the anti-Jewish measures they implemented, they saw things from the perspective they had been trained in: they looked for anti-national and anti-state threats from pro-Serb and pro-communist elements, respectively. Since in the early months of the occupation communist resistance was still in its infancy, the Serbs were the main suspects. It was in proportion to their supposed pro-Serb loyalties that the Jews were identified as a 'menace'; and this happened almost from the start. Raising the importance of this

nationalist ‘filter’ on perceiving ‘friends’ and ‘enemies’ of the state does not preclude the existence of committed anti-Semites in the Bulgarian state apparatus. It does suggest, however, that there is a need to devote further attention to the ‘street-level bureaucracy’ behind the anti-Jewish policies that ensued. We need to look at the processes through which average bureaucrats—members of the police and the local authorities—took ownership of the anti-Jewish agenda.

Second, in times of war, environments are by their very nature extremely dynamic, and changes in social relations can often take place at a fast and seemingly unforeseeable pace. The atmosphere of Vardar Macedonia in 1941—that short burst of Bulgarian euphoria and expectation coupled with anxious uncertainty—differed significantly from that in the spring of 1943 when, following a two-year process of economic marginalization and social exclusion, the isolated, impoverished Jews of Macedonia were rounded up with the assistance of specialized bureaucrats sent from Sofia. The sheer rapidity with which social distance and systematized cruelty had been established by this time might tempt us to seek explanations within a short time frame. However, I argue that the situation Jews faced, from 1941 on was one the authorities and other social agents had created, in an extremely volatile setting, through the selective re-appropriation of multiple ‘available pasts’. To put it more succinctly, the history of the Holocaust in Bulgarian-ruled Vardar Macedonia needs to be viewed as late Ottoman or post-Ottoman history. If we leave out the last decades of the Empire and the interwar era, it is impossible to understand the acceleration of time in those fateful months. The fashioning of popular indifference to the plight of the Jews arose from a combination of long-term identity and social processes, mid-term professional routines and short-term opportunism.

TERRITORIAL REVISIONISM AND BULGARIA’S OCCUPATION OF MACEDONIA

On the eve of World War II, Bulgaria stood firmly among the revisionist states in Europe.¹² The tiny, humiliated Balkan state hoped to regain a degree of national grandeur and achieve the unification of all Bulgarian-inhabited territories. Some 60 years earlier, in March 1878, the San Stefano Treaty, which ended the Fourth Russo-Turkish war, had envisioned the creation of a ‘greater Bulgaria’ comprising most of Ottoman Macedonia.

Three months later, in Berlin, Britain, fearing that the new state might become a channel for Russian influence, championed the creation of a much smaller Bulgarian principality and the country was cut to size. From that moment on, the 'recovery' of Macedonia became a central motif in Bulgarian foreign policy. However, Bulgaria was not the sole Balkan state hoping to profit from the enfeeblement of the Ottoman Empire. Serbia and Greece vied for control over the region as well. Meanwhile, the 'Macedonian question' was shaped by the development of revolutionary committees,¹³ and by the local processes of Macedonian identity formation.¹⁴ Temporarily united during the First Balkan War (1912), the three Balkan protagonists quarrelled over the allocation of the spoils afterwards. Dissatisfied with the initial peace settlement, Bulgaria launched an offensive against its former allies, and was defeated. Macedonia was split into three segments. The largest segment, Vardar Macedonia, was granted to Serbia and was renamed 'South Serbia'.

During World War I, Bulgaria sided with Germany in the hope of regaining its lost lands, but all it achieved was a brutal and short-lived occupation of Vardar Macedonia. Punishment came in the form of the Treaty of Neuilly (1919), which imposed the relinquishment of further territories to Yugoslavia, financial sanctions and the downsizing of the army.¹⁵ While tens of thousands of refugees from Vardar Macedonia and Greek Thrace sought a new life in Bulgaria, the country's embittered political circles dreamt of revenge. Meanwhile, divisions between Macedonian revolutionary factions and bloody infighting between them were creating considerable political instability.

In the feverish environment created by the start of World War II, political decisions were made with a view to their expected effect on territorial aspirations. The Bulgarian ruling elite believed that a show of sympathy with Germany's approach to the 'Jewish question' would serve national goals. In the autumn of 1940, the government of Bulgaria prepared a Law for the Protection of the Nation (ZZN), largely modelled on the Nazi Nuremberg Laws. This came into force in January 1941, ahead of the signing of the Tripartite Pact on 1 March 1941.¹⁶ A month later, after letting German troops use its territory to invade Greece, Bulgaria was ceded the administration of Vardar Macedonia (except for a small segment allotted to Italy) and also Western Thrace and the Pirost region.¹⁷ It gained these territories without firing a shot.

THE ‘JEWISH QUESTION’ IN THE SHADOW OF BULGARIAN
NATIONAL ASPIRATIONS: THE MAPPING OF FRIENDSHIP
AND ENMITY IN A MULTI-ETHNIC BORDER CITY

How did the Jews fit into this revisionist agenda? For Bulgarian political circles, the occupation of Macedonia meant first and foremost a re-linking with ‘national brethren’ abroad. Enthusiasm was boosted by the initial warm welcome given to Bulgarian troops in the areas acquired: they were seen as an improvement on the ruthless Germans.¹⁸ For local supporters of the Bulgarian national cause, the change of sovereignty also promised a departure from Serb centralizing policies and, possibly, appointments to state offices.¹⁹ Between May and August 1941, a host of civil servants was posted to Macedonia. These bureaucrats were a mix of returnees who had left Macedonia after the Balkan wars and newcomers from the old kingdom who were all too often ill-trained. Two administrative areas were created: the Skopje and the Bitola districts. There the intelligence services were structured in departments: Department A (political surveillance), Department B (counter-intelligence, with control over national minorities among its prerogatives), Department V (former Yugoslav political parties), and Department G (the press). The new territories were formally annexed on 14 May 1941 and all personnel were given one axial mission: to integrate them into the kingdom forthwith. Included in the task was a charge to ascertain the Bulgarian identity of the citizenry.

In October 1941, the Bitola Regional School Inspectorate circulated a letter among school directors and teachers, aimed at stirring their patriotic feelings:

Teachers must not forget that the population among which they will work has suffered in the struggles against those who sought to eat up Bulgaria—through foreign propaganda both in the country and at the borders of the Bulgarian nation (*narodnost*). ... The merits of these people are that, while living in the western and south-western borders of the regions that are truly Bulgarian, they have remained over the centuries the builders of its borders, a breakwater to repel the attacks of enemies.²⁰

At this time, the ‘Jewish question’ was not high on the occupiers’ agenda. The local Jewry was small in number, mostly financially modest, and not yet associated with a (still weak) communist threat.²¹ It was a pair of other issues that dominated the Bulgarian priority checklist in the former ‘City

of the Consuls': the 'de-Serbianization' of the region; and delimitation of spheres of influence with the Italians. The Bulgarians had hoped that their occupation zone would include the region of Ohrid, to the west of Bitola. Although a German decision made on 15 May 1941 expanded Bulgarian territory, the amount of land allocated to the Italians provoked great disappointment.²² Failure to gain important economic assets, especially the mineral resources of western Macedonia, contributed to the acrimony in the Bulgarian-Italian dispute. But national issues were also to the forefront: Italy was thought to favour the Albanian cause, and was accused of encouraging Slavs to identify as Macedonians. Thus, an intelligence police report of August 1941 read:

In the Bulgarian territories occupied by Italian troops, the Turkish and the Albanian people, protected by the Italians, harass the Bulgarians in incredible ways. ... Italian officers forbid Bulgarians to call themselves Bulgarians, only 'Orthodox Macedonians' or 'Macedonians', meanwhile they write the endings to their names with 'ich' [i.e., with a Serb spelling].²³

Nevertheless, in the struggle for the souls of the Orthodox majority, the Bulgarians' chief rivals were the Serbs. Following the Second Balkan War (1913), officials had been sent from Belgrade to 'Serbianize' Vardar Macedonia; Serb colonists were settled in the province through grants of fertile farming land, and in public schools the learning of Serb was made compulsory.²⁴ Opponents of Serbianization faced state repression, especially during the dictatorship of King Aleksandar (1929–1934).²⁵ To reverse these policies, the Bulgarian authorities decided to remove Serb officials, nationalize Yugoslav properties and redistribute plots to several priority groups, including 'deserving' (pro-Bulgarian) citizens.²⁶ A couple of months after the Bulgarian troops entered Bitola, the Serbs there were put on trains and sent back to Serbia.²⁷ In a document dated December 1941, the chief of the district police department reported bombastically:

During the summer [of 1941], rumours [about the termination of Bulgarian rule] were circulated by Serbs, who were numerous in the region at the time. As the Germans were having difficulties with Serbs in Serbia and wished to limit their return to old Serbia, they were supposed to remain here. Feeling that in such a case the morale of the Bulgarians could become shaky, I initiated a tremendous task, their deportation to old Serbia. ... The liquidation of the Serb element continued for about a month and a half.²⁸

The threat posed by the smaller national groups living in the Bitola area was deemed to be proportionate with their proximity to the Serbs and their allies, England and France. In the multicultural city of Bitola, several ethnic groups were held in suspicion. The distrust of Albanians has already been noted. More broadly, all groups able to garner support from a ‘kin-state’ were closely monitored. These included the Turks and the Aromanians. The Greeks, a traditional competitor in the shaping of the Macedonian issue, also stood out.²⁹

By comparison, the Jewish group constituted a very small piece in the Macedonian ethnocultural mosaic. Yet, early on, Jews were singled out as being ‘allies of the Serbs and the democratic states’.³⁰ On 19 May 1941, the Bitola regional police office warned the director of police in Sofia:

Although few in numbers, Serbs tried, before the war, to impose their outlook on the region through their numerous commercial, cultural and political organizations. In this endeavour, they have ... received unreserved support from the Jews, who number about 2,000 people in the city of Bitolja.³¹

A police intelligence report covering the May–November 1941 period went one step further in identifying Jews as supporters of foreign enemies:

In the recent past the region was the site of several propaganda campaigns ... because the people here were subjected to assimilation by the Serbs. The area also adjoins the Greek border. ... England and France have enjoyed a decisive influence and have acted—the former through paid Serb and Jewish agents, and the latter through its missionary institutions supported by the Bitolja branch of the French-Serbian bank. ... The English propaganda ... was fully assisted by the Jewish group in Bitolja under the leadership of the Chelebon brothers and Yuso Franko.³²

Even more vexing for the Bulgarian administrators, the Jews were alleged to be Serbian-speakers. According to the Skopje annual activity report concerning people under the surveillance of Department V (23.04–31.12.1941), ‘the Jewish population in its majority speaks Serbian, a language through which they conduct tacit propaganda, which is also led by the few Serbs who have remained in Skopje. At the same time, some Jews living in the city keep up a correspondence with their co-nationals who live in Serbia, using secret messengers.’³³

This allegation needs to be put into perspective. Since the second half of the nineteenth century, language had been a major bone of contention in Macedonia, because neither religion (Orthodoxy) nor ethnicity (a Slavic background) could settle the question as to whether local inhabitants were Serbs, Bulgarians or some other distinct people. As soon as they arrived in Macedonia, Bulgarian officials hastened to erase Serb linguistic influence. Typewriters and publishing houses became the objects of meticulous, almost obsessive surveillance: 'All those who own a printing office are registered with the Department,' an intelligence report for 1941 ran. 'They are forbidden to print pieces in Serbian. For the Department to be assured of this, in all the printing houses Serbian characters [for the print trays] have been taken out and been put under seals. The Department has toured all the bookstores of the city. Where books in Serbian were found, they were taken away'³⁴

That the 'majority' of Jews in Skopje, or in any other Macedonian city, should have been perceived by Bulgarian police agents as Serbophones would have left both Yugoslav officials and members of the Jewish communities of Yugoslavia dumbfounded. On the eve of the war, Macedonia's Sephardim Jews were generally portrayed—by Jews and non-Jews alike—as a rather traditional, conservative, self-enclosed community, whose ability to integrate into 'Yugoslav modernity' was far from guaranteed. Even in the capital city, where regular contacts with the Serb bureaucracy had encouraged a higher level of proficiency in Serbian, attachment to Ladino (Judeo-Spanish) as a mother language remained strong among the Sephardim Jews. According to the 1931 census, among Jews in the Vardar Banovina: 2.90 per cent spoke Serbo-Croat; 95.90 per cent spoke 'Jewish' (they were primarily Ladino-speakers but there were some Yiddish-speakers as well); 0.41 per cent spoke Hungarian; and 0.37 per cent spoke German.³⁵ In the interwar years, after the state had taken over the former school of the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* and imposed compulsory learning of Serbian in state schools, the Serbian language had made some inroads among the Bitola Jewish youth. Nevertheless linguistic integration remained limited.

Two factors may explain the Bulgarian officials' misreading of the situation. The first is the nature of the network of social contacts the civilian administrators developed after moving into a region they knew poorly, and whose political and cultural cleavages they struggled to understand. Their prime Jewish interlocutors were members of the commercial elite and those highly respected citizens who had been active in community

affairs—people who were fluent in Serbian. Had these administrators spent more time in the poorer Jewish quarter of Bitola, they would have heard more Ladino than Serbian. Had they been familiar with the bazaar, they would have been exposed to multiple ways of speaking the local idioms. A second factor may have been even more compelling. As the ethnologist Gerard Lenclud once put it, ‘seeing is recognizing’.³⁶ Obsessed with Serb influence, the Bulgarian authorities filtered the ‘Jewish question’ through ‘national’ lenses.

CHARTING AN UNEASY COURSE: JEWS IN THE FACE OF COMPETING NATIONAL PROCESSES

What had the Bulgarian administrators failed to see? In other words, what position did the Jews really occupy in the blurred national(istic) landscape of Bitola? At the start of the war, members of the local Jewish community were deeply divided in their social standing: there was a small merchant elite which stood out from an impoverished majority of craftsmen, porters, maids and people with no jobs at all. Jews were divided too in their visions for a future, some espousing a Jewish national project, others integration within the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Having mainly settled in the area in the sixteenth century, the local Sephardic community had achieved a relatively good level of prosperity by the first half of the nineteenth century. They benefited from their commercial links with Salonika and from trade routes reaching as far as Constantinople. After 1873 the coming of the railway—Bitola was the last stop on the line—opened new paths for upward social mobility.³⁷ Meanwhile, the city’s demographic, social and cultural profiles evolved as Christian peasants from neighbouring villages settled in the town. The hellenized Vlach bourgeoisie which had previously been dominant, progressively lost in pre-eminence.³⁸

However, Jewish hopes for a better future were dashed by the burgeoning of national movements that were ready to advance their legitimacy at gunpoint. The fluidity of national allegiances among the Orthodox population made conflict between the various national committees all the more intense. In August 1903, an ill-fated attempt at an armed insurrection—the Illinden Uprising—was brutally repressed by the Ottoman powers.³⁹ Insecurity increased as various bandits, loosely connected with the revolutionaries, engaged in ‘protection services’. Mark Cohen has vividly captured the atmosphere of this turbulent period: ‘In the years 1903 to 1912,

the Monastir region endured an armed revolution against Ottoman rule, a coup that toppled the sultan's government, years of deadly guerrilla warfare between Macedonia's Greeks and Bulgarians, massive emigration to the United States and other countries, a cholera epidemic that slowed business through all of 1911, and a decline in food production that led to extraordinary inflation.⁴⁰

Faced with criss-crossing nationalisms, the Jews tried to avoid taking sides. Writing in retrospect, with a view to demonstrating the *longue durée* commitment of the (now departed) Jews to their respective national causes, Macedonian and Bulgarian historiographies have singled out a few individuals, like Rafael and Mentesh Kamhi, who joined the revolutionaries.⁴¹ But in Bitola (as in Salonika), Jewish groups tended to look on the creation of Christian nation states, which might brandish a flamboyant patriotism, with some anxiety. The rise of Balkan nationalisms increased their attachment to the more stable imperial framework.⁴² The division of Macedonia after the Balkan wars added to Jewish insecurity in Bitola, as ties were severed with Salonika, a major trading partner and a cultural centre of Sephardic life. The economy declined. Located in the middle of battling sides in World War I, the city was heavily bombarded and half destroyed. The population dwindled. The 1912 figure of 60,000 inhabitants, including 8,900 Jews, was cut to 28,000 with only 3,000–3,500 Jews by the post-war period (1919–1921). Subsequent recovery was slow. (The population reached 32,000 in the late 1930s but with only 3,246 Jews.)⁴³

Seen against this twenty-year crisis, the creation of a new Kingdom of the Serbs, the Croats and the Slovenes in 1918 represented a modicum of stability. The post-war international treaties had accorded Jews minority rights, so that, for instance, they could have communal organizations and private schools; but social issues remained pressing. Most importantly, the local Jews were caught up between pro-Yugoslav centralizing forces, proponents of a Macedonian autonomist movement who kept on warring among themselves, a formerly influential Turkish community weakened by the collapse of the Empire and an Albanian minority undergoing a process of national awakening. Identifying fully with any of these was a real challenge. Moreover, Bitola's Jews found themselves on the wrong sides not only of the multiple binaries dividing the kingdom but of those dividing Jewish communities themselves—between Ashkenazi and Sephardim, North and South, the more 'civilized' West and the post-Ottoman 'Orient'.⁴⁴ In the eyes of the Zagreb and Belgrade Jewish elites,

who claimed a higher level of integration and modernity, Macedonia's Sephardim still bore the stigma of having lived for so long at the periphery of the Ottoman Empire.⁴⁵

Some Jewish youth turned to Zionism, investing their hopes in a national project that could put them on a par with the other nationalities: in the 1930s, 429 Bitola Jews left for Palestine, while others emigrated to the United States and elsewhere.⁴⁶ But, as they had done during the Ottoman era, the majority of Jews sought to accommodate themselves to the new regime,⁴⁷ at the same time trying to maintain good relations with the various nationalities. The German invasion, followed by the arrival of Bulgarian troops, caused much apprehension.

Let us now consider how the Bulgarian officials' interpretation of national interests and the ethnocultural marquetry of the area impacted on the execution of anti-Jewish measures during the first year of occupation.

ENFORCING ANTI-SEMITIC POLICIES: THE CONVERGENCE BETWEEN NATIONAL AND ANTI-JEWISH AGENDAS

Following the occupation of Vardar Macedonia, the Bulgarian authorities proceeded to implement the Law for the Protection of the Nation and other anti-Jewish regulations. They did this diligently and in close tandem with the Sofia police directorate and the Ministry of the Interior. The legislation introduced a series of exclusions and thresholds for the professions, as well as severe restrictions on Jews' public and private lives. The utmost priority was given to the control of Jews' movements—movements in Bitola, between the Macedonian cities, and both in and outside the Vardar occupation zone. As early as June 1941, Jews who did not respect the curfew were being heavily fined.⁴⁸ In the initial phases of the occupation, there were some disagreements about the treatment of Jews who had been born in Bitola, were resident in Serbia or Croatia at the outbreak of the war, and were now returning to their home city. On 18 June 1941, the chief of the Bitola district police expressed his frustration at the excessive leniency of the regional prefect:

Up to the present, over 30 Jewish families from Belgrade and Zagreb have arrived in groups, and have wished to remain in Bitola, where they were born. In order to solve the question of their being officially allowed to stay in the city, I asked you for instructions, in letter N.328 of 20th of this month. In answer, I received radiogram N.3 [a telegraphic communication], dated

23.06, with the following direction: 'that such people be sent back where they came from.' In order to implement this order, I called these people to our department and ordered them to leave, but this order was cancelled by the regional prefect, who authorized them to stay permanently in Bitolja.⁴⁹

However, step by step, the controls tightened—although agents regularly complained that movements were 'hard to limit for want of [better] border services'.⁵⁰ In July 1941, Jews were required to register with the Bitola police. Arrivals and departures at the train station were carefully monitored. This tracing of the whereabouts of foreign Jews was not a priority for the Bulgarian authorities only: refugees from German-controlled Serbia and from other Central European territories were of great concern to the Nazis. By the summer 1941, massive killings of Jews had begun in Serbia, initially started up as retaliation measures for partisan activities. They were to spiral into an almost total elimination of Serb Jews by the end of 1941.⁵¹ Although Bulgaria enjoyed more room for manoeuvre in matters relating to the Jews than mainstream Bulgarian historiography used to maintain, the 'Jewish question' was indeed a matter of cooperation with the Germans.⁵²

A second objective was the economic marginalization of the Jews. The January 1941 Law for the Protection of the Nation forbade Jews to hold public office or to exercise certain professions; it introduced a *numerus clausus* on a number of other posts. Within a month, the Jews were compelled to declare their wealth. In October 1941, the list of proscribed activities was extended to all branches of industry and commerce. Prohibited businesses Jews had owned were to be sold to non-Jews and the benefits from the sales were to be deposited in (frozen) bank accounts. In addition, discriminatory fiscal policies were introduced in July 1941 in the form of an *ad hoc* tax on Jewish property, according to which Jews were forced to relinquish 20–25 per cent of their assets.⁵³

When it came to enforcing these measures and to determining which cases were to be handled first, however, the selection of Jewish victims mirrored the intertwining between the 'Jewish' and the 'national' questions this chapter has charted. One telling example is the treatment of the Bitola branch of the French-Serbian bank. In her memoirs, the former partisan Zhamila Kolonomos, a renowned contributor to the writing of the history of the Holocaust in Macedonia, explains that the reason behind her father's summary dismissal from this bank was a denunciation an employee made to the Germans.⁵⁴ Such a denunciation may well have

happened, but Zhamila's father, Isak Kalev Kolonomos, a prominent figure in the local Jewish community and the director of the bank, was also under Bulgarian surveillance. On 8 July 1941, he was dismissed in accordance with article 27 of the ZZN. The Bulgarian officials who arranged this believed they were actually killing three birds with one stone. As the chief of the Bitola regional police made plain, they were simultaneously weakening Serb influence, dismantling a source of funds for the English and the French *and* enforcing the anti-Jewish legislation:

Based upon art. 27, al. 'D' of the Law for the Protection of the Nation and with letter N II-24, dated July 8th, I warned the directorate of the joint French-Serbian bank in Bitolja to dismiss director Isak Kalev Kolonomos and the employees Moise Avram Kalderon and Rufo Bahor Sadik, a measure which was put into force on the very same day. The Bitola branch of the French-Serbian bank retains capital and deposits, which are in the hands of Serbs and Jews; and, in order to defend the interests of the population, a Bulgarian should forthwith be appointed as director, as stipulated in the same article of the Law.⁵⁵

Commenting on the postal surveillance of Bella Kolonomos, one of Isaac Kalev Kolonomos's daughters, an intelligence report dated 16 August 1941 confirms the convergence of the three objectives engaging the officials:

The service has received a postcard from Skopje written in Hebrew on the 14th of August, addressed to Bella Konolomos, a Jew from Bitola; the card has been photographed, and I have put the picture at the disposal [of the administration]. The father of the addressee, Isak Kalev Kolonomos, former director of the French-Serbian bank in Bitolja, has been in touch with the French honorary consul in the city, Marcel de Vos, and with the French-English propaganda being put out in Macedonia.⁵⁶

In turn, honorary consul Marcel de Vos was depicted as:

a supporter of General de Gaulle [who] has in the past received money through the French-Serbian bank for propaganda-related purposes [as well as obtaining] propaganda literature. ... For this reason I ordered that he be discretely put under permanent surveillance, and I also ordered that both his official and personal correspondence be checked.⁵⁷

Within a matter of months, anti-Jewish measures were stepped up, and their implementation became more ruthless. *Pelistersko eho*, the new local weekly launched by the Bulgarian authorities, printed anti-Semitic articles; Jews unable to pay the anti-Jewish taxes were expropriated; attempted fraud in the estimation of Jewish property was severely punished and could lead to the confiscation of assets;⁵⁸ and, late in 1941, Jews were forbidden to live in certain areas of the city, some having to relocate to the poorer Jewish quarter. Between January 1942 and September 1942, a register was compiled by the occupation authorities listing over a thousand Jews with photographs, details of physical characteristics and personal data including occupations.⁵⁹ By this time, the estrangement of Bitola's Jews was complete. They had been turned into a 'foreign threat'.

WHERE THE 'PATH OF DEPENDENCY' LED: THE ENTWINEMENT OF SOCIAL, ETHNIC AND LEGAL ESTRANGEMENTS

To conclude, let us return to the issue of citizenship policies which opened this chapter. On 10 June 1942, the authorities issued a 'Decree on Citizenship in the Territories Freed in 1941'. Article 4 of the ordinance stipulated that: 'All Yugoslav and Greek citizens of non-Bulgarian origin who on the day of coming into force of this Order reside in the territory liberated in 1941 become Bulgarian citizens, except if they express the wish before 1 April 1943, to retain their former citizenship or to acquire some other foreign citizenship and at the same time emigrate from the territory. The order does not apply to persons of Jewish origin.'⁶⁰ Several hypotheses have been advanced to account for the exclusion of Jews residing in the 'newly acquired' territories from Bulgarian citizenship. Some scholars insist that the Germans were putting pressure on the Bulgarian authorities to speed up settlement of the 'Jewish question'.⁶¹ Other authors have pointed out that the decision was consistent with the earlier Law on the Protection of the Nation, which already forbade the granting of Bulgarian citizenship to Jews: therefore, they claim, it followed from a previous legally binding document.⁶² Recent scholarship has suggested that the Jews' exclusion from Bulgarian citizenship also stemmed from a determination high-ranking Bulgarian politicians already had, to find a comprehensive 'solution to the Jewish question' for Bulgarian and non-Bulgarian Jews alike.⁶³ It points in particular to Petăr Gabrovski, the

minister of the interior and to Aleksandăr Belev, then a legal adviser at the ministry, and later appointed head of the Commissariat on Jewish Affairs.

Archival records on the issue are scarce. They include a report to the prime minister from the Ministry of Justice,⁶⁴ an annotated version of a preliminary project, and the protocols of discussions held on 19, 26, and 28 May by an *ad hoc* commission formed of representatives from the legislative council of the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of the Interior, and the general staff of the army. Neither of the first two mention the Jews, and in the protocols of the commission, reference to the Jews is relegated to the last paragraph: ‘In particular with regard to persons of Jewish origin, the Commission found that they should not be recognized as Bulgarian citizens. The above is in accord with the Law for the Protection of the Nation.’⁶⁵

The angle adopted here to account for the unfolding of anti-Jewish policies in the newly annexed territories is somewhat different. The focus is on a moment predating the creation of the Commissariat on Jewish Affairs, and on a specific social group: the mid-ranking bureaucrats who were sent to Macedonia to enforce decisions made in Sofia. Most scholarship on the disenfranchisement and ultimate round-up of Macedonia’s Jews has focused on the period between the autumn of 1942 and the arrests of March 1943. However, the economic, social and political marginalization of these Jews (as well as the reshaping of relations between local Jews and non-Jews) started much earlier. It had begun before any members of the Bulgarian administration considered plans for future deportations. I argue that we need to bring a specific time (1941) and a specific social group (the local functionaries) back into the picture in order to understand the implementation of the anti-Jewish measures. The first months under Bulgarian rule were the moment when local administrators devised ways of making sense of the ‘Jewish question’, and invented patterns of management, thereby creating what sociologists call a ‘path of dependency’.

As it turned out, Bulgaria was ill-prepared to administer the ‘newly liberated’ territories. It lacked both financial resources and manpower. The recruitment of bureaucrats was disorderly, and depended on the good will of candidates who might have quite different motivations—emotional attachment to the land of their fathers and mothers, the hope of making a new professional start, a taste for adventure, and so on. Particularly in the 1930s, anti-Jewish rhetoric had gained significant social visibility in Bulgaria, notably, though not solely, in the milieu of patriotic and fascist

organizations. Mainly it focused on two bugbears the Jews were supposed to be associated with: on the one hand they were said to be on the side of the communists; on the other, it was claimed that they had control of large amounts of capital. Bitola's Jews in 1941 hardly fit into either of these categories. Communist structures were weakly developed and Jewish participation in them negligible. In terms of wealth, the local bourgeoisie was small and coexisted with a mostly destitute majority. Seeing the issue through the lens of the anti-Semitic rhetoric of the time was unlikely to help local administrators frame the 'Jewish' question and define their own role in ways meaningful to them. What every single Bulgarian civil servant did understand and relate to emotionally, however, was the 'national idea'—the re-conquest of Macedonia and the strengthening of Bulgarian consciousness among local Macedonians. When support for national enemies (the Serbs) and 'Jewish' monetary issues intersected, as in the case of the French-Serbian bank, action was undertaken promptly. As the Bulgarian administrators applied the measures aimed at the marginalization of Jews, they were borrowing from a nationalistic vision shaped at the end of the nineteenth century and from nationalizing techniques devised and tried out in the wake of the Balkan wars.

In their correspondence with their superiors in Sofia—the police directorate and the Minister of the Interior—the local police and intelligence officers portrayed Jews as being pro-Serb and occasionally pro-Greek, but definitely not pro-Bulgarian. Incrementally, these mid-ranking bureaucrats construed Macedonia's Jews as 'foreign' to the would-be national community. Thus, even before they were refused Bulgarian citizenship, the Jews of the 'newly freed territories' were excluded from the realm of the 'national brethren'. Ultimately, the interplay between the 'national' and the 'Jewish' questions was to make its contribution to the creation of a general indifference towards the plight of Macedonia's Jews.

NOTES

1. See A. Matkovski (1972) *Tragediyata na Evreite od Makedoniya* (Skopje: Kultura); F. Chary (1972) *The Bulgarian Jews and the Final Solution 1940–1944* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press); Z. Kolonomos and V. Vesković-Vangeli (eds) (1986) *Evreite vo Makedoniya vo Vtorata svetska vojna (1941–1945). Zbornik na dokumenti*, 2 vols (Skopje: Makedonska akademija na naukite i imetnostite); N. Danova and

- R. Avramov (eds) (2013) *Deportiraneto na evreite ot Vardarska Makedoniya, Belomorska Trakiya i Pirov, mart 1943 g. Dokumenti ot bälgarskite arhivi*, 2 vols (Sofia: Obedineni izdateli).
2. R. Crampton (1997) *A Concise History of Bulgaria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 176.
 3. V. Sirutavičius and D. Staliūnas (eds) (2011) *A Pragmatic Alliance: Jewish-Lithuanian Political Cooperation at the Beginning of the twentieth Century* (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press).
 4. A. Weiss-Wendt (2009) *Murder without Hatred. Estonians and the Holocaust* (New York: Syracuse University Press).
 5. H. Case (2009) *Between States. The Transylvanian Question and the European Idea during World War II* (Stanford: Stanford University Press), pp. 175–98.
 6. The few exceptions to this approach include Danova and Avramov (2013) *Deportiraneto na evreite*.
 7. For a reconsideration of attitudes towards the Jews in the partisan movement, see Z.-A. Kolonomos (2013) *Dvizhenieto na otporot i evreite od Makedoniya* (Skopje: Fond na Holokaustot na Evreite od Makedoniya).
 8. Mark Cohen has unveiled some of the threads binding Slavic identity processes, the making of Yugoslavia and Jewish survival strategies: M. Cohen (2003) *Last Century of a Sephardic Community: The Jews of Monastir, 1839–1943* (New York: Foundation for the Advancement of Sephardic Studies and Culture).
 9. H. Case (2013) ‘The Combined Legacies of the “Jewish Question” and the “Macedonian Question”’ in J. P. Himka and J. B. Michlic (eds) *Bringing the Dark Past to Light. The Reception of the Holocaust in Post-Communist Europe* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press), pp. 352–76.
 10. The article is part of a book project titled *Nationalizing ‘Foundational Pasts’: The Holocaust as History and Memory in Bulgaria and Macedonia*. The author gratefully acknowledges support from Sciences Po’s Scientific Advisory Board (SAB).
 11. Since the fall of socialism, a new body of archival records from the Ministry of the Interior has been made available at the Bulgarian Central State Archives (*Centralen Därzhaven Arhiv*, CDA). The present research draws particularly on the archives of the intelligence police.
 12. M. Cattaruzza, S. Dyroff and D. Langewiesche (eds) (2013) *Territorial Revisionism and the Allies of Germany in the Second World War* (New York: Berghahn Books).
 13. D. M. Perry (1998) *The Politics of Terror. The Macedonian Liberation Movements, 1893–1903* (Durham NC and London: Duke University Press); and N. Lange-Akhund (1998) *The Macedonian Question, 1893–1908. From Western Sources* (New York: Columbia University Press).

14. K. Brown (2003) *The Past in Question: Modern Macedonia and the Uncertainties of Nation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
15. R. J. Crampton (1987) *A Short History of Modern Bulgaria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 83–4.
16. For a chronology of anti-Jewish measures, see A. Teneva and V. Gezenko (2007) 'Chronology of Anti-Jewish Legislation and Public Counteraction' in V. Toškova et al. (eds) *Obrecheni i spaseni: Bălgariya v antisemitskata programa na Tretiya Rayh: izsledvaniya i dokumenti* (Sofia: Sineva), pp. 162–76.
17. M. Miller (1975) *Bulgaria during the Second World War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press).
18. Up to the end of May 1941, Bulgarian police reports complain about plunder by the Germans of shops in Bitola, and the difficulties the Bulgarian occupation authorities encountered when they tried to persuade local traders to reopen their shops: *Central Dărzhaven Arhiv* (CDA), *Fund* (F) 2123 K, *opis* (o) 1, *arhivna edinitsa* (ae) 13 577, *list* (l) 35–39. See also Miller (1975) *Bulgaria during the Second World War*, p. 123.
19. These hopes were soon disappointed, as the Bulgarian occupation powers – partly because they distrusted individuals who had been associated with the Macedonian autonomists – often preferred to rely on bureaucrats whose interwar experience guaranteed a modicum of institutional continuity. See documents 47 & 51 in *Arhivite govoriyat*, 2011, pp. 209–17, pp. 233–7.
20. CDA, F 269 K, o 1, ae 11, l. 1–7.
21. The archives of Department A of the intelligence services (communist propaganda) for the region of Bitola show limited evidence of local Jewish involvement in 'anti-state' activity in 1941. One of the first armed actions in Bitola was the physical elimination of the regional chief of police, Aleksandăr Kyurchiev, in the spring of 1942. In June 1942, seven young Jews were arrested and received heavy sentences in the 'Jewish trial'. See G. Dimovski-Colev (1993) *Bitolskite evrei* (Skopje: Drushtvo za nauka i umetnost 'Bitola'), p. 187, pp. 193–5; K. Naydovski (1987) *846 dena vo bugarskite fashistichki zatvori* (Bitola: Misirkov), p. 32. More broadly, in Vardar Macedonia, communist resistance to Bulgarian rule was initially hampered by conflicts between Bulgarian and Yugoslav communists as to who should be responsible for Macedonia: Miller (1975) *Bulgaria during the Second World War*, pp. 130–3. On the organization of resistance to Bulgarian rule in 1941/1942, see *Zbornik – Bitola i Bitolsko vo NOB 1941–1942*, Bitola, kn. 1, 1978; on the early Jewish contribution, see B. Ruso (1957) 'Belezhki ot sostanokot so uchesnitsite na NOB', *Bitola*, 1; and B. Ruso (1971) 'Uchestvo na Bitolskite evrei vo NOB', *Yubileen vestnik Pelister*, No. 3, 8.

22. Italy was granted control over Tetovo, Gostivar, Kichevo, Debar and Struga, as well as some villages south of Ohrid. After much quarrelling, an agreement on the demarcation line was finally concluded on 15 July 1943: N. Kochankov (2007) *Ot nadezhda kăm pokrusa. Zapadna Makedoniya v Bălgarskata vānsbna politika* (Sofia: Heron Press), pp. 53–7.
23. CDA, F 2123 K, o 1, ae 17 897, l 77–80.
24. N. Boškowska (2009) *Das jugoslawische Makedonien 1918–1941. Eine Randregion zwischen Repression und Integration* (Wien: Böhlau Verlag); V. Jovanović (2002) *Jugoslavenska država i južna srbija, 1918–1929* (Beograd: Inis); V. Jovanović (2011) *Vardarska Banovina, 1929–1941* (Beograd: Inis).
25. C. A. Nielsen (2009) ‘Policing Yugoslavia: Surveillance, Denunciations, and Ideology during King Aleksandar’s Dictatorship, 1929–1934’, *East European Politics & Societies*, vol 23(1), pp. 34–62.
26. CDA, F 242 K, o 4, ae 846, l 116–122; l 178–180.
27. At the time, the number of Serbs recently settled in Bitola was estimated at about 1,000 (7,000 in the Skopje district): CDA, F 2123 K, o 1, ae 13 577, l 35–39.
28. CDA, F 2123 K, o 1, ae 17 897, l 113–116.
29. CDA, F 223 K, o 1, ae 13577, l 61.
30. CDA, F 2123 K, o 1, ae 13 577, l 63.
31. These underestimated numbers were soon revised, based on Yugoslav statistics: CDA, F 2123 K, o 1, ae 13 577, l 60–64.
32. CDA, F 2123 K, o 1, ae 17 897, l 129–136.
33. CDA, F 2123 K, o 1, ae 22 286, l 54.
34. CDA, F 2123 K, o 1, ae 22 286, l 60–67.
35. For languages spoken, see Publikationstelle Wien (1943) *Die Gliederung der Bevölkerung des ehemaligen Jugoslawien nach Muttersprache und Konfession (nach den unveröffentlichen Angaben der Zählung von 1931)* (Vienna), pp. 10–20, cited in H. P. Freidenreich (1979) *The Jews of Yugoslavia* (Jerusalem and Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America), p. 212. However, censuses fail to capture the diversity of linguistic practices in multicultural environments. As porters, craftsmen, ambulant traders or merchants, Bitola’s Jews often commanded the whole gamut of languages of their employers and clients.
36. G. Lenclud (1995) ‘Quand voir, c’est reconnaître. Les récits de voyage et le regard anthropologique’, *L’enquête*, 1995, 113–29.
37. B. C. Gounaris (1993) *Steam over Macedonia, 1870–1912: Socio-economic Change and the Railway Factor*, Boulder: East European Monographs (New York: distributed by Columbia University Press), pp. 74–130.

38. B. C. Gounaris (2001) 'From Peasants into Urbanites, from Village into Nation: Ottoman Monastir in the Early Twentieth Century', *European History Quarterly*, 31(1), pp. 43–63.
39. Brown (2003) *The Past in Question*.
40. Cohen (2003) *Last Century of a Sephardic Community*, p. 97.
41. For Macedonia, see A. Matkovski (1982) *A History of the Jews in Macedonia* (Skopje: Macedonian Review Editions), pp. 68–75; from a Bulgarian perspective, see R. M. Kamchi and C. V. Biljarski (2013) *Spomeni na edin evrein Makedonski revolyucioner* (Recollections of a Macedonian Jew Revolutionary) (Sofia: Sineva).
42. J. P. Cohen (2014) *Becoming Ottomans: Sephardi Jews and Imperial Citizenship in the Modern Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press); and M. Mazower (2005) *Salonica, City of Ghosts. Christians, Muslims and Jews, 1430–1950*, (London: Harper Perennial), p. 282.
43. Cohen (2003) *Last Century of a Sephardic Community*, p. 197.
44. Dr. Cvi Rothmüller's oft-cited 1932 report is eloquent: 'The South is facing the crumbling of the feudal system and the slow transition into capitalism and the Jews are still holding strong to the old traditional patriarchal system, as a result of the late liberation from Ottoman rule': C. Rothmüller (1932) *Jevrejska omladina Juzhne Srbije* (Zagreb: Biblioteka Hanoar), pp. 24–5, cited in K. Birri-Tomovska (2012) *Jews of Yugoslavia, 1918–1941: A History of Macedonian Sephards* (Brussels: Peter Lang), p. 173.
45. See also Freidenreich (1979) *The Jews of Yugoslavia*, p. 7.
46. Cohen (2003) *Last Century of a Sephardic Community*, p. 151.
47. While noting the relative benefit that some Jews might have derived from Serb rule, communist historiography in Macedonia has been keen to introduce a distinction between the (compromised pro-Serb) bourgeoisie, notably in Skopje, and a dynamic left-wing youth: Matkovski (1982) *Tragediyata na Evreite*, pp. 77–8.
48. CDA, F 2123 K, o 1, ae 17 897, l 103.
49. CDA, F 2123 K, o 1, ae 17 897, l. 108–109.
50. CDA, F 2123 K, o 1, ae 17 897, l. 108–109.
51. W. Manoschek (2014) 'The Fate of the Yugoslav Jewry' in N. Ragaru (ed.) *La Shoah en Europe du Sud-Est. Les Juifs en Bulgarie et dans les terres sous administration bulgare* (Paris: E-Editions du Mémorial de la Shoah), pp. 100–11.
52. Bulgarian archives have kept traces of this cooperation, notably in the case of 47 Serb Jews, who were arrested in Skopje with the help of the Gestapo in November 1941. They were returned to Serbia and later executed in Belgrade (CDA, F 2123 K, o 1, ae 22 286, l. 56–7).
53. R. Avramov (2012) '*Spasenie*' i padenie. *Mikroekonomika na dърzhavniya antisemitizăm v Bălgariya, 1940–1944* (Sofia: U.I. 'Sv. Kliment Ohridski').

54. J. A. Kolonomos (2008) *Monastir without Jews. Recollections of a Jewish Partisan in Macedonia* (New York: Foundation for the Advancement of Sephardic Studies and Culture), p. 26.
55. CDA, F 2123 K, o 1, ae 17897.
56. CDA, F 2123 K, o 1, ae 17897, l 87.
57. CDA, F 2123 K, o 1, ae 17897, l 87.
58. Dimovski-Colev (1993) *Bitolskite evrei*, pp. 184–6.
59. Cohen (2003) *Last Century of a Sephardic Community*, pp.172–3; and I. D. Nehama (2002) ‘Photographs and Identities of Bitola (Macedonia) in the Photo Archives, USHMM & Archives at Yad Vashem’ (typescript).
60. The ordinance is reproduced in N. Grinberg (1945) *Dokumenti* (Sofia: Tsentralnata Konsistoriya na evreite vǎv Bǎlgariya), p. 43.
61. Crampton (1997) *A Concise History of Bulgaria*, p. 76. In parallel, during the summer of 1942, Adolf-Heinz Beckerle, the German minister plenipotentiary to Bulgaria, negotiated an agreement with the Bulgarian government on the revocation of Bulgarian citizenship for Jews who lived in Germany and German-controlled territories (mainly in Czechoslovakia and Moravia): Matkovski (1982) *Tragediyata na Evreite*, p. 111. In the spring of 1943, about 60 Jews were to perish as a result of this entente: see V. Paunovski (2014) ‘A New View of the Beginning of Anti-Jewish Legislation in the Kingdom of Bulgaria. Intention, Progress, and Consequence’ in N. Ragaru (ed.) *La Shoah en Europe du Sud-Est*, pp. 92–8, at 95.
62. Vladimir Paunovski follows the thread binding the Law on Bulgarian Citizenship (passed in December 1940), the Law for the Protection of the Nation and the June 1942 decree: Paunovski, 2014 ‘A New View of the Beginning of Anti-Jewish Legislation’, pp. 92–8.
63. Danova and Avramov (2013) *Deportiraneto na evreite ot Vardarska Makedoniya*, pp. 15–16.
64. CDA, F 242 K, o 4, ae 897, l.6–10.
65. CDA, F 242 K, o 4, ae 897, l.12.

Genocide in Times of Civil War. Popular Attitudes Towards Ustaša Mass Violence, Croatia 1941–1945

Alexander Korb

Croatian district officials were shocked by what they witnessed at the end of July 1941 in the town of Velika Kladuša in north-western Bosnia. Thirteen members of the Ustaša, a militia serving the same Croatian state as themselves, had been dispatched from the capital, Zagreb, and had started massacring Serb inmates of the local prison. In reaction, and out of fear, most of the Serbs fled from the neighbouring villages. The militia then set about looting the emptied houses. They shipped away trucks full of goods and furniture. Soon, civilian looters arrived to partake in the pillage. Further expulsions and shootings occurred, and the situation got so badly out of control that the Ustaša started shooting some of the pillagers in order to safeguard their own shares of the goods. Once the militia was gone, the locals started to take the houses apart: roof tiles, rainwater pipes, door frames; everything got carried away. The seals the local administration had put on some of the houses were of no avail. Several villages thus got destroyed by the Ustaša and by opportunistic criminals.¹

A. Korb (✉)

Stanley Burton Centre for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, University of Leicester, Leicester, UK

e-mail: ak368@k.ac.uk

This episode illustrates a dilemma that many governments faced in war-time Europe, especially in Eastern and South-eastern regions. With the genocides and the programmes of ethnic cleansing they had unleashed, they had put in motion a social dynamic that was hard to control. They could not even defend their own economic interests against looters and rioters. Moreover, the episode shows that a number of ordinary civilians were willing to partake in massacres and lootings, or got drawn into them in other ways.

THE LEGACY OF THE WAR UNDER COMMUNIST REGIMES

Discussing the links between genocide and society—in other words popular attitudes towards mass murder—has never been much liked in Eastern and South-eastern Europe. After World War II, there was a widespread tendency to blame the Germans for all the atrocities that had happened. This allowed the communists to maintain their dichotomist narrative of ‘the people’ versus ‘the fascists’. The latter were seen as invaders from outside, who had been supported by only a few local ‘helpers’.² Even though quite a lot of collaborators were punished and locked away after 1945, their numbers were presented as small in the years to come. By contrast, the role of the resistance movements was glorified and exaggerated.

This representation of history was successful both in Western and in Eastern Europe, as it blamed outsiders and largely cleared the local population of blame. Those who were guilty lived far away in Western Germany, and any people who remembered better were dead or had—voluntarily or forcibly—left for Israel and other countries overseas.

Under communist regimes, however, this narrative was more dominant and lasted longer, since it allowed the communist parties to exploit the paradigm of ‘brotherhood and unity’, as the Yugoslav communists called their version, while establishing and tightening their regimes by redistributing looted goods to the people. They could exclude many from the vaunted ‘unity’ by branding them ‘collaborators’ or ‘enemies of the people’. With such paradigms it was made clear that ‘the people’ had been on the upright, anti-fascist side of history.

Of course, the suppression of widespread knowledge of popular participation in the Holocaust and other mass crimes across Eastern Europe and the Balkans did not last. All along, private memory competed with the party’s and the state’s version of history.³ The weaker the communist regimes became after the late 1970s, the more their version of history was

challenged. This came partly from a revitalization of nationalistic narratives, partly from grass-roots movements that started investigating local histories of the war and the Holocaust. In recent years, a number of milestone books such as Jan T. Gross' *Neighbors* and Jan Grabowski's *Hunt for the Jews* shattered the old myth that the Holocaust had been perpetrated by the Germans alone.⁴ The force with which this revelation broke through also demonstrates how fragile the old consensus had been. After all, most Poles, Romanians, Serbs, Croats, Czechs and Slovaks knew what had happened to the Jews that had lived among them, and they knew that local people had participated in their persecution.

In Yugoslavia, however, the process of acknowledging the local communities' responsibilities for acts of violence committed during World War II was far more complex than in the rest of Eastern Europe and the Balkans. This was largely for two reasons. First, the Holocaust had been part of a civil war that lasted from 1941 until 1946. Unlike in other countries, where the Left and the Right were struggling for power during and in the aftermath of the war, political conflicts in Yugoslavia were strongly intertwined with a civil war along ethnic lines. Yugoslavia was heavily shaped by these conflicts, and in the 1970s they started being fought openly. Indeed, the path to the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s was laid by previous 'history'. And this is the second reason for a delayed truthful engagement with the past in Yugoslavia, when compared with other countries that shook off communist regimes in the late 1980s: the wars of secession in post-Yugoslavia, which lasted throughout the 1990s, prevented any dealing with the past both on a practical and on a discursive level.⁵

GENOCIDE AND CIVIL WAR

As the opening example demonstrates, popular participation in acts of mass violence was not just one phenomenon among others that took place in wartime Yugoslavia; it was (and is) a key element of what constitutes civil war. Yet we need to distinguish between the levels of violence in what Christian Gerlach calls an 'extremely violent society'—a society where a multitude of groups of perpetrators targets a multitude of victim groups for a variety of reasons.⁶ Viewing Yugoslavia as such a society stands in stark contrast to the conventional historiography of the country's wartime history, even though no serious historian denies the high intensity of violence committed. But mass violence in wartime Yugoslavia has usually been described as something forced onto society from outside or from

above, rather than something taking place within society and forming a part of it. The links between violence and counter-violence have not been properly taken into consideration either. Finally, the Holocaust in Yugoslavia has largely been analysed in isolation—not as part of the ongoing civil war. This is a major analytical flaw which follows the tradition of heaping all responsibility for war crimes onto the Germans, while ignoring the societies within which they occurred.

ETHNIC CLEANSING: MASSACRES: THE HOLOCAUST

In this chapter, I look at three forms of mass violence that took place in wartime Croatia in relation to popular participation in the atrocities, and public reactions towards them. The forms I study are: (1) ethnic cleansing, as found in the deportation of Serbs from Croatia and their looted property being redistributed among Croats; (2) massacres, following the targeting of Serb civilians by Ustaša militias and, this being seen as civil war, by armed resistance to this; and (3) the Holocaust itself, when Jews and Gypsies⁷ were deported from Croatian cities, or quarters within them, and had their property pillaged and redistributed.

The chapter focuses on the western part of Yugoslavia, which became the ‘Independent State of Croatia’ in 1941. This can be taken as a prism giving a view onto wartime Yugoslavia as such. Croatia was not a truly independent state, since Germany and Italy had divided it into two zones of occupation. On the ground, however, the Croatian regime and its Ustaša militias were quite independent. Many Croatian Jews did not come across a single German during the war, and they either survived or were targeted by local perpetrators. So, in this area, the room for manoeuvre for both victims and their perpetrators was considerable. This enables us to study the social dynamics and breadth of participation in the collective violence.

Croatia and the Ustaša

The Ustaša was a radical nationalist movement that sought to destroy the Yugoslav state and the bond between the South Slav peoples. Its members wanted to create an independent Croatian state by force. The bulk of the Ustaša activists, including its chief, the lawyer Ante Pavelić, were exiles who had been based in Italy and other foreign countries since the 1930s. From these places they directed terrorist attacks against the Yugoslav

state. In 1941, however, the fact that the Ustaša's core consisted mostly of exiles was seen as a proof that it was a marginal movement interfering with Croatia from outside; those Ustaša activists who operated from within Croatia received considerably less attention.⁸ The Ustaša has mostly been analysed within its Yugoslav context: its roots have been traced back to Austro-Hungarian origins, and the relative success of the movement prior to 1941 has been explained as resulting from the distortions of the Yugoslav Kingdom. Only in recent years have historians started to present the Ustaša as part of a broader European scene of anti-liberal and fascist movements, thus aiming to explain the Ustaša's ambiguity between cooperative, Catholic and pro-peasant anti-modernism on the one hand, and an embrace of modernity on the other, including schemes for social and ethnic engineering of the Croatian population. Such approaches have started to take the self-perception of the Ustaša campaigners more seriously: they saw themselves as a part of a European fascist movement, wanted to become part of the New European Order, and thought of themselves as representatives of a Central European nation.⁹ This matters, because it demonstrates that the Ustaša's mass violence was not an expression of ancient ethnic hatred (as is allegedly found in the Balkans), but rather part of the identity crisis of a modernist movement that saw itself as European and wanted to distance itself from its more backward neighbours.¹⁰

The Ustaša was a paramilitary movement. Even though it started creating a state bureaucracy and an army after 1941, successfully including groups and institutions beyond its ranks in the Independent State of Croatia, its essence consisted of its militias, which had up to 100,000 members.¹¹ Recent studies have discussed the movement's mass violence and have highlighted the variety of contexts within which it thrived. The historian Radu Dinu, chiefly interested in how and why local perpetrators conduct acts of violence, has described the Ustaša's atrocities as a 'social practice',¹² while Ben Shepherd has examined German military violence and suggests that the Austro-Hungarian background of many of the officers may have played a role when violence escalated.¹³ I argue that the Ustaša's onslaught against Serbs, Jews and Gypsies was a case of intertwined genocides: the victim groups were, to an extent, attacked by the same perpetrators, deported to the same camps and discriminated against by the same laws. Yet, the cases of assault did not follow the same pattern or timeline or dynamic. The picture becomes even more complicated if we add the Germans: while Croats and Germans, Ustaše and Nazis cooperated in some instances, they competed in others, and often enough they

clashed over the policies of destruction.¹⁴ To get a full picture, the effects of Italian, Četnik and partisan policies need to be taken into consideration. Their reactions and their violence had an impact on the Ustaša and their genocides. In order to understand the social dynamic, it is necessary to study the escalation of violence and counter-violence and examine instances where the Ustaša felt fragile and used excessive violence as an act of perceived ‘forward defence’.

Popular Support for the Ustaša: And How It Faded

It is important to note that the Ustaša, especially in the first two years of its reign—the period during which it committed most of the atrocities—could rely on some popular backing. In the spring of 1941 this support was quite enthusiastic. The German troops had been welcomed as liberators, and when Ante Pavelić reached Zagreb on the Easter Monday of 1941, approximately 100,000 individuals were awaiting him ‘as if he was the Messiah’.¹⁵ Easter—the resurrection of a Croatian state; Pavelić—the Messiah: the new ruling class tried to exploit the religious sentiments of the Croatian population by using images like this. In the first months, support for the Ustaša was overwhelming. The idea of a greater Croatia led by Croats and integrated into the New European Order appealed to a great many. But the initial support soon shifted once the Croats realized that their state was far from being independent and that the Croatian littoral was annexed by Italy. Moreover the genocides the regime began to initiate not only appalled many Croats for moral reasons; they could also see how it was bringing chaos to their country. A German agent who travelled through Bosnia in August 1941 reported that a broad movement of Muslims, former peasant party members, Ustaša supporters and Serbs were starting to turn against the government because of the reign of terror.¹⁶ Public opinion became even less favourable towards the regime in 1942, when hunger, social inequality and a wave of terror against the Catholic majority started kicking in. After 1943, when it became clear that the Germans might lose the war and that the Ustaša could be swept away at some point, a vast majority opposed the government, and the communist resistance started dominating the discourse and ensuing events.¹⁷

But fading support for the Ustaša did not necessarily mean that fewer people partook in acts of collective violence. There are three basic reasons for this. First, the genocides the Ustaša instigated, and the armed and violent resistance against them, unleashed a powerful social dynamic that was

not easy to stop. This becomes evident when we see what happened with looted property both in cities and villages. Second, the ethnicized civil war forced people into allegiances that might not have been their first or initial choices. For instance, once Serbian Četnik militias started their (counter-)attacks against territories controlled by the Ustaša, Croatian civilians sided with the Ustaša regime, whether they liked it or not, simply because it seemed to be the only power that promised protection from enemy attacks. Only gradually did the success of the partisans provide individuals with a choice they did not have in 1941 or 1942: to escape the dichotomy of a nationalist civil war by siding with a supra-ethnic force. Third, the civil war and its atrocities brutalized all society; killing others became a practice that seemed increasingly normal and morally justified. It took Yugoslav society years, if not decades, to ‘de-brutalize’.

The Ustaša’s Ethnic Engineering

The Ustaša’s goal was to create an ethnically homogenized greater Croatian state. Ruling over a territory that was by no means less multi-ethnic than greater Yugoslavia had been, the Ustaša faced enormous difficulties as they tried to establish their grip on the country. The Independent State of Croatia had a population of 6.5 million.¹⁸ The government’s ideological programme was contradictory and not very detailed, but, in a nutshell, it saw Croatia’s 800,000 Muslims (12.5 per cent) as an integral part of the Croat nation and courted them accordingly, at least on paper. By contrast, it saw the almost 2 million Serbs (30 per cent), 40,000 Jews and roughly 25,000 Gypsies in the country as external tribes that had only come in a few centuries back. These peoples, the Ustaša maintained, were weakening the biological body of the nation and needed to be sent back to their places of origin, Serbia and other parts of the Balkans.¹⁹ Initially, the Ustaša neither intended nor planned to kill all those who were to be excluded, despite the claims made in the conventional historiography of Yugoslavia. The Ustaša’s ideologists and intellectuals envisioned a scheme of resettlement and forced assimilation, with the aim of undoing the demographic changes of the last 500 years. They wanted to return to the pre-modern state of ‘ethnic purity’.²⁰ It goes without saying that such utopian visions had a genocidal nucleus, since it was hardly likely that all out of the hundreds of thousands would let themselves be resettled voluntarily. So, from the start, the Ustaša planned to use terror against their real and alleged enemies, and take ‘revenge’ against Serbs and Jews for the

alleged subjugation of Croatia. Yet—and this is the case with most other genocides—mass murder was not initially the method considered. Besides, smaller or larger portions of the minorities to be excluded (Jews and Serbs, respectively) were to be absorbed into the Croatian nation. Right-wing intellectuals argued that up to 50 per cent of Croatia's Serb-Orthodox population were Croats by ethnicity—'actual Croats', or, as they were referred to after 1941, 'former Serbs'.²¹ By a mix of measures including terror, social pressure, forced conversion, religious offers and propaganda, these Serbs were to be assimilated. It was a policy that, of course, did not work as intended and it did not prevent Ustaša attacks on villages populated by the very Serbs they aimed to integrate.

The regime was swift in assaulting Serbs, Jews and communists. It deprived them of their rights by issuing new laws, by creating a system of concentration camps, and by spreading terror across the country. At the same time the regime was far from being all-powerful. When the war against the Soviet Union became their new priority, the German armies withdrew. Instead, masses of Italian troops arrived in the zone of occupation. There were parts of the Independent State of Croatia where the Croatian military and the Ustaša never penetrated. Some Serb-populated areas were never administered by the state, but only raided by militias with greater or lesser frequency.

Resistance

The Ustaša's terror fuelled two resistance movements: the Serb royalist Četniks and the communist partisans. These two cooperated at the start, but soon started waging a civil war of their own against each other. In 1942, hostility towards the partisans even led to temporary truces between the Ustaša and the Četniks.²² This illustrates the complexities of a civil war that was always fought in a violent manner but whose frontlines were often far from being clear. At a local level, thousands of civilians got involved, taking one side or another. The Ustaša, unsurprisingly, counted 'Serbs', 'Četniks', 'communists' and 'bandits' as equal enemies. In their perspective, there could be no distinction between combatants and non-combatants, and their genocidal onslaught targeted Serbs regardless of gender or age (though men of fighting age were most often the victims of systematic slaughter, while women and children were more often the victims of 'collateral' killings). Muslim militias, both those affiliated to the Ustaša and autonomous groups, also committed atrocities against Serbs.

In cases where Četniks or partisans struck back and conquered territory, parts of the Croatian and Muslim population were identified as supporters of the Ustaša movement or were made responsible for previous atrocities on account of their ethnicity. The Četnik attacks on Muslims were especially vicious and violent, and it is fair to label the Četnik mass murder of Muslims between 1941 and 1944 as genocidal. In a few cases, partisans also murdered Muslim civilians.²³ But much larger in scale were the summary killings of refugees trying to flee the country in the spring of 1945. Many of these were civilians.

Regardless of the atrocities committed by Četnik, Muslim and partisan militias and the impact they had on society, the main genocidal force in the region was the Ustaša. Their mass violence unfolded in three waves, each of which will be discussed in the following section. These were: ethnic cleansing; massacres and the Holocaust, or, to be precise, the Ustaša mass murder of Croatian Jews and Gypsies. At each level of mass violence ordinary Croats had the chance to participate.

Ethnic Cleansing

On 4 June 1941, in the German embassy in Zagreb, German and Croatian officials agreed on a resettlement scheme according to which up to 500,000 individuals would be resettled across South-eastern Europe. A mutual interest in ethnic homogenization was at the core of this agreement: Germany was interested in the Germanization of the annexed Slovenian provinces and in displacing the majority of its Slav population into other parts of Yugoslavia; Croatia was willing to accept a part of the Catholic Slovene population but, in exchange, was allowed to deport up to 180,000 Serbs from Croatia and Bosnia into Serbia proper.²⁴ The Ustaša's plans were not about ethnic homogenization alone, but also contained a number of elements of social engineering. In a nutshell, the government was attempting to create a better balance between the middle and lower classes as well as between cities and the countryside. It could do this, it believed, by deporting unwanted Serbs. Hence, the government's rhetoric was full of references to 'social justice', and it promised the Croatian people a better future. The plans as to how the resettlements were to be carried out clashed with reality, however. 'Resettlements' were hardly ever put into practice without lethal attacks. It was the mix of fear and force that made the Ustaša regime genocidal in such a singular way. Serbs were

deported in their thousands to Serbia, to Germany (for forced labour), or, as the worst fate of all, to the Ustaša concentration camps.

The question to be discussed here is how ordinary people behaved when parts of the population of their village or city were forced to leave. This applies to the resettlements of Serbs in 1941 as well as to the deportations of Jews and Gypsies in 1942 and 1943. Both were presented as steps towards an ethnically homogenized society.

Deportations were a highly ‘communal’ process that left no one uninformed: more and more neighbouring houses stood empty from one day to the next; perishable goods had to be taken care of in houses and farms; the pets and livestock of the deportees needed to be looked after; their fields, at least in theory, needed to be tilled, meadows to be mowed. I am not suggesting that every individual who partook in such activities became a culprit of ethnic homogenization. But this perspective should raise our awareness that ethnic cleansing is a social process that leaves no one in a community untouched. The Ustaša government was well aware of this and tried to distribute the responsibility for ethnic cleansing at a communal level on as many shoulders as possible. So they could organize the expulsion of Serbs and the allocation of Slovenes at this local level, the Croatian government formed a new agency called the State Directorate of Renewal or *Ponova*. This directorate formed local committees in all the villages and towns affected, and their members were put in charge of the preparation, execution and aftermath of the expulsions. The actual expulsions were done with the help of the police. Detailed guidelines were issued at a national level, specifying how to deal with moveable and non-moveable goods the state risked losing if there was no proper action. The *Ponova* formed committees at two levels: the steering committee consisted of local political leaders and representatives of the religious communities, the Ustaša, the police, and so on; while the expert committee was in charge of the practical and ‘humanitarian’ aspects of the resettlements and represented a broad mix of representatives from a variety of professional backgrounds of both genders. ‘Catholic and Muslim Croats’, as the official wording put it, were the dominant members; but some ethnic Germans were appointed, too, and in rare cases even Orthodox Serbs, who served on the expert panel (never the steering committee) in their capacities as doctors.²⁵ Recent debates on the Nazi *Volksgemeinschaft* (‘community of the people’) have highlighted the importance of redistributing Jewish goods as an incentive to make ordinary Germans participate in the exclusion of Jews and so become accomplices.²⁶ As will be discussed

later, private enrichment played a significant role in Croatia too. But there, another aspect seems to have been more important. Local dignitaries took part in the organization of the resettlements because they thought they could take responsibility for their communities in a challenging situation. This was partly because they believed in the necessity of demographic engineering of their communities, partly because they thought that if the resettlements were going to happen anyway they could at least try to safeguard the interest of their communities and conduct events in a way that was acceptable. Slyly, the government had intertwined the deportation of Serbs and the arrival of Slovenes. This meant that local councils often had no choice but to form assembly points and reception centres to provide food and transportation. These could be used both for those who arrived and those who departed. In reality, the Slovene and Serb population movements were hardly connected; but on paper and in their circular letters the *Pomona* headquarters gave out that 400 Slovenes would arrive in every Croatian district as early as July 1941, thus intensifying the discourse of resettlement and mentally preparing local councils. Doctors, veterinary surgeons, nurses, midwives, teachers, agronomists, land surveyors and many other professionals got drawn into the resettlement project, whether they had a Ustaša affiliation or not.

Moreover, ethnic cleansing developed into just the social force the Ustaša intended, as it was twinned with the promise of ‘social justice’ and with economic opportunities. Getting the loot from houses, receiving stolen cattle, being able to move to a better dwelling, gaining bargains at public auctions, or being appointed ‘trustee’ (or at least having the hope): there were myriad ways in which individuals could benefit.²⁷ It was greed paired with social responsibility. Countless looted items were donated to charitable organizations or seized by them: furniture for workers’ canteens, musical instruments for the Ustaša youth clubs, books for public libraries, building materials and food for the poor. The loot was well utilized.²⁸ The drive to exploit the situation that went hand in hand with the expulsions did not come only from above. It came from below as well. Countless corporations, their members and other individuals filed letters with suggestions and requests. Marija Barac for instance, a 27-year-old divorced housewife, wrote to enquire if there was a café or bar under Jewish or Serb management that she could take over.²⁹

Of course, the promise of ‘equality’ and ‘justice’ the government had given could not be fulfilled. Quite the contrary. The overall feeling among the population must have been frustration at not having got a proper share

(or nothing at all), paired also with guilt. This explains the high number of follow-up petitions that were sent to the *Ponova* and other institutions.

Massacres

While ethnic cleansing was a social reality in which ordinary people often participated without any intention of causing physical harm to others, there were pressing life-or-death issues in the communities that were shaken by massacres. Massacres mostly occurred in regions of ethnic complexity, where militias attacked villages that were run, or at least dominated, by Serb inhabitants. These massacres did not occur out of the blue. The perpetrators usually came from outside and came with the intention of inciting violence. When the Croatian state was given suzerainty over the largely Serb-populated southern and eastern parts of Bosnia, it sent small teams of Ustaša emissaries there, where they set up their bases in the district capitals. Recruitment of Croats or Muslims for the reign, twinned with public terror, was their overarching strategy. On 28 May 1941, ten students and Ustaša activists from Zagreb arrived in Trebinje, a district capital in eastern Hercegovina. They recruited local Croats, formed a militia, and almost immediately started destroying Serb monuments, like the one to the Montenegrin poet Petrović-Njegoš. In this way they blazoned the new regime on a symbolic level. But it did not take them long to start killing, and their terror soon escalated, sparking armed resistance and soon bringing the newly formed Ustaša regime to the brink of collapse.³⁰ But, if such radical activists were absent, events could equally well take a different course. In the city of Višegrad for instance, well known from Ivo Andrić's novels, the local authorities ignored government orders to dismiss all Serb officials, and pointedly did not introduce the anti-Jewish laws, as the local Ustaša leader reported in disbelief to Zagreb. Opponents of the Ustaša government could openly gather in the streets.³¹ Another example is to be found in a public gathering in Velika Gorica near Zagreb, where Ustaša activists asked a well-respected peasant to give a speech. Raising his voice, this peasant started publicly condemning the persecution of the Serbs and called upon people to live in peace with them.³² It would be unimaginable to have either scene happen in Nazi Germany, but similar small acts of defiance occurred over and over again in the towns and cities of the new Croatian state. They did not necessarily indicate open opposition to the government, but they demonstrated that the Ustaša's idea of violent exclusion of minorities had yet to be accepted. Though massacres were

committed throughout the country in the early summer of 1941, it is hard to assess whether they were committed in a context where the government was strong or fragile. More often than not, they were conducted where militia leaders met, or feared, resistance in the regions they were trying to control. The Ustaša terror in regions populated by non-Croats was murderous. Often operating from a string of armed posts or fortified cities, its forces entered the countryside in armed convoys with the sole intent of causing harm.

As far as the local people were concerned, the ethnic composition of their neighbourhood was important. There were villages that were populated by Serbs exclusively; so when there was a militia attack every villager was a potential target, and the killers were all from opposing groups. It was far more complex in mixed villages, where there was a Serbian population mingled with a Croatian and/or Muslim element. The likelihood that locals would participate in atrocities, or even commit killings of their own, was higher. We know from many survivor reports that neighbours did indeed kill neighbours, after people from a locality had been recruited into the Ustaša militias.

The Holocaust of Jews and Gypsies

The mass murder of Jews and Gypsies was almost solely carried out in camps, and not in the cities and dwellings these people had lived in (as happened with the Serbs). Yet, it was publicly known that the genocide was taking place. Proclamations about the shooting of Jewish hostages were stuck on walls; news of deportations to camps and evictions from apartments was all out in the open. Jews were deported into Croatian concentration camps from the very beginning of the Ustaša rule. Moreover, the Germans carried out deportations from Zagreb to Auschwitz in August 1942 and in May 1943. Gypsies were deported to the Jasenovac concentration camp in the summer of 1942, where the vast majority quickly perished. Altogether, around 26,000 Jews and 23,000 Gypsies were murdered by the Independent State of Croatia.³³ Croats and Germans clashed at times over who was to be deported, and who not. But these clashes concerned only the deportation of the Jews, as the Germans played no role in the mass murder of the Gypsies in Croatia.³⁴ The deportation programmes did not cause a public outcry but were the subject of public discussions and caused a string of protests on a number of counts. The reactions of the Croat population regarding the assets of deportees

have been discussed already, and the question here is what ordinary Croats thought and felt about the deportation of their neighbours, and how they expressed their feelings. In general, the mood shifted quite quickly, the overall brutalization of wartime society notwithstanding. German deportations of Jews were met with gloomy silence by the Zagreb population, and the Germans got worried.³⁵ By 1942 it was clear to everybody that the deportees were facing death.

Yehuda Sterk is an elderly gentleman who lives in Jerusalem and who volunteers at the Yad Vashem visitor desk every Wednesday. Throughout the war, he lived with his mother in a block of flats in the Zagreb city centre—a stone's throw away from the Ustaša police headquarters. Not everybody in the house knew that his family was Jewish, but many did, including the housekeeper. The Vashems were never denounced and they survived in Zagreb in their own pre-war flat. The police had simply forgotten to register them. It is a simple, yet extraordinary story of survival that reveals the climate in Zagreb, a city that was at the heart of a genocide.³⁶ At the same time numerous Croats wrote letters and petitions to the Ustaša leadership or to Pavelić himself, in which they outlined suggestions about how the persecution of Jews and Serbs should be carried out. Srećko Jukić, a Croat from Sarajevo, sent a list of 40 Serbs who had still not lost their public positions. Matija Burić from Zagreb sent a seven-page proposal to Pavelić with detailed suggestions on how the 'Serbian question' should be solved. Mato Andrić asked Pavelić not to allow any Jews to convert to Catholicism, and urged him not to grant Croatian citizenship to any Jewish applicants, having heard of two cases where this had happened. Jews and Serbs, he concluded, should be thrown into the Drina, the Danube and the Save, and be washed into the Black Sea.³⁷ Such letters, which can be found in the archives in great numbers, demonstrate that there was a widespread feeling among Croats throughout 1941, that 'their' state had been restored and that they were now entitled to participate in public affairs. It is the 'participatory moment' many authors have identified in other cases of genocide, and which they have discussed in connection with the German *Volksgemeinschaft*.³⁸ The other side of the coin, however, is that an equally high number of individuals wrote letters in defence of neighbours, colleagues or members of their community who were threatened.³⁹ Such letters came from people at all levels of society. It is probable that most of them had no effect. But they demonstrate that society in wartime Croatia was far from being uniform, and that there was no consensus about the persecution of Serbs, Jews and Gypsies, despite the

economic opportunities their removal offered. In the case of the Muslim dignitaries and clerics who raised their voices against the persecution of minorities and sometimes proactively tried to defend them, one motive was clear: defence of the multi-religious balance of Croatia and Bosnia was also a defence of their own position within that fragile balance.⁴⁰ Their feeling was that attacks against the Serbs could ultimately turn against the Muslim community, and that the deportation of Muslim Gypsies constituted a breach in the defence line around the Muslim population as a whole. But the protest also suggests a sense of participation, a belief that, after the destruction of the old Yugoslav Kingdom, the new Croat state was a place where opinions could be expressed, and that voicing them was not reserved to Ustaša members alone. This might be an effect of the intense Ustaša rhetoric about Croatian self-empowerment: in the propaganda, Croats were presented as a people who were free and unbreakable, who stood up for their rights. As long as the Croats constituted a minority themselves, the Ustaša had always been active in the discourse on minority rights as well.⁴¹

CONCLUSION

The Croatian Ustaša's multiple onslaughts against Serbs, Gypsies and Roma unleashed a social dynamic that made ordinary people participate in collective violence, regardless of their ethnicity. By far the most atrocities were carried out by the Ustaša, and it is evident that Croatian civilians were drawn into participation more than the Muslims, Serbs, Germans or other Yugoslavs. But the war years in Yugoslavia were also years of an extremely brutalizing civil war, so it cannot come as a surprise that people from all backgrounds and both genders participated in violence. This violence could be more or less vicious, more or less physical, and more or less conscious. The deportations of Serbs, Jews and Gypsies opened up a whole field of social and economic opportunities in which tens of thousands could, and did, participate. This caused some pressure from below, when ordinary people tried to push the government in a certain direction at the expense of the victims. But greed was not the only motive: many civilians were unavoidably drawn into collective violence, as they had to manage their communities in challenging times. Local elites were charged with taking care of refugees, while also being required to assist in the deportation of certain groups of people. Hence it would be premature to see nationalism and greed as the only causes that made ordinary people

perpetrators. Participation in direct acts of killing was a widespread phenomenon only in those communities where the opportunity arose: mixed villages and regions where the level of hatred had risen high, where fear and paranoia drove a community of perpetrators (which came to include civilians), and where a genocidal civil war was making a highly regional impact, with atrocities and killings occurring in the villages. The general Croatian population began to be more critical of the genocides the Ustaša was carrying out in their name. Public criticism of the deportation of Jews, mainly coming from the cities, and countless petitions on behalf of the victims demonstrate that indifference towards mass violence was not a given, even in those times of brutalizing civil war.

NOTES

1. District Bosanska Dubica to County Administration Nova Gradiška, 10.06.1942, Military Archives Belgrade (VA)/NDH/196, 1/48–1; numerous similar events were reported by Croatian and German officials.
2. T. Judt (2005) *Postwar. A History of Europe since 1945* (London: Vintage), pp. 45–6.
3. N. Bašić (2007) ‘Wen interessiert heute noch der Zweite Weltkrieg? Tradierung von Geschichtsbewusstsein in Familiengeschichten aus Serbien und Kroatien’ in N. Bašić, H. Welzer and C. Gudehus (eds) *Der Krieg der Erinnerung. Holocaust, Kollaboration und Widerstand im europäischen Gedächtnis* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag), 150–85.
4. J. T. Gross (2002) *Neighbors. The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland* (New York: Princeton University Press); J. Grabowski (2013) *Hunt for the Jews. Betrayal and Murder in German-occupied Poland* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press).
5. See, for example, L. Radonic (2010) *Krieg um die Erinnerung. Kroatische Vergangenheitspolitik zwischen Revisionismus und europäischen Standards* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus).
6. C. Gerlach (2010) *Extremely Violent Societies: Mass Violence in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
7. The category ‘Roma’ was not used at the time. While the Roma constitute an ethnic group, the category ‘Gypsy’ was created by the perpetrators and covered a group that was constructed out of a mix of ethnic, racial, social and religious categories.
8. See, for instance, H. Sundhausen (1983) *Wirtschaftsgeschichte Kroatiens im nationalsozialistischen Großraum 1941–1945. Das Scheitern einer Ausbeutungsstrategie* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt).

9. For modernity, see R. Yeomans (2013) *Utopia of Terror* (Rochester: Pittsburgh University Press); for Europe, see N. Bartulin (2014) *The Racial Idea in the Independent State of Croatia. Origins and Theory* (Amsterdam and Leiden: Brill).
10. For a debate on this perception, see M. Mazower (2000) *The Balkans* (London: Modern Library).
11. The figures kept on growing and reached a climax towards the end of 1944, when the Croatian military was merged with the Ustaša militias: see N. Barić (2003) *Ustroj kopnene vojske domobranstva Nezavisne Države Hrvatske, 1941–1945* (Zagreb: Hrvatski Institut za Povijest).
12. R. H. Dinu (2013) *Faschismus, Religion und Gewalt in Südosteuropa. Die Legion Erzengel Michael und die Ustaša im historischen Vergleich* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag).
13. B. Shepherd (2012) *Terror in the Balkans. German Armies and Partisan Warfare* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press).
14. A. Korb (2013) *Im Schatten des Weltkriegs. Massengewalt der Ustaša gegen Serben, Juden und Roma in Kroatien 1941–1945* (Hamburg: Hamburg Edition); a similar approach is taken by T. Dulić (2005) *Utopias of Nation. Local Mass Killing in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1941–42* (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet).
15. R. Kizling (1956) *Die Kroaten. Schicksalsweg eines Südslawenvolkes* (Graz: Hermann Böhlau).
16. Deutsche Informationsstelle III to von Weizsäcker, Foreign Office, 12.08.1941, Foreign Office Archives, Inland II A/B/ R 99.307, p. 153314; see also M. Broszat and L. Hory (1964) *Der kroatische Ustascha-Staat 1941–1945* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt), p. 146.
17. Ana Antić has analysed how the Ustaša was under constant pressure from communist propaganda, and how it responded: A. Antić (2010) 'Fascism under Pressure. Influence of Marxist Discourse on the Ideological Re-Definition of the Croatian Fascist Movement', *East European Politics and Societies* vol. 24, No. 1, 116–58.
18. Publikationsstelle Wien (ed.) (1943) *Die Gliederung der Bevölkerung des ehemaligen Jugoslawien nach Muttersprache und Konfession nach den unveröffentlichten Angaben der Zählung von 1931* (Wien: Übersetzungsdienst).
19. For Ustaša ideology, see Bartulin (2014) *The Racial Idea*.
20. See M. Lorković (1941) *Das Volk und das Land der Kroaten* (Wien: Übersetzungsdienst); this is the German edition of a book published in 1939 by the Croatian Cultural Council, Matica Hrvatska.
21. A. Pavelić (1941) *Die kroatische Frage* (Berlin: Institut für Grenz- und Auslandstudien).

22. P. Kačavenda (1966) 'Saradnja Četnika i Ustaša u Bosni 1942. godine', *Vojnoistorijski glasnik* vol. 17, No. 5, 37–67.
23. V. Dedijer and A. Miletić (eds) (1990) *Genocid nad Muslimanima, 1941–1945. Zbornik dokumenata i svjedočenja* (Sarajevo: Svjetlost); M. A. Hoare (2006) *Genocide and Resistance in Hitler's Bosnia: the Partisans and the Chetniks, 1941–1943* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
24. S. D. Milošević (1982) *Izbeglice i preseljenici na teritoriji okupirane Jugoslavije 1941–1945. godine* (Beograd: Narodna knjiga).
25. Korb (2013) *Im Schatten des Weltkriegs*, p. 190.
26. F.-L. Kroll (2013) "‘Volksgemeinschaft’. Zur Diskussion über einen umstrittenen Integrationsfaktor nationalsozialistischer Weltanschauung' in A. Gallus et al. (eds) *Deutsche Kontroversen. Festschrift für Eckhard Jesse* (Baden-Baden: Nomos), pp. 99–112.
27. See a report from *Ponova* to Croatian Counties, July 1941, Historical Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina (HM BiH)/NDH 1941; for auctions, see N. Lengel-Krizman (2003) *Genocid nad Romima. Jasenovac 1942* (Zagreb: Biblioteka Kameni cvijet), p. 74.
28. Examples can be found in Milošević (1982) *Izbeglice i preseljenici*.
29. Korb (2013) *Im Schatten des Weltkriegs*, p. 159; for Barac, see letter to Governmental Presidency, 08.08.1941, Croatian State Archives (HDA)/1076.1/548, T I, 80/41.
30. District Command to Commander of the 4th Gendarmerie Division, Bileća, 01.06.1941, VA/Fond NDH/143a, 1/12-1; see also Dulić (2005) *Utopias of Nation*, p. 227.
31. Letter to the Ustaša Headquarters (GUS), 30.06.1941, HDA 223/24, 13579 Pr.
32. Quoted in Milošević (1982) *Izbeglice i preseljenici*, p. 127.
33. For a discussion of the figures, see Dulić (2005) *Utopias of Nation*, p. 313; as for Serbs, approximately 324,000 Serb individuals were killed in the Croatian state.
34. A. Korb (2011) 'Ustaša Mass Violence Against Gypsies in Croatia, 1941/42' in A. Weiss-Wendt (ed.) *The Nazi Genocide of the Roma: Reevaluation and Commemoration* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn).
35. Report, Police Attaché Hans Helm, w/o date, Yad Vashem Archives/M.70/46, p. 16; see also I. Goldstein (2005) 'The Holocaust in Croatia' in R. S. Levy (ed.), *Antisemitism. A Historical Encyclopedia of Prejudice and Persecution* (Santa Barbara CA: ABC-Clío).
36. I interviewed Y. Sterk in Jerusalem, 22.08.2006.
37. S. Jukić to J- Francetić, Sarajevo, 30.06.1941, HM BiH, NDH/1941, 22; 'Predlog u pogledu riješenja srpskog pitanja', 27.06.1941, HDA 218.1/4, 526-B, Chair of the Government; M. Andrić, to Pavelić, Zagreb, 20.08.1941, HDA 218.1/11, 3059-B/41.

38. See, for instance, M. Mann (2005) *The Dark Side of Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); M. Wildt (2007) *Volksgemeinschaft als Selbstermächtigung. Gewalt gegen Juden in der deutschen Provinz 1919 bis 1939* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition).
39. The historian Esther Gitman has documented numerous examples: see E. Gitman (2011) *When Courage Prevailed. The Rescue and Survival of Jews in the Independent State of Croatia, 1941–1945* (St. Paul MN: Paragon House).
40. E. Greble (2011) *Sarajevo, 1941–1945. Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Hitler's Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press).
41. For the discourse on minority rights in Croatia, see A. Korb (2014) 'Von der Ustascha zur SO. Die Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft und ihr Geschäftsführer Theodor von Uzorinac-Koháry (1958–1967)', *Südosteuropa Mitteilungen* vol. 54, No. 4, 74–91.

The *Pazifizierungsaktion* as a Catalyst of Anti-Jewish Violence. A Study in the Social Dynamics of Fear

Tomasz Frydel

One can lose all hopes except the one—that the suffering and destruction of this war will make sense when they are looked at from a distant, historical perspective. From sufferings, unparalleled in history, from bloody tears and bloody sweat, a chronicle of days of hell is being composed which will help explain the historical reasons for why people came to think as they did (Ringelblum Archive, ‘The Last Stage of Resettlement is Death’ (AR II, no. 197))

TOWARD THE RECOVERY OF A STRUCTURE OF VIOLENCE

Recently the historian Christoph Dieckmann has pointed to what he regards as an ongoing weakness in scholarship on the Holocaust. While historians have made tremendous advances in understanding and reconstructing the Jewish experience of genocide, he states, the same cannot

I thank Irene Eber, Stephan Stach and Natalia Aleksium for their feedback on drafts of this article.

T. Frydel (✉)

Department of History, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada
e-mail: tomasz.frydel@mail.utoronto.ca

be said for their approach to the non-Jewish world.¹ This observation may serve as a fitting point of departure into the subject examined here: peasant violence towards Jews who sought shelter in the Polish countryside between 1942 and 1945. In Polish historiography, there have been several publications in the last 15 years dealing with Polish society and the Holocaust, and these have done a great deal to bring the perspective of the Polish-Jewish victim into the national consciousness. This much-needed reassessment has emerged most dramatically in the debate surrounding the Jedwabne pogrom of 10 July 1941, which lay buried in Polish memory for decades after the event.² A dominant motif in this reappraisal has been a stress on the experience of Jewish ‘fear’ during and after the war,³ a trend recently modified by the historian Marcin Zaremba, who has used an umbrella concept, the ‘great fear’, to integrate the social anxieties of various ethnic and social groups in the immediate post-war period in Poland.⁴

The Canadian historian, Jan Grabowski, who is of Polish origin, has written a pioneering micro-history of one particular Polish county in the General Government, Dąbrowa Tarnowska. The study flags up an important link regarding the effects of acts of repression on social relations. Among the most celebrated Righteous Rescuers in the Polish national pantheon are the eight members of the Ulma family (including the pregnant mother, Wiktoria Ulma) who were murdered for hiding people from two Jewish families—the Szalls and the Goldmans—in the village of Markowa in south-eastern Poland.⁵ Grabowski draws on the testimony of Yehuda Erlich, who hid in the nearby village of Sietesz and stated that following the murder of the Ulmas, ‘there was enormous panic among the Polish peasants who were hiding Jews. The next morning 24 corpses of Jews were discovered in the fields. They had been murdered by the peasants themselves, peasants who had kept them hidden during [the previous] 20 months.’⁶ However, there is insufficient documentary evidence to link the two episodes together and to allow for a full exploration of the social dynamic around them.⁷

Indeed, historians are always at the mercy of the limited archival sources at their disposal and history never offers ideal laboratory conditions. But just 25 kilometres east of Dąbrowa Tarnowska, in the vicinity of Radomyśl Wielki,⁸ the dynamic hinted at in the above case has been fully captured by the sources. The goal of this chapter is to reconstruct the context of ‘Polish’ fear in more depth and to track its fluctuations

within a broader canvas of ‘social processes and social dynamics’. So as to keep the social landscape consistent, the analysis is based on cases found solely in the Krakow District of the General Government, particularly the Subcarpathian region of south-eastern Poland.

GERMAN POWER AND THE STRUCTURES OF VILLAGE SOCIETY

Before we proceed, an overview of the structures of village life is needed. The occupation authorities were primarily interested in the Polish province as a source of food quotas (*kontyngenty*) to feed the German army; and also in obtaining ‘human quotas’—forced labourers for the Third Reich. It was the responsibility of each village head (*soltys*) to meet these quotas. To help the village heads carry out their new duties, the Germans instituted a system of local guards (*Ortschutzwache* or *Ortschutz* for short; *samoobrona*, or ‘self-defence’ units in Polish). This was done in each village (*gromada*). The members were often drawn from the local fire brigades, and if this was not sufficient, a village head could always turn to the Polish ‘blue’ police (*Polnische Polizei*), which was subordinate to the *Ordnungsdienst* (in rural areas, the gendarmerie). A member of the *Ortschutzwache* was called a *dziesiętnik* and each unit was headed by a commander. During the day, a village alarm could be activated at times of emergency by ringing a bell or banging a drum to alert members of the *Ortschutz* and other villagers, while an active watch with two shifts had to be maintained during the night. So the *Ortschutz* was in effect a kind of local militia representing the lowest reaches of German authority. A secondary system of ‘hostages’ (*zakładnicy*) made these men personally responsible for maintaining ‘security’ over their areas of jurisdiction. Thus the self-same system that had been turned against ethnic Polish society in the forceful extraction of contingents was expanded into a system of surveillance covering all the categories of people targeted by Nazi Germany. Punishment could now be expected not only for helping fugitives, but for any failure to report and apprehend them.

In essence, villages had been ‘weaponized’ against outsiders and the whole system was held in place by draconian threats at each level of authority. Moreover, to ensure that things ran smoothly, rural communes were infiltrated by two kinds of German informers. The first group consisted of local informers, or *V-Personen* (*konfidenci*), who were based in

the community. They were often loyal *Volksdeutsche* (ethnic Germans), but recruits from every ethnic background could be found. The second group consisted of more professional informers, who moved around the region as agents provocateurs, posing as Soviet POWs, partisans, deserters and Jews.⁹ There are even cases of Jews who cooperated with the Gestapo in catching fellow Jews and gathering information about the underground.¹⁰ Informers who were sent into the villages were testing the nerve endings of the entire village security apparatus. The goal of this widespread practice was undoubtedly to condition a ‘conveyor belt’ response among villagers, so that they immediately reported any strangers who made an appearance and had them apprehended.

THE *PAZIFIZIERUNGS*AKTION IN PODBORZE

The central case investigated here concerns Podborze, a middle-sized village in the commune (*gmina*; *Sammelgemeinde*) of Radomyśl Wielki, located on the edge of a small wooded area, the Schabowski Forest. The Siekfriet (Siekwierd) family had lived in Podborze prior to the outbreak of war. They consisted of a father (Szymon), a mother (name unknown), a daughter (Maria), and two sons (Leon or Lejzor and Roman). As a result of Habsburg policies toward ethnic minorities, almost every village in historic Galicia contained some smattering of Jewish farmers, or *Dorfyidn*, and the Siekfriets were the ones here. The Siekfriets did not report to Radomyśl when Jews from surrounding villages were being resettled there in the early summer of 1942, but decided instead to take a chance on it, hiding in their home village among people they knew. They rotated their stay with different families, though spending most of their time with the family of Jan and Karolina Dudek and their son and daughter, Staszek and Agnieszka.

What first set the compass of Polish–Jewish relations quivering was the introduction of the death penalty for those who harboured Jews. ‘At first, people helped them willingly, but when news spread that an entire family could be shot for hiding Jews or offering them any kind of help, the locals began to be afraid’, one inhabitant recalls. Many families simply turned the Siekfriets out of their homes.¹¹ On the afternoon of 23 April 1943—Good Friday of that year—two cars full of German policemen entered the village. They drove first to the home of Michał Pająk, the village head, and ordered him to direct them to where the Jews were hiding. However, they arrived at the Dudek household only to find the house empty. The

German policemen began to set fire to the village using incendiary bullets. They started with the Dudek's home and went on firing at every second house along the road. The peasant buildings were made of wood and had thatched roofs, so that the fire spread quickly through the entire homestead and to neighbouring houses. A total of 23 homes had been set ablaze when the policemen finally stopped and returned to Mielec. The families directly affected lived out the remainder of the war with neighbours or in makeshift shacks. Jan. and Karolina Dudek were eventually captured by the German police, but were saved through the intervention of a German colonist from Golezów (Goleschau) with whom their son, Stanisław, was employed. The Siekfriets went into hiding in the nearby Schabowski forest. Szymon Siekfriet, his wife, and his son Leon were killed in the subsequent hunts for Jews. Only Maria and Romek survived.

‘APRIL WAS THE CRUELLEST MONTH’: THE REPRESSION EFFECT

The Podborze ‘pacification’ came on the heels of the launch of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising on 19 April 1943. That same week, Heinrich Himmler wanted to honour Hitler’s birthday, which was on the next day, by eliminating the entire Jewish ghetto as a response. But in the Polish province, this tragic Jewish fight for death with honour was a distant affair. In the annals of German violence in occupied Poland, the *Pazifizierungsaktion* or ‘pacification’ at Podborze does not seem particularly remarkable or deadly. No one was killed at the time and only a part of the village was burned down. On this note, official memory of the event generally stops, with an emphasis on the courage of the Poles who sheltered Jews despite German regulations to the contrary and the heavy price they paid as a consequence.¹² Yet for local communities the burning of the village represented the crossing of a certain threshold, opening up a second, darker chapter in the region. The blaze at Podborze was eventually put out, but another deadlier fire crept quickly into social relations. According to Agnieszka Pieróg, Jan and Karolina Dudek’s daughter, the villagers’ rage at what had happened was turned against the Dudek family; some from the village even tried to capture them and throw them into the fire. As the German police search for this Polish family continued, the villagers, fearing for their lives, chased them out. Even Jan Dudek’s own brother, a member of the Resistance movement, threw him out of his home, out of fear for his own family’s safety.¹³

The *Pazifizierungsaktion* in Podborze had immediate consequences well beyond the village. In order to capture the narrative after 23 April 1943, we have to turn to a different set of sources—the post-war investigation and trial records produced on the basis of the so-called Decree of 31 August 1944, which was issued by the new pro-Soviet government, the Polish Committee of National Liberation (PKWN).¹⁴ If viewed on a map, the effect of the Podborze ‘pacification’—the eye of the storm—spread to at least ten other villages within a 15 kilometre radius and brought three Polish police stations into its orbit, leaving an echo in over a dozen cases. In order to follow this narrative, we must turn our attention to these.

The Commune of Radomyśl Wielki

A day or two following the ‘pacification’, the Polish police was dispatched into four villages in the commune of Radomyśl Wielki, and this went on into the early summer. The villages were Schabowiec, Dąbrówka Wisłocka, Ruda and Dąbie. A village head appears to have first called the Radomyśl police to the hamlet of Schabowiec (3 kilometres south of Podborze) near the village of Partynia. The commandant, Jan Pielach,¹⁵ and three policemen, Józef Fordymacki, Ferdynand Zieliński and Stanisław Górecki (d. 1943), arrived to find a large group of people surrounding six or seven Jews whose identities are now unknown (it is not clear whether the Siekfriets were among them).¹⁶ Pielach claims that he wanted to take the Jews to Mielec, but the village head, the forester (Szulc), and the people present ‘were opposed to this and demanded that the Jews be liquidated on the spot’. They were afraid that notifying the Germans ‘could bring unfortunate consequences on the village’.¹⁷ If Pielach had not taken charge, he says, ‘the inhabitants would have lynched the Jews, but I did not allow this.’¹⁸ So the Jews were summarily shot, and the village head ordered the locals to bury the bodies in the nearby woods. Pielach recalls how those who demanded their death ‘pointed to the ashes of the burned homes ... in Podborze, which was still smoking’.

On the same day, the policemen were called to the village of Dąbrówka Wisłocka, 10 kilometres south of Podborze. Members of the village guard, who were also the local firemen, had been given an order by their commandant, Józef Skrzypek, to apprehend Jews hiding in the property of Jan Bartkowicz.¹⁹ A group of four Jews (names unknown) were captured and brought to the community building. When Pielach, Strzępka and Fordymacki arrived, it seemed to Pielach that ‘a self-defence group

of its own kind [had been] organized by the local population against the Germans and their repressions, giving shelter to persons of Jewish nationality who were hiding in the vicinity of the village'. As in Schabowiec, Pielach 'heard demands from the [other] people present at the location to liquidate the Jews, because they would bring disaster to the village, as in Podborze'.²⁰ The policemen executed the Jews behind the building.²¹

In the village or Ruda (5 kilometres south of Podborze), three Jews were hiding in Wojciech Puła's stable. They were Eisig Brodt, Mendel Josiek and another Jew whose identity is not known. The village head had designated Puła and Józef Pęgiel to be the 'hostages' for the village guard system, and by hiding Jews while he was in this position Puła had put himself and his family in considerable danger. When the panic spread from Podborze on 23 April 1943, someone notified the police, betraying the presence of Jews in the village. The guard system was activated and sent to capture them. Puła was away from the village at the time, and when he got back, he discovered that the Jews he had been hiding had been captured:

Jan Kuśnierz told the witness [Wojciech Puła] that Eisig from Radomyśl Wielki was captured and revealed that the witness was hiding him. ... The witness became angry and afraid that he was facing a death sentence for hiding Jews—as the Jew Eisig informed everyone—he hit the Jew Eisig on the head with the handle of a pitchfork, the Jew fell on the ground, and the witness ran away. ... [F]ear from hiding the Jew was all the greater, because he [Puła] was a hostage [*zakładnik*] at the time.²²

Supplementing this testimony, Pielach explains that 'the incident took place immediately after a few "pacifications" and actions had been carried out in the region by the gendarmerie and the Gestapo as [a means of] repression against the population for hiding Jews. ... As a result, the local population was terrified and begged the police to catch the Jews who were hidden, through fear of repression'.²³ In the chaos that followed this incident, an unknown child appeared near the body of Eisig, and no one knew who its parents were, since many resettled families had been moved into the commune. Some witnesses claimed the child was the daughter of the murdered man and, after the war, Józef Pęgiel was falsely accused of taking the 'Jewish' child to Górecki, the policeman at the Radomyśl station, to have her killed. However, the investigation established that a Polish mother from the nearby village of Dulcza Wielka came to the station and claimed the child as her own.²⁴

As the summer of 1943 approached, events with a now familiar pattern unfolded in the village of Dąbie, 15 kilometres south of Podborze. Stanisław Bukala came from the village to the Radomyśl police station, stating that the inhabitants had organized their own round-up and had captured two Jews, a brother and a sister whom the locals called the ‘Mosieks’. The commandant, Jan Pielach, ‘asked Bukala why they had not been brought to the police station. He [Bukala] responded that the Jews were quite aggressive: they were threatening to denounce the villagers to the Germans about something. This is why these Jews cannot be handed over to the Germans.’²⁵ Pielach took one of his policeman, Michał Strzępka, to the village on Bukala’s horse-drawn cart. In 1965, 15 years after his own trial and after serving a sentence, Pielach had this to say:

The Jews asked to be taken to Mielec, so that they could submit a deposition. So I took the Jews on the cart and we took the village road in the direction of Radomyśl. I noticed that a group of people followed the cart, demanding that we should not take the Jews to Mielec, but liquidate them on the spot. The man who was on the cart made some threats against the people of Dąbie, saying that he would teach them a lesson, and complaining that they took 12 dollars from him. I came to the conclusion that if these Jews were brought to Mielec and submitted depositions, the village of Dąbie would come to a sorry end. After consulting with the accused Strzępka, we decided that we would liquidate these Jews on the spot.²⁶

The Commune of Wadowice Górne

In the commune of Wadowice Górne, the repression effect can be traced in the documents to five villages—Wadowice Górne, Wadowice Dolne, Trzciana, Wampierzów, and Kawęczyn. The response of the Wadowice Górne policemen, led by commandant Ciemiorek, was a pre-emptive one: ‘The blue police of Wadowice Górne called together a meeting and stated that Podborze was burned down for sheltering Jews. The same thing could take place in Wadowice Górne if those who shelter Jews do not deliver them to the police station.’²⁷ The meetings that ensued included a public reading of anonymous letters of denunciations—giving the names of individuals suspected of hiding Jews—and a reminder that such actions posed a danger of German retaliation to both Jews and Poles. Earlier meetings held in surrounding villages had led to the formation of a spontaneous search party in Wadowice Dolne. The village guard, now aided by

local volunteers, believed that, if they combed the village in a house-to-house search and submitted a written statement (*protokół*) to the Polish police confirming that they had not found any Jews, their village would be immune from German repression. Apolonia Kania was sheltering two Jewish families at the time (four members of a family from Radomyśl and a brother and sister from the Schnall family).²⁸ These Jews were found and taken away by the Polish police.

In Wadowice Górne itself, a farmer, Tomasz Stachurski, had been giving shelter to the Adler family, *Dorfjudn* from the village of Kawęczyn. They were Rafael ‘Tula’ Adler (the father), Helena Adler (the mother), their daughter, and a son, Jankiel. Stachurski had sheltered them for 11 months when the elderly Adler mother ‘began to lose her mind and told everyone that I was sheltering Jews’.²⁹ Fearing that he would bring a death sentence on his whole family, he told the Jews to leave, but continued to supply them with food. Some two weeks after Podborze, the ‘hostages’ Michał Marnik and Stanisław Strycharz captured some of the Adler family and delivered them to the police station.³⁰

In the village of Trzciana, 10 kilometres north of Podborze, the effect was immediate. Some of the inhabitants of Podborze had fled to this village, spreading the fear. Amid the panic, Chana Feuer (Gimpel), a 70-year-old Jewish woman from the neighbourhood, turned up at the home of Anna and Józef Sypek, where she had once hidden, and refused to leave. The visible presence of fugitive Jews put local communities in an existential dilemma and often in a state of paralysis about what to do. In most cases, people opted for ensuring their own safety. This case shows how avoiding personal responsibility for the destruction of the village guided some of the locals’ actions. According to the accused, Józef Łaz, Feuer ‘refused to leave the house, but said, “Do with me as you please.” Anna Sypek said we should do whatever we wanted with her—kill her somewhere or drive her away; because, should the Germans find out and burn the village down, no one must blame her as being responsible for hiding Jews.’³¹ A little under the influence of alcohol, Łaz and the others then decided that the safest course of action was to escort Feuer to the neighbouring *Volksdeutsche* village of Hohenbach (Czermin), which had its own gendarmerie and SS base (*SS Stützpunkt*) and had, over time, become a killing ground for Jews captured in the region.

Within a prevailing atmosphere of fear, the pattern of Jewish families being ejected from their zones of safety, to be pulled apart and eventually destroyed continued to spread throughout the region. Jakub (Jankiel)

Goldklang, his wife, and five-year-old son were a local Jewish family who went into hiding in the forests of Wampierzów and Trzciany. The family was supported by local villagers, but when the German repression increased, the locals stopped bringing them food. The ‘pacification’ served as a powerful visual reminder of the potential consequences. In the words of one witness: ‘the fire from the burning village was visible from Wampierzów.’³² Sometime in the spring of 1943, Jankiel Goldklang was shot by a forester, Józef Sypek. Leib Süssel Feuer, who was also hiding in the forest, approached the bleeding Goldklang, but was afraid that someone might come back and find him, and unable to be of any help, left Goldklang lying where he was and returned to his bunker.³³ Goldklang crawled out of the woods and was discovered the next day in the barn of a local farmer. When a Polish policeman, Józef Gancarczyk, arrived at the scene, Goldklang, no longer able to bear the pain he was in, allegedly requested that Gancarczyk ‘finish him off’. Three days after her husband’s murder, Goldklang’s wife and her son were driven out of the woods by hunger and went to the Kawęczyn village head, Józef Sidur, to seek help and advice. But all Sidur did for her was to have Józef Soja escort this poor woman and her son to Czermin, where they were shot.

The Commune of Rural Mielec

As shown in Wampierzów, an immediate result of the collective fear that struck communities at this time was that villagers refused contact with Jews in hiding; and this meant cutting off their food supply. This was also the case in the village of Rydzów, 4 kilometres east of Podborze. In the words of one witness, ‘up to the time of the burning of Podborze, Jews were hiding in the village and the vicinity, supported with food by the local population. Even the village head supported them with whatever he could. After the burning of Podborze, the population refused to give them help for fear of similar repercussions.’³⁴ When a group of labourers set out for work in the nearby forest of Piątkowiec, five Jews, members of the Mansdorf and Drelich families, came out of the woods and asked to be brought to the *Flugzeugwerk Mielec* labour camp where members of their families had been drafted. They were brought to the village head, Jan Moździerz, who felt compelled to follow protocol. Asked by the prosecutor why he handed over these Jews, Moździerz replied: ‘I took them and did not let them go, because after they were brought to me, I knew that the death penalty and the burning of homes awaited me and my colleagues if someone reported to the German authorities that we had Jews here and did not hand them over.’³⁵ A witness added, ‘a few weeks

prior to the Jews being sent to the German police, the Germans had burned down the village of Podborze for hiding Jews, and similar threats were being made in the village of Rydzów—that the village would be burned down for hiding Jews.³⁶ The ‘pacification’ action had clearly left its mark on local attitudes.

Although it is not certain, it may have been in the shadow of the Podborze events of April 1943 that three further Jews were denounced in the village of Podleszany. Perla Schnall and her sons Leon and Schnaj had allegedly taken shelter on the property of a farmer, Jan Stec, without his knowledge. In the narrative presented to the prosecution, Stec claims that a neighbour had begun to put pressure on him to report the Jews. When, fearing for his life and the life of his family, he told the Schnalls to leave, they responded that ‘if they have to die, let him die, too.’ Stec notified the Polish police at Mielec. They arrived and took Perla and Leon off with them, and these two Jews were shot. Schnaj managed to run away. In his trial, Stec was found guilty. The court identified April 1943 as ‘the most intense period of persecution and murder of the Jewish population’.³⁷

If the series of murders described above can indeed be grouped together, the documents indicate (as a conservative figure) 35 Jewish deaths resulting from the Podborze ‘pacification’: 15 in the commune of Radomyśl Wielki; 13 in Wadowice Górne; and 7 in rural Mielec. Assuming that not all incidents made it to the level of an investigation or trial, it is likely that there were more cases of murder not captured by the documents.

POLISH FEAR: JEWISH DENUNCIATION

In the spring of 1943, the air was thick with fear as the social landscape was carpet-bombed with ‘pacification’ actions. Podborze was only one of a number of villages to be hit by a major *Pazifizierungsaktion* in the region surveyed: Wiewiórka (23 March 1943), Podborze (23 April 1943), Gumniska and Latoszyn (13 June 1943), Brzeźnica (30 June 1943), Bobrową (9 July 1943), Róża and Mokre (24 July 1943), Jaworze Dolne (4 February 1944), and yet more. Some of these villages—for example, Wiewiórka and Róża—were hit more than once. Of the atrocities above, the attacks on Wiewiórka, Gumniska and Latoszyn and Jaworze Dolne were related to the shelter of Jews, although the Germans appear also to have been targeting members of the Resistance movement.

A major component of ethnic ‘Polish’ fear regarding the shelter of Jews was that, if captured, the Jews whom Poles had protected might reveal the identities of their helpers. The reconstruction of events given above hints more than once at this anxiety, as in the case of Jusek Eisig in the

village of Ruda or with the Mosiek siblings, who allegedly made public threats to denounce villagers. The documentary records of the ‘pacification’ actions at Jaworze Dolne, Gumniska and Latoszyn also have this motif running through them. According to Józef Kałuża, during the ‘pacification’ and search of Jaworze Dolne and Jaworze Górne, the Germans captured Mendel Ekstein and tortured him into revealing where other Jews were hiding.³⁸ In one of the several German incursions into the village of Gumniska, Samuel Wind was ‘captured in the woods by German gendarmes [and] betrayed Michał Zieliński, stating that he received the piece of bread and revolver found on [his person] from him’.³⁹ When Robert Urban, the Dębica gendarme, came looking for Zieliński, who had fled, he shot his wife Rozalia Zieliński instead. Also during the time of these events, the German police captured a young Jewish woman by the name of Fajga in the vicinity of Tuszów Narodowy, some 20 kilometres north of Podborze. Fajga was a *Dorfyid* from the village of Grochowe, whose mother had recently been taken and killed by the German police. When her mother was captured, she was marched through the village of Malinie and beaten into indicating which families had offered her food or shelter. However, when the 17-year-old daughter was captured, she was not killed. She was redeployed in the countryside as a short-term informer. From the spring to the summer of 1943, her survival depended on her ability to denounce Poles for various violations of German law, including their offering help to herself as a Jew in the villages of Tuszów Narodowy, Grochowe and Malinie. Locals recalled how she was driven through villages by the German police on a horse-drawn cart as she pointed to peasant homes. Among others, she denounced two Poles and a family of 12 Roma in the village of Grochowe. When Fajga was examining the 12 bodies to make sure they were all dead, she herself was shot and buried along with the warm corpses.⁴⁰ Though the claim should be taken with a rather large grain of salt, the former policeman, Jan Pielach, states in his testimony that the ‘pacification’ of Podborze was itself the result of a denunciation made by a Jew, ‘who voluntarily reported to the German authorities and stated that the local population was hiding Jews’.⁴¹

On the outskirts of Mielec, the Bäumer und Lösch camp in Czekaj, included a special barracks for Jewish informers and their families.⁴² On the fateful day of 23 April 1943, perhaps in the shadow of the Podborze ‘pacification’, members of the *Ortschutz* in the village of Chrzastów apprehended an unknown man and handed him over to the Polish police in Mielec. They later learned that he was a Jewish informer, probably

belonging to this group.⁴³ He was released after capture and was seen walking around in the presence of the Gestapo in Mielec. In this case, not handing the man over would most likely have resulted in the death of those who failed to enforce their assigned obligations.

In many cases, the final veracity of these testimonies is now beyond the reach of the historian, yet it is important to present them, as they reveal the social anxieties connected with offering shelter. This outlook overlapped with the thinking of the underground Resistance movement. In a report dated 12 March 1943, the commander of the district AK (Home Army), Rzeszów-South, issued the following order to the soldiers under his command: ‘There has not been a single incident in which captured Jews have not denounced everyone who offered them help. In many cases, they maliciously give surnames [of individuals] who are completely uninvolved. All are shot on the spot. We have suffered many losses because of this. Therefore, I forbid any contact with fleeing Jews and any assistance to them.’⁴⁴ In point of fact, many of the Polish policemen examined here—Pielach, Strzępka and Mrowiński—had ties with the underground movement and they make loose references to such orders in the course of their trials: they express the view that their actions protected the ethnic Polish population. Perhaps the case of an ethnic German gendarme in Wielopole, Wilhelm Jaki (alias ‘Korab’), demonstrates the thinking most effectively. Jaki was also linked to the underground movement. He recalls the following:

The commandant of the blue police station in Wielopole, Bystroń, requested that the Dębica gendarmerie and a unit of the SS from Pustków⁴⁵ together with its gendarmerie be brought to the village of Mała and other [places] in order to carry out the pacification of these villages against Jews and Poles. When this project made its way to the gendarmerie, on my own initiative, I submitted [an alternative] project to the commandant of the gendarmerie, in which he would send me and someone else to Mała and if we found any Jews there, we would liquidate them. The commandant of the gendarmerie agreed to my proposal.⁴⁶

Jaki and a Polish policemen then set out to target individual peasants suspected of hiding Jews. This was, he said, to shield rural society from an onslaught of ‘pacifications’. Of course, one should approach the testimonies of the accused with great care and not simply reproduce their own narratives. Each case must be examined on its own terms. Yet the logic of survival that arose out of the local conditions of occupation is in keeping with the broader context of attitudes and dilemmas examined here.

CONCLUSIONS

The Polish countryside was witness to various categories of fugitive from Nazi German law, such as Jews, prisoners of war, Romani people, partisans and Poles escaping from forced labour inside Germany. The focus here has only been on the nexus of fugitive Jews and Poles in the aftermath of the major ‘liquidation’ *Aktionen* in the ghettos. The goal of this analysis has been to examine how extreme forms of violence against Poles sheltering Jews, particularly the *Pazifizierungsaktionen*, functioned in rural communities. The study shows how a society whose entire state institutions had been hijacked by the occupying powers, right down to village structures, dealt with genocidal policies at the local level. As such, it is a study in the intimacy of violence. I do not claim to present an explanatory mechanism that captures *all* forms of peasant harm towards Jews. Violence toward Jews had a variety of sources, such as fear, material gain, Nazi propaganda, and anti-Semitism; and a number of reported crimes have been left out of this analysis. But I would risk the thesis that the landscape of terror formed the deep structure of anti-Jewish violence. ‘Pacification’ actions and other collective forms of retribution acted like a glacier sliding across the social landscape and carving out the primary channels along which other forms of behaviour could flow.

This approach takes a certain methodological risk in consciously putting pre-war attitudes, including evident anti-Semitism, into the background. There is no doubt that anti-Semitism was a constant in Eastern Europe and, more broadly, in Europe as a whole. But the historian has to stop and ask why so many Jews lost their lives at particular points of time in such horrific numbers. The potential risk is countered by the gain in seeing more clearly the social dynamics that grew out of the conditions of occupation. In important ways, extreme German terror overrode some natural predispositions and deepened others, creating new social dynamics and relationships. Part of the aim of this chapter has been to clear a path for further study of the dynamics of violence, seeing it apart from ideology, and perhaps in a similar way to that of the historian Daniel Blatman, who has shifted our understanding of the ‘death marches’.⁴⁷

Colonized subjects of a defeated state, Poles and Jews became the targets of differentiated German policies that gave rise to two separate trajectories of experience. Though they were unequal victims, the cumulative effect of the German regulations was to restructure social reality in such a way as to set members of the Polish and Jewish populations on a collision course when they came into contact with each other—though this was mostly viewed in terms of ethnic categories. The model of violence that emerges from the present study makes a straight narrative of Polish

‘ethnic cleansing’ of Jews seem too simplistic.⁴⁸ The case of Podborze shows a progression of violence not grounded in any obvious anti-Semitic feeling or extreme nationalism, but arising in the force field of collective fear and hysteria sown by German terror. Although similar data is unavailable, it is highly probable that the appearance of Jewish corpses in nearby fields following the murder of the Ulma family in the village of Markowa, as described by Yehuda Erlich in the introduction, was a result of what I would call a local repression effect.

A system of control was imposed on village life that ensnared and destroyed the lives of Jews. It did not require anti-Semites for its continued operation, and—self-perpetuating—it gave rise to a certain arithmetic of survival, as people struggled to cope with the brutal conditions of occupation. Violence accelerated exponentially when fugitive Jews came to represent an existential threat to the community. In the social dynamics that erupted around fugitive Jews across the territories of the General Government, we can perhaps discern the germs of post-war pogroms.



Fig. 9.1 The inhabitants of Podborze in front of their burned down homes (Photograph taken immediately after the war. Courtesy of Maria Przybyszka)

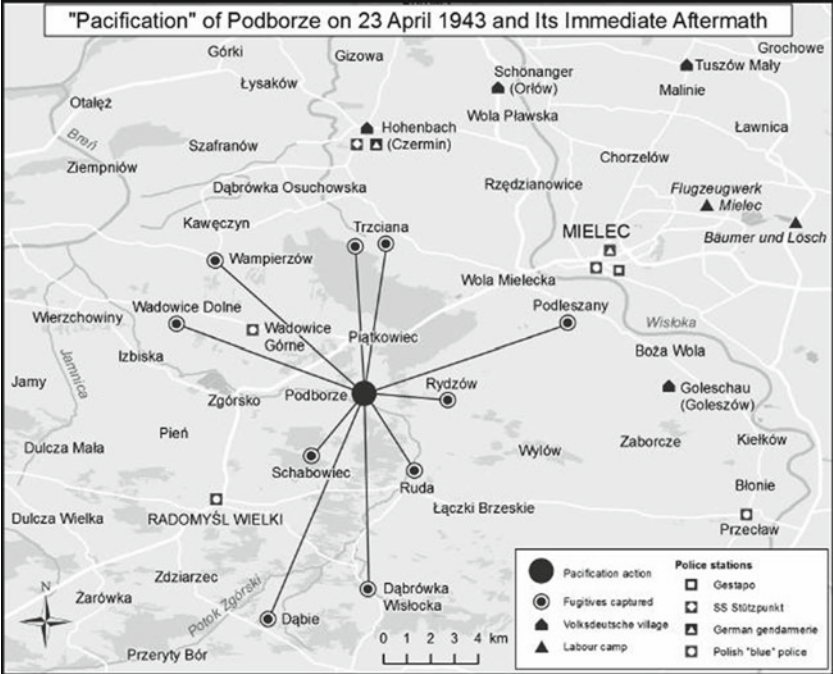


Fig. 9.2 'Pacification' of Podborze on 23 April 1943 and its immediate aftermath

APPENDIX

NOTES

1. Christoph Dieckmann made this remark during the conference that lies behind this volume.
2. J. T. Gross (2001) *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
3. J. T. Gross (2006) *Fear: Anti-Semitism in Poland After Auschwitz: An Essay in Historical Interpretation* (New York: Random House); B. Engelking (2011) *Jest taki piękny słoneczny dzień ... losy Żydów szukających ratunku na wsi polskiej 1942–1945* (Warszawa: Stowarzyszenie Centrum Badań nad Zagładą Żydów).
4. M. Zaremba (2012) *Wielka trwoga: Polska 1944–1947. Ludowa reakcja na kryzys* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak).
5. M. Szpytma (2009) *The Risk of Survival: The Rescue of the Jews by the Poles and the Tragic Consequences for the Ulma Family from Markowa* (Warszawa: Institute of National Remembrance).
6. J. Grabowski (2013) *Hunt for the Jews: Betrayal and Murder in German-Occupied Poland* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), pp. 152–3. For a brief discussion of peasant fear within a broader topology of the experience of Jews in hiding, see Engelking, *Jest taki piękny słoneczny dzień*, pp. 101–9, 217–20.
7. The Ulmas and the Jews they were sheltering were killed on 24 March 1944, but the historian Mateusz Szpytma believes that the second cluster of murders occurred two years earlier in 1942 and that the two events may have fused into a single episode in Yehuda Erlich's memory. See the discussion between Grabowski and Szpytma: Szpytma (2011) 'Markowa po "Złoty chmiel"', *Więź* 7, no. 633, 66–74; J. Grabowski (2011) 'Prawda leży w mogiłach', *Więź* 8–9, no. 634, 103–6; S. Szpytma (2011) 'Sprawiedliwi i inni', *Więź* 10, no. 636, 100–1.
8. The commune of Radomyśl Wielki belonged to 'Grosskreis' Debica, a county that was enlarged by the occupation authorities by combining the pre-war Polish counties of Tarnobrzeg, Mielec, and Dębica.
9. A unit of the Peasant Battalions in the Krosno region 'sold a machine gun for 3,000 zł to a member of the Jasło Gestapo, Becker [Oskar Bäcker], dressed up as a Jew'. See Centralne Archiwum Wojskowe w Warszawie (Central Military Archives in Warsaw; CAW), collection II.33.44, Peasant Battalions, Rzeszów District IV-Bez, pp. 1–11, 'Oracz' to 'Zawojny', 28 October 1943.
10. The Mielec Gestapo used several Jewish *V-Leute* in the region. One of these was a young woman with the pseudonym 'Sophie', who joined the Mielec post in the spring of 1943. See A. Krempa (2013) *Zagłada Żydów mieleckich* (Mielec: Muzeum Regionalne), pp. 20–2.

11. Interview with a villager, p. 4, in M. Przybyszewska (2007) *Bez grzechu zaniechania. O martyrologii mieszkańców Podborza—1943* (Mielec: Agencja Marketingowa Market Service).
12. A monument commemorating the event was unveiled in 2007. For the politics of memory surrounding this site, see T. Frydel (2012) ‘Constructing the Memory of Rescuing Jews in the Polish Countryside: The Case of Radomyśl Wielki and Mielec County’ in A. Sitarek et al. (eds) *Zagłada żydów na polskiej prowincji* (Łódź: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej), pp. 335–65.
13. Information based on an interview with Agnieszka Pieróg (née Dudek) in the possession of the author.
14. The August Decree gave courts jurisdiction to prosecute ‘fascist-Hitlerite criminals and traitors to the Polish nation’. For a discussion of the Decree, see A. Skibińska and J. Petelewicz (2007) ‘The Participation of Poles in Crimes against Jews in the Świętokrzyskie Region’, *Yad Vashem Studies* 35, no. 1, 2–3.
15. Jan Pielach, his wife, and child were Poles resettled from the Poznań region.
16. According to the testimony of Stanisław Dudek in 1981, the Siekfiets were shot by the Mielec gendarme Heinrich Wudzke in the company of three Polish policemen from Radomyśl Wielki—Jan Pielach, Stanisław Górecki and Michał Strzępka. See AIPN Rz, Main Commission for the Investigation of Crimes against the Polish Nation (OKŚZpNP), file S 2/81 and Sn 13/2/81, pp. 3–3v.
17. Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance (AIPN Rz) in Rzeszów, 34/61, Vol. 2, testimony of the accused, Jan Pielach, p. 25.
18. AIPN Rz 34/61, Vol. 2, testimony of the accused, Jan Pielach, p. 95.
19. AIPN Rz 34/61, Vol. I, testimony of witness Stanisław Kuzar, pp. 238–41. According to Kuzar, the Jews were captured around five in the afternoon, probably hours after the ‘pacification’ action.
20. AIPN Rz 34/61, Vol. 2, testimony of Jan Pielach, pp. 24–5.
21. According to Pielach, one of the Jews demanded to be taken to the Mielec Gestapo: ‘After having arrived at the location, one of the captive Jews demanded that he be brought to the Gestapo, showing me some letter, but would not give me an explanation or let me see the letter upon request and tried to run’, AIPN Rz 32/1, Vol. I, p. 99.
22. AIPN Rz 353/89, testimony of witness Wojciech Puła, pp. 74–5.
23. AIPN Rz 353/89, testimony of Jan Pielach, pp. 102–3. The incident is echoed in a post-war account by Antoni Balarzyn: ‘Nothing would have happened, but when they asked who he was and where he lived, he said that he lived at Wojciech Puła’s and told them his name. When Puła, who was one of the hostages and was taking part in that patrol, heard that, he grabbed a pitchfork that was lying against the wall of the stable and pierced Eisig Josek with it. A few moments later Eisig was dead.’ USHMM,

- A. Balaryn (1989) *The Martyrdom of the Jewish Population of Radomyśl Wielki and the Surrounding Areas during the Second World War* (Virginia: M. Miller), p. 17.
24. AIPN Rz 353/89, testimony of Józef Pęgiel, pp. 331–332. The little girl allegedly said that her ‘father was killed by the Germans for [hiding] the Jews and her mother was poor’—a possibility in the wave of panic, chaos and killing that came in the wake of the ‘pacification’.
 25. AIPN Rz 32/1, testimony of Jan Pielach, p. 95.
 26. AIPN Rz 34/61, Vol. II, testimony of witness Jan Pielach, trial of Michał Strzępka, 1965–75, pp. 24–31.
 27. AIPN Rz 34/61, Vol. II, testimony of Jan Kuliga, pp. 44–5. The policeman Brunon Mrowiński, who joined the Home Army during the occupation, had taken part in organizing such meetings. He stated that he received such instructions from his commander, Leon Kobzdej (‘Leśnik’) of the Mielec AK, as well as a Catholic priest from Wadowice Górne, Fr. Chałas, AIPN 358/162, p. 114v.
 28. AIPN Rz 358/162, testimony of Apolonia Kania, p. 125v.
 29. AIPN Rz 358/162, interrogation of the accused Tomasz Stachurski, 8–8v.
 30. AIPN Rz 358/162, main hearing, testimony of Izak Sommer and Jan Sypek, pp. 72–81. By some accounts, the child, Jankiel, survived the war by being passed around from farmer to farmer, while the elderly Adler mother was killed by locals on account of her behaviour.
 31. AIPN Rz 34/61, Vol. II, testimony Józef Łaz, p. 10.
 32. AIPN Rz 358/162, testimony of Jan Ciuła, p. 119.
 33. AIPN Rz 358/146, testimony of Leib Süssel Feuer, pp. 12–13.
 34. AIPN Rz 353/148, testimony of Jan Łączak, p. 55.
 35. AIPN Rz 353/148, testimony of Jan Moździerz, p. 7.
 36. AIPN Rz 353/148, testimony of Józef Dudek, p. 55.
 37. AIPN Rz 367/74, court sentence, pp. 2–7.
 38. AIPN Rz, OKŚZpNP, S 16/12/Zn, Vol. I, testimony of Józef Kałuża, pp. 9–11.
 39. AIPN Rz, OKŚZpNP, S 20/09/Zn, Vol. II, testimony of Władysław Salwiesz in 1946, p. 363. According to the historian Elżbieta Rączy, Wind was motivated by simple vengeance. When Michał Zieliński refused to continue helping him, Wind reported him to the German police. For this and similar examples, see E. Rączy (2008) *Pomoc Polaków dla ludności żydowskiej na Rzeszowszczyźnie, 1939–1945* (Rzeszów: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej), p. 114.
 40. AIPN Rz, OKŚZpNP, II Ds. 28/70, testimony of Michał Ochalik, pp. 23–23v; AIPN Rz, OKŚZpNP, S 91/09/Zn Vol. I, testimony of Władysław Pieróg, pp. 163–163v; AIPN Rz 373/9, testimony of Władysław Witek, pp. 83–85v.
 41. AIPN Rz 34/61, Vol I, testimony of witness Jan Pielach, pp. 24–31. In another place, Pielach stated that ‘there were incidents of repression by the

Germans resulting from denunciations made by Jews; this was specifically the case in the village of Zdziszko [writing unclear], where the Germans shot two families, namely: the Szkwars and the Głowackis, as a result of a denunciation made by a Jew who hid with them, as well as in the village of Róża, where the Germans shot seven people as a result of a denunciation made by a Jew, who worked there as a farmhand.' AIPN Rz 32/1, pp. 99–100.

42. Archiwum Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego (Archives of the Jewish Historical Institute; AŻIH), Testimony collection 301, file 3503, testimony of Jakub Grynblum, 1947.
43. AIPN Rz 353/61, pp. 258–61, testimony of Bogdan Porter, a Jewish fugitive who came into contact with one of these informers.
44. AIPN Rz 105/7, Archives of KC PZPR in Rzeszów, Order No. 3, Point 21 of instructions issued by the commander of district AK Rzeszów-South, Col. Józef Maciołek, alias 'Żuraw', p. 120.
45. A concentration camp on the grounds of one of the largest military base complexes in the General Government, *SS Truppenübungsplatz Heidelager*.
46. AIPN Rz 353/278, interrogation of the accused Wilhelm Jaki, pp. 41–5.
47. D. Blatman (2011) *The Death Marches: The Final Phase of Nazi Genocide* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press).
48. Compare, for example, with Andrew Kornbluth, who argues that local anti-Jewish violence in Poland 'constituted part of a pan-European continuum, in which inhabitants of the continent from the Pyrenees all the way to Russia participated in Nazi-inspired ethnic cleansing': A. Kornbluth (2013) 'Jest wielu Kainów wśród nas'. Polski wymiar sprawiedliwości a Zagłada, 1944–1956', *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i Materiały* 9, 157.

Slovak Society and the Jews. Attitudes and Patterns of Behaviour

Barbara Hutzelmann

INTRODUCTION

On 26 September 1939, Bela Weichherz from Bratislava wrote a comment in his diary:

In the independent state, the measures against Jews have got even harsher. Aside from the fact that the looting of Jewish businesses and insults to Jews in broad daylight have now become the order of the day, Jews have begun to be forced from their jobs. I was among the first to lose my employment. On March 30th all Jews at Philips were laid off.¹

The diary of Bela Weichherz ends in the spring of 1942. On 6 June of that year, he was deported to Sobibór, together with his daughter and his wife, and they were murdered. The fate of the Weichherz family is representative of some 75,000 of the 90,000 Slovak Jews. These people perished in the Shoah, because of the anti-Semitic policy of the Slovak state.

The Holocaust unfolded as a political and social process with many players caught up in different positions. Raul Hilberg's categorization of 'victims', 'perpetrators' and 'bystanders' assigns supposedly fixed, distinct roles to the various players concerned—persecuted Jews, the initiators of persecution

B. Hutzelmann (✉)

Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich, Germany

along with their henchmen, and, as ‘bystanders’, the ‘uninvolved’ population.² This last category is increasingly being brought into question. What roles did the thousands of ‘unconcerned citizens’ or indirect beneficiaries of the extermination of the Jews really play in the whole process?³ On the basis of current research, we have to modify our terms. Rather than ‘perpetrators’, ‘victims’ and ‘bystanders’, it is more accurate to speak of ‘social players, who [were] characterized by multiple roles and dynamic changes of these roles’.⁴

This chapter looks at developments in Slovakia. Unlike countries such as Poland and the Soviet Union, the Slovak Republic (as it became) was not occupied by the Germans until September 1944. As a result of the Munich Agreement in September 1938 and the German occupation of the ‘remnant’ of Czechoslovakia on 14 March the following year, Slovakia had been given statehood, and was one of the most loyal allies of the German Reich. The course of the war—in which the Slovak Republic participated alongside Germany—also affected the social dynamics surrounding the persecution of the Jews. Although the country was not independent, in the full sense of the word, it would be too simplistic to see this German-protected state (*Schutzstaat*) simply as a ‘puppet regime’.⁵ Tatjana Tönsmeier insists that this point of view not only overestimates the degree of German influence, but also underestimates the room for manoeuvre given to the Slovaks. In fact, the Slovaks used this leeway and often succeeded in holding back and delaying certain developments the Germans wished to push, when they were convinced these went against their national interests.⁶ The competing wings of the ruling Hlinka’s Slovak People’s Party, the ‘moderates’ based around Jozef Tiso, and the ‘radicals’ following Vojtech Tuka and Alexander Mach only differed marginally in their anti-Semitic policies.⁷

Martin Dean portrays the relationship between the pauperization of the Jews and their later annihilation as ‘the social dynamic of the Holocaust’,⁸ and Frank Bajohr has demonstrated that the ‘Aryanization’ of Jewish possessions involved ‘one of the largest transfers of property in recent German history’.⁹ Based on these insights, this chapter examines the ‘Aryanization’ of Jewish property in Slovakia, the deportations from the country in 1942 and 1944, and the involvement of Slovak society in these happenings. What were the social dynamics and changes that influenced the persecution process? Who were the main players responsible for the persecution and extermination of Slovak Jews? What patterns of behaviour can be seen in non-Jewish society during the stages of persecution? Can we identify people’s motives and the underlying reasons and reactions determining their choices to support the persecution of Jews or to offer them help?

And finally, to what extent did existing anti-Semitism further the programme of genocide, or at least minimize opposition to it?

The concept of 'exclusion from gainful employment', as used by Ludolf Herbst and Ingo Loose, helps us see deeper into the complex picture of how society benefited while the Jews fell into economic disaster, and it helps us appreciate the full dimensions of these shifts.¹⁰ In this chapter, the terms 'expropriation' and 'Aryanization' are used within this framework. Due to limited space, the Jewish side of the story has to be left untold.

SOCIAL DYNAMICS AND CHANGES AFFECTING THE PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS

In Slovakia, the first persecutions of Jews followed the First Vienna Award of November 1938.¹¹ The new one-party state was led by the anti-Semitic Hlinka's Slovak People's Party (HSĽS), which initiated legislative measures against the Jews as early as March 1939. The first anti-Semitic law, Law 63, passed in April of that year, defined 'Jewishness' according to religious criteria and emphasized the ideological importance of segregating Jewish citizens.¹²

Jews were swiftly excluded from gainful employment. The first phase of this process lasted from March 1939 to September 1940. It started with bans on Jews being employed in certain occupations. These were followed by a Land Reform Law in February 1940 and the so-called First Aryanization Law two months later.¹³ The Germans criticized the First Aryanization Law, saying it was insufficient, and it was abrogated in October. By then, the second stage of the expropriations had already begun, and was to last till the autumn of 1942. This stage was launched with a constitutional law legalizing anti-Jewish measures by decree, and another law requiring the registration of all Jewish assets. Both were enacted in the early summer of 1940.¹⁴ A government shake-up which Hitler enforced in July 1940 brought about the temporary ascendancy of the German-friendly politicians Vojtech Tuka and Alexander Mach, and this gave rise to a further dynamic in the persecution, which Jozef Tiso, the president, ultimately endorsed.¹⁵ Germany sent advisors to Slovak ministries and institutions, including Dieter Wisliceny, who was 'Advisor for the Solution of the Jewish Question'.¹⁶ Wisliceny accelerated the expropriation of the Jews by initiating the founding of the Central Economic Office in September 1940.¹⁷ This was put under Tuka's sole control and was headed by his protégé Augustín Morávek. Its tasks were to implement a 'revolutionary

way' of expropriation through the total exclusion of the Jews from gainful employment and the transfer of Jewish property to Christians. Moreover, the compulsory organization of all Jews by means of the 'Jewish Centre' that had been created in September 1940 was under its control as well.¹⁸ Real estate owned by Jews was taken under the control of temporary curators in October 1940.¹⁹ In November 1940 a 'Second Aryanzation Law' was enacted, which covered the expropriation of all kinds of possessions and the deprivation of gainful employment for all Jews.²⁰ These laws were extended by numerous supplementary measures controlling the whole life of Jews and eliminating any freedoms left to them. A steady stream of regulations on almost all kinds of property came next.²¹

The radicalization of persecution of the Jews was intertwined with the beginning of the war against the Soviet Union and the massacres of Soviet Jews, civilians and prisoners of war. The 'Jewish Code', enacted in September 1941, was a significant step in this further dynamic in Slovakia.²² The code offered a racist definition of 'Jews' based on Germany's Nuremberg Laws. Most of its 270 paragraphs dealt with the elimination of the Jews from economic life. In addition, Jews had to wear the Yellow Star. In a further piece of legislation, enacted the same day, the government demanded an extraordinary capital levy on Jews, exacting 20 per cent of whatever capital they had registered in 1940. As it turned out, the state only gained about 12 million crowns in this move instead of the 530 million expected, because the target population had already been pauperized:²³ according to Eduard Nižňanský approximately 64,000 Jews had lost their incomes or been adversely affected. Decrees obliging Jews to be conscripted for forced labour were in place before July 1941, but in that month, they were tightened up and made more severe.²⁴ It was at this time that Wisliceny organized an official state visit to the Jewish forced labour camps in German-occupied East Upper Silesia. The visit brought some of the Slovak officials to the realization that the Jews 'had to exist there under conditions which would ultimately lead to their deaths'.²⁵ Nevertheless, Mach afterwards picked Nováky and Sered as sites for Slovak labour camps, and a third one was opened in Vyhne in February 1942. The 'Fourteenth Department' of the Ministry of the Interior was started up as a second institution specifically devoted to Jewish persecution.²⁶

By the autumn of 1941, the 'Final Solution' for European Jewry had already been set in full swing on Soviet soil. Moreover, trials of Zyklon B at Auschwitz, the use of mobile gas chambers at Kulmhof and the

construction of gas chambers in Bežec at the end of 1941 mark the transition to a process of systematic extermination.²⁷ The Slovak government agreed to a German request, made in November 1941, for the deportation 'to the East' of Slovak Jews residing in Germany, but claimed their assets for itself.²⁸ This prepared the ground for deportations of the Slovak Jews living in Slovakia. When, on 16 February 1942, the German Foreign Office asked for 20,000 young Slovak Jews to be sent to 'work assignment in the East', the agreement was just a formality. In fact, the whole operation had been under preparation for weeks. Between 26 March and 5 April 1942, Slovakia deported 8,000 young men and women to Auschwitz and Majdanek. The state then decided on the deportation of whole Jewish families and, up to 20 October 1942, multiple 'family transports' were sent to Auschwitz and the Lublin District. Altogether 57,628 Jews were carried off to the death camps in 1942. Only a few survived.

The deportations were ended in the autumn of 1942. Prominent among the many reasons given for this was that the Slovak government had 'solved the Jewish problem' by getting rid of most of the pauperized Jews.²⁹ The Germans made many attempts to get the deportations started up again, but the Slovak authorities declared them definitively finished in August 1943. This autonomous behaviour against Germany did not lead to negative consequences for the Slovak government.³⁰

During the third stage of the seizure of Jewish properties, which lasted until the end of the war, the state sold Jewish assets below their value and liquidated what remained—especially houses (taken by the state), but also other belongings which were sold off in public sales.³¹ In the labour camps, thousands of Jews produced goods for the benefit of the state, their total value amounting to 39 million crowns.³² In this 'calm phase', all the anti-Jewish measures were still in force. Deportation trains filled with Hungarian Jews went through Slovak territory in 1944; the remaining Jews in eastern Slovakia were deported to the western side of the country; and around 3,000 Slovak Jews who had fled to Hungary now returned to the Slovak Republic.³³

A dramatic last dynamic occurred with the Slovak National Uprising in late August 1944. Tiso responded by asking for German military support. German troops and *Einsatzgruppe H* invaded the country to put down the uprising and hastened to complete the 'Final Solution of the Jewish Question'.³⁴ Despite all this, the formal independence of Slovakia remained untouched.

PERPETRATORS AND BENEFICIARIES

In this escalating persecution several perpetrators and beneficiaries stand out: the state, its protagonists, the Slovak majority population and ethnic Germans.

The HSĽS had called for the expropriation of the Jews even before 1938 and, in February 1939, Mach was already saying: ‘The Jews, who have gold, jewellery and wealth, they have got rid of everywhere, and we will do so, too. ... People, who have stolen wealth here, will have it taken from them. That’s the practical solution to the entire Jewish question!’³⁵ Contrary to Aly’s thesis of governments creating loyal populations by providing them with Jewish property,³⁶ most of the Jewish property did not go to the ‘poor Slovak’ but rather to the state and its institutions, even when there were other intentions—since Tiso understood the expropriations ‘as a way to build a Slovak middle class’.³⁷ The state, for example, seized all the assets of the deportees by enacting a Constitutional Law in May 1942, which legalized the deportation and de-naturalization of the deportees retrospectively.³⁸ The Ministry of Finance finished the main expropriation process in the autumn of 1942 with the transfer of capital, shares, precious metals and diamonds to the Slovak banks. The distribution of looted property among the population was not finished till 1945.³⁹

The Central Economic Office (CEO) decided whether an enterprise had to be liquidated or be given to a Christian Slovak. Its whole activity was characterized by lack of state control, biased decisions, the growing influence of the party in power and chaotic management.⁴⁰ Corruption was rife amongst politicians, a notable example being Augustín Morávek, who added to his wealth enormously. The Jewish underground movement ‘Working Group’ was able to bribe Anton Vašek, head of the Fourteenth Department, though its bid to get him to slow down the deportations ultimately failed. The Catholic bishopric of Spiš, represented by its bishop Ján Vojtaššák, applied for the Baldovce Spa, expropriated from its Jewish owner, Ladislav Fried, and obtained it.⁴¹ Tiso himself supplied his family with looted wealth from Jews.⁴²

Some examples may serve to illustrate how ministries and government institutions cooperated with the CEO. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs contacted it on how to expropriate Slovak Jews abroad. The Central Employment Bureau initiated protests against the employment of Jews. The secret police and the police departments, as well as their community offices, sent in notifications on Jews who had not registered valuables,

or who were working without work permits. And people in government authorities and ministries wrote in to request that confiscated Jewish properties (often apartments and houses) should be personally assigned to them.⁴³

Propaganda had raised a lot of expectations within Slovak society. Up to the end of 1941, 10,000 of the 12,000 enterprises belonging to Jews were liquidated, and the Jews' exclusion from economic life was to a large extent achieved. In addition, some 'inconvenient competition' for non-Jews was removed. About 2,000 of the enterprises seized from Jews were given to non-Jewish applicants.⁴⁴ There were a lot of petitions from 'ordinary people' applying for the expropriated businesses and belongings the state had taken away. These 'ordinary people' were thus actively taking part in the looting.

Two main issues held back the wholesale robbery of Jewish enterprises—a lack of money and a lack of qualifications to run a business at all. The government preferred to favour unqualified but politically 'safe' applicants—members of the HSLS and of its militia, the Hlinka Guard—and offered courses for the untried new business owners:

We begin to learn arithmetic well ... And, anyway, help is so near! Now there is vacation time. Our students have returned home for vacation. Their knowledge in maths is certainly good enough to teach the ones who need help, at least as far as their business requires.⁴⁵

Under these circumstances, with barely competent new people heading the enterprises, the former Jewish owners were often employed just to keep the businesses running. Work permits could save Jews from losing their livelihoods, but they could be withdrawn at any time. The Steiner bookseller family in Bratislava, for example, could continue working in their expropriated shop, but the new owner would come around several times a month to collect the money.⁴⁶

After the installation of temporary trustees in some important Jewish enterprises in Topoľčany in 1939, even one of the trustees complained that the whole thing was merely regarded 'as a source of money' and found it irritating that 'temporary trustees were being replaced every two or three months so that more people could get in on this bonanza and "lick the fat from the pot"'.⁴⁷

Local district administrators, functionaries of the party and the Hlinka Guard played significant roles in the expropriation process. Often, among

applicants seeking spoils, they favoured party members. In Topoľčany, a small group of local party officials transferred most of the 74 expropriated companies to their own relatives, to the wives of the highest-ranking Hlinka guards, to three mayors and to a Catholic priest. In Trenčín, practically all the 247 houses belonging to Jews were transferred to community and party officials.⁴⁸ In 1941, the community office in Modra received a mass of petitions from schools, police stations and local party organizations asking for confiscated Jewish radios.⁴⁹ The order allowing temporary ‘trustees’ to take over houses also roused great interest, as is shown in a petition on behalf of an official in the Slovak railway company: ‘The reason for the request is, that the income of the applicant is so low, that it is not possible for him to marry ... because free apartments are so expensive.’⁵⁰

Numerous staff members in ministries, institutions and offices furthered the process of expropriation—and the deportations too—simply by doing their jobs. Although the term ‘Aryanization’ was used almost consistently, in character the expropriations were essentially ‘Slovakizations’.⁵¹ Claims that spoils of the expropriation should go to ethnic Germans caused conflict between the Slovak and the German governments and rows with the leadership of the German *Volksgruppe* (the German ethnic group organization in Slovakia).

The Slovakian government fulfilled all the economic and military obligations set out in its treaties with Germany, but it was not interested in letting the German Reich establish extensive economic holdings in its territory, nor did it endorse the increasing German influence over its national economy or the strengthening of the German minority. The ethnic Germans tried to pursue various claims, and the leader of their *Volksgruppe*, Franz Karmasin, complained to Himmler himself that everything was going to the Slovaks. After this, Wisliceny created a Slovak-German Commission within the CEO to clarify controversial cases. With a policy of ‘rubber walls’, the Slovaks thwarted the expectations of the *Volksgruppe*.⁵² The Germans wanted ‘their share’ of the expropriated houses and temporary trustee positions too. They ended up with about 8.3 per cent of the Jewish property.⁵³

By and large, the expropriation process failed to ‘feed Slovak society with Jewish property’⁵⁴ as had been promised. Corruption and systematic illegal practice affected the whole process. Moreover, there were negative effects on the national economy. The Slovak banks ‘were seriously affected by the negative effects of Aryanization because repayment of loans to the Jewish owners for their Aryanized property was entirely voluntary’.⁵⁵ Nor

did many of the ‘Aryanizers’ ever pay in full the (quite low) ‘liquidation value’ of the properties they obtained. For example, a female party member applied for a shop in Vranov nad Topľou, owned by a Jewish woman, with the idea that it would bring her an income, since she was unable to do hard physical work and lacked qualifications for anything else. She succeeded in taking over the shop but never paid the ‘liquidation value’. Even so, after the war, in which the shop was destroyed, she demanded four times the sum she should have paid, as compensation.⁵⁶

When we examine the motives of the population as a whole, the influence of anti-Semitism has to be taken into account. Popular acceptance of ‘the conception of the collective “us” and “them”, or more exactly “us” versus “them”’⁵⁷ had been officially encouraged long before 1938. The HSLs’s ‘populist anti-Semitism’⁵⁸ was cast as national, political and economic anti-Semitism, based on religious prejudice. As Miloslav Szabó states, ‘the anti-Jewish mood of the Slovak population became a decisive factor of differentiation within the emerging Slovak political landscape.’⁵⁹ From the end of 1938, these ‘main tendencies of modern Slovak anti-Semitism were ... merged’.⁶⁰

But a person did not have to be an anti-Semite in order to participate in the robberies. The main motives were avarice, the chances of getting hold of bargains by ‘legal’ looting, and the openings offered for climbing up the social ladder. The petitions in which Slovaks applied for Jewish properties reveal an undisguised readiness to benefit from the opportunities offered by the state as it went about the expropriation.⁶¹ It would, nevertheless, be too simplistic to explain the robberies as merely due to economic motives. We need to consider not only people’s desire for personal enrichment, but also a long-existing inner impulse to reject Jews and deny them an equal place in society. In the end, it was this which enabled the applicants to seize Jewish property without qualms.⁶²

This non-acceptance of Jews was a significant factor when it came to the deportations in 1942. By and large, Slovak society supported, or at least tolerated, the deportations. They were directly fostered by all levels of government and local administration. The highest authorities were informed early on what the ultimate fate of the deportees would be. Tiso, for example, had known about the killings of Jews in Šitomir since the end of 1941 and in 1942 had received a letter from an escaped deportee telling him what was happening.⁶³ He vindicated the deportations publicly in August 1942, invoking ‘self-love’, which ‘commands me to remove ... everything that damages me or that threatens my life. I don’t think I need to convince anyone that the Jewish element threatened the life of Slovakia.’⁶⁴

The Slovak state agreed to pay 500 RM for each deportee, to ‘cover’ pretended accommodation and food, but insisted on a German promise that the Jews would never come back.⁶⁵ The government had not planned their annihilation from the start, but took its decision with open eyes when the Germans offered it the chance. The distribution of the possessions of the victims was still being negotiated between Germany and the Slovak Republic long after the murders had been accomplished. Ultimately, they agreed on a territorial arrangement.⁶⁶

The robberies continued in the Slovak deportation camps and trains. Looting from secured houses and flats happened quite frequently. Institutions, museums and professional associations all put in applications for the looted belongings of the Jews.⁶⁷

Work permits became extremely important for Jews—both so that the lucky possessors could earn a living, and as documents that could help them avoid deportation. For historians, they also raise the suggestion that some Slovaks may have been taking up these last remaining legal opportunities to protect Jews. In the archives, we can find a good many requests by Slovaks asking for work permits for Jews. It is difficult to say whether, and to what extent, such requests were driven by compassion, because the applicants could only express officially acceptable reasons, usually economic in nature. Thus we find dispossessors from Kežmarok complaining about refused work permits and predicting financial ruin for their businesses if run without their ‘most important experts’.⁶⁸ On the other hand, many dispossessors, like the one who took over the Steiners’ bookshop in Bratislava, listed the former Jewish owners and their families for deportation, as they were now able to seize the stolen goods without the lawful owner being there to hold them back.⁶⁹

In the summer of 1942, public opinion changed somewhat, both over the war and concerning the deportations. The deportations became ‘unpopular within ... society’.⁷⁰ Soldiers from the Eastern Front spoke about mass killings of Jews in the Soviet Union. Slovak troops had themselves taken part in at least one of them.⁷¹ Rumours that the deported Jews would ‘be boiled to soap’⁷² spread in popular gossip and were known to politicians too.⁷³ People could witness for themselves cruel scenes in the local deportation centres:

The Hlinka guards took all the valuables off the Jews. ... They were beaten by the guards at every opportunity ... Furthermore, the Slovaks say, what has happened to the Jews will not remain unavenged and, one day, they will all have to pay for it.⁷⁴

This change in popular opinion did not bring about any broader solidarity with Jews among Slovaks, since general society had excluded them long before the turn of events in 1942. But the change does show that, while the expropriations were mostly regarded as ‘fair’ measures, the gratuitous ill-treatment and the deportations that followed was seen as inhuman.

From September 1944, the persecution of the Jews was under the control of the Germans, though supported by Slovak helpers and by the ethnic German *Freiwillige Schutzstaffel*. All exemptions were abolished: 12,000 Jews were deported to Auschwitz or other concentration camps, and more than 2,000 were killed on Slovak soil. The Slovak government wished to imprison all Jews within the national boundaries, but Himmler insisted on their deportation to German concentration camps.⁷⁵ After receiving protests from the churches and a rebuke from Pope Pius XII, Tiso wrote a letter to the pope, attempting to justify these actions:

[We] did not undertake the incriminated actions against the Czechs and Jews because of their nationality or race, but from a duty to defend our nation against enemies that for centuries have operated destructively in our midst ...⁷⁶

The plunder of Jewish assets continued right up to 1945. A lot of Jews in hiding were denounced—mostly when they were no longer able to pay those who were helping them, but sometimes out of pure hatred, as in the case of Evá Bäckerová’s family, who were betrayed and deported.⁷⁷ Alica Ressler reports that they had hidden in a farmer’s house for two weeks. Some weeks later, he let them hide in his house again, but, when their funds ran out, the same farmer betrayed them to the police.⁷⁸

OFFERS OF SOLIDARITY AND HELP, AND THE MOTIVES BEHIND THEM

Any help offered to Jews during these years came largely from isolated actions of individuals or smaller groups. It is very difficult to find criticism of the systematic expropriations of ‘Aryanization’ openly expressed, or statements from people refusing to participate. However, there are a few examples we know of where non-Jews offered some solidarity to Jews suffering from these policies. In Zvolen, for example, around 104 Slovaks petitioned against the expropriation of the local watchmaker, Vojtech Štromf. He was, they said, the only watchmaker in the region, a man valued for his skill

and reliability. Despite this petition, he was deported to the Lublin district in June 1942 and perished. The First Aryanization Law (as it was called) offered the opportunity of ‘voluntary Aryanization’, and a Christian Slovak called A. Filadelfi used this as a loophole to help the Vig family. In a fictitious act of ‘Aryanizing’, he took over 55 per cent of their business and, in 1942, the whole enterprise, in this way saving the Jewish owners from deportation. He gave the business back to them in 1946.⁷⁹

When the deportations started, only a few people made active attempts to save Jews from being taken away. The rescue attempts that were made ranged from hiding Jews, helping them escape to Hungary, providing work permits for them and, in the case of priests, baptizing them into the Christian religion.⁸⁰ From the records, we can identify a small group of altruistic helpers. For example, some farmers rescued the eight-month-old Ivan Kamenský, without asking for payment (to protect him, they dressed him up as a girl) and a Slovak family working in a health clinic hid Evá Bäckarová up until 1944.⁸¹ But many survivors do say that their rescuers were often very poor and needed to be paid, so they could afford to feed the Jews they were helping out.

Several institutions also got involved in helping Jews. The Jewish Code and the Constitutional Law of 1942 laid down the criteria for ‘exemptions’—cases in which Jews could be spared the force of the anti-Jewish laws. There were exemptions for Jews who had been baptized, or were economically important, or who were married to Christians. Exemptions issued by several ministries became life-saving documents accorded to 3,800 Jews, and they included their closest family members. Thus more than 12,400 people could be saved—at least until the autumn of 1944. In August 1942, Tuka ordered verification of these exemptions. Jozef Sivák, the minister of education, Imrich Karvaš, governor of the Slovak National Bank, and Peter Zaňko, general secretary of the Central Association of Slovak Industries, successfully lobbied the minister of economic affairs, getting him to skip these verifications. Sivák, especially, supported Jews in many ways and committed himself to acts of assistance on their behalf.⁸²

Before 1941, the Catholic Church made no protest against anti-Jewish policies, limiting its criticisms to the racism in the Jewish Code. It kept its focus on baptized Jews and it was not till 1943 that it condemned the deportations openly. But Catholic priests all over Slovakia baptized Jews, and so did Protestant pastors. An example on the Catholic side is the priest Father Šimkovič⁸³; and one on the Protestant side, the pastor Emmerich Varga, who baptized eight Jews. Both were punished. Offers of rescue

did not necessarily result from humane or altruistic ideals; in many cases it seems that they emerged spontaneously on the spur of the moment. Thus survivors also report surprise impulsive gestures from perpetrators: for example, one SS-man let a family escape but shot all the other captured Jews in his charge.⁸⁴

During the deportations in 1944/1945, around 10,000 Jews were able to survive in the Slovak Republic through the assistance and protection of ethnic Slovaks, even though their helpers now had to fear the death penalty. Many questions about Slovaks' motives for helping Jews remain unanswered. Beyond doubt, the social setting in the nation had changed: the war was lost and the future of the state could no longer be taken for granted. Moreover, the Slovak population itself was now experiencing acts of violence from German SS troops. The image of the Jew as the 'worst enemy' of the Slovaks no longer seemed sustainable when civilians were faced with an enemy like this. There had been something of a change in attitude when the deportations were carried out in 1942, and this too may have deepened when knowledge spread about the nature of the Holocaust.⁸⁵

Though, at this time, some Slovaks did help Jews for humane and altruistic reasons, scholars have doubts whether these late rescue attempts really do indicate any general change in the Slovak attitude towards Jews or the way they had been treated. Post-war events, such as the pogrom in Topoľčany on 24 September 1948, would seem to show otherwise; and the few Jews who returned from the concentration camps were met with a prevalent anti-Semitism. The survivor and ethnologist Peter Salner has even called the treatment of these returnees 'the Holocaust after the Holocaust'.⁸⁶ It is, therefore, difficult to be make a trustworthy judgement.⁸⁷

CONCLUSION

In the Slovak Republic the persecution of the Jews was deeply influenced by the objectives of the ruling HSLŠ party and by the influence of the 'protecting' power, Germany. The dynamic of persecution changed during the war, and accelerated decisively between the summer of 1940 and the autumn of 1942, causing the pauperization, and finally deportation, of the Jewish community. The state and its many authorities must be seen as the main perpetrators. It was the state that initiated the persecution measures, gained from them, and willingly organized the deportations, when the opportunity was given.

However, broad sections of the population also supported the expropriation of the Jews. Some called for it, while many more were proactive in participating and gaining from it. Many were driven by the chance of improving their social status. Anti-Semitism had long been prevalent within society and may well have been the background reason for the easy acceptance and compliance the general population gave to the isolation and segregation of Jews.

Later, this turned to callousness in the face of their extermination. Though there was a slow growth in reluctance to countenance the deportations in 1942, this did not lead to clear-cut rescue activities. Parts of society benefited from the deportations—people had acquired businesses from Jewish owners and were sometimes glad to see them got out of the way. The rescue activities that did take place came often from the isolated actions of altruistic individuals—though, surprisingly, some rescues were organized by those who seemed indifferent. In 1944/1945, there was something of a change. Many Jews in the last stages of the deportations were rescued through the support of non-Jewish Slovaks. As yet, the motivations behind this altered attitude cannot be answered clearly. But, at this time, the war was approaching its end and the social settings that enabled the Holocaust were dramatically dissolving.

Without doubt, the persecution of the Jews was among the central ideological goals of the ruling HSELS and the Slovak state. The ‘Aryanization’ process developed into a comprehensive transfer of assets in Slovakia, and ultimately ended in the systematic deportation and murder of most of the expropriated Jews. There was consensus with Germany on the anti-Jewish policy, but the Slovaks also insisted on sticking to their own ideas and protecting what they saw as their national interests against German demands. In this, they had a certain room for manoeuvre, as shown in the stop put to deportations in 1942 and in the ‘disadvantage’ ethnic Germans faced in trying to profit from the expropriations.

NOTES

1. B. Weichherz, ed. and trans. D. H. Magilow (2008) *In Her Father's Eyes. A Childhood Extinguished by The Holocaust* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press Piscataway), p. 146.
2. R. Hilberg (1992) *Perpetrators, Victims, Bystanders. The Jewish Catastrophe 1933–1945* (New York: Harper).
3. F. Bajohr and A. Löw (2015) ‘Tendenzen und Probleme der neueren Holocaust-Forschung. Eine Einführung’ in F. Bajohr and A. Löw (eds)

- Der Holocaust. Ergebnisse und neue Fragen der Forschung* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag), pp. 9–30, here p. 11.
4. Bajohr and Löw (2015) ‘Tendenzen und Probleme’, pp. 9–30, here p. 11.
 5. J. K. Hoensch (2000) ‘Die Slowakische Republik 1939–1945’ in H. Lemberg et al. (eds) *Studia Slovaca. Studien zur Geschichte der Slowakei und der Slowaken. Festgabe zu seinem 65. Geburtstag* (Berlin: Oldenbourg), pp. 221–47; I. Kamenec (1992) *Slovenký štát* (Prague: Anomal), pp. 41, 138.
 6. T. Tönsmeier (2003) *Das Dritte Reich und die Slowakei 1939–1945. Politischer Alltag zwischen Kooperation und Eigensinn* (Paderborn: Schöningh Verlag), pp. 320 ff.
 7. Tönsmeier (2003), *Das Dritte Reich*, p. 155.
 8. M. Dean (2008) *Robbing the Jews. The Confiscation of Jewish Property in the Holocaust 1933–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 378 ff.
 9. F. Bajohr (2002) ‘“Arisierung” und Restitution. Eine Einschätzung’ in C. Goschler and J. Lillteicher (eds) *‘Arisierung’ und Restitution. Die Rückerstattung jüdischen Eigentums in Deutschland und Österreich nach 1945 und 1989* (Göttingen: Wallstein), pp. 39–59, here p. 39.
 10. L. Herbst (2004) ‘Banker in einem prekären Geschäft. Die Beteiligung der Commerzbank an der Vernichtung jüdischer Gewerbetätigkeit im Altreich 1933–1940’ in L. Herbst and T. Weihe (eds) *Die Commerzbank und die Juden 1933–1945* (München: Beck), pp. 74–137; I. Loose, C. Kreuztmüller and B. Nietzel (2004) ‘Nazi Persecution and Strategies for Survival. Jewish Businesses in Berlin, Frankfurt am Main, and Breslau 1933–1942’, *Yad Vashem Studies* (2011) 39/1, 31–70; I. Loose (2015) ‘Massenraubmord? Materielle Aspekte des Holocaust’, in Bajohr and Löw, *Der Holocaust*, pp. 141–64, here p. 157.
 11. E. Nižňanský (1999) *Židovská komunita na Slovensku medzi československou parlamentnou demokraciou a slovenským štátom v stredoeurópskom kontexte* (Prešov: Universum); Ľ. Hallon (2007) ‘Arizácia na Slovensku 1939–1945’ in *Acta Oeconomica Pragensia* 15/7, 148–160, here 149 ff.
 12. 63/1939 Slovak Law Code (Slovenský zákoník, Sl.z.).
 13. 40/1940 Sl. z.; 113/140 Sl.z; Hallon (2007) ‘Arizácia’, 150–2.
 14. 210/140 Sl. z.; 203/1930 Sl. z.; Hallon (2007) ‘Arizácia’, 152–6.
 15. J. M. Ward (2013) *Priest, Politician, Collaborator. Jozef Tiso and the Making of Fascist Slovakia* (Ithaka: Cornell University Press), pp. 214 ff.
 16. Tönsmeier (2003) *Das Dritte Reich*, pp. 139 ff.
 17. 222/1940 S. z.
 18. 233/1940 Sl. z.; L. Hallon, J. Hlavinka and E. Nižňanský (2010) ‘Pozičia Ústredného hospodárskeho úradu v politickom, hospodárskom a spoločenskom živote Slovenska v rokoch 1940–1942’ in J. Hlavinka and E. Nižňanský (2010) *Arizácie* (Bratislava: Stimul), pp. 11–65, here pp. 13–14.
 19. 257/1940 Sl. z.
 20. 303/1940 Sl. z.

21. A. Vašek (1942) *Die Lösung der Judenfrage in der Slowakei* (Bratislava: Globus Verlag).
22. 198/1941 Sl. z.
23. 199/1941 Sl. z.; L. Lipscher (1980) *Die Juden im Slowakischen Staat* (München, Wien: Oldenbourg), pp. 77–78; I. Kamenec (2007) *On the Trail of Tragedy* (Bratislava: Hajko & Hajkova), p. 170 (translated from the original Slovak book published under the title *Po stopách tragédie* in 1991 in Bratislava); Hallon (2007) *Arizácia*, p. 155.
24. 130/1941, 153/1941 Sl.z.; E. Nižňanský, I. Baka and I. Kamenec (eds) (2004) *Holokaust na Slovensku, Vol. V, Židovské pracovné tábory a strediská na Slovensku 1938–1944* (Bratislava: NMS–ŽNO-VHU), Doc. 41, 50, p. 308.
25. Tönsmeier (2003) *Das Dritte Reich*, pp. 143, 157.
26. Nižňanský, Baka and Kamenec (2004) *Holokaust na Slovensku*, Vol. V, doc. 54, 64; Tönsmeier (2003) *Das Dritte Reich*, p. 143.
27. D. Pohl (2011) *Die Herrschaft der Wehrmacht: Deutsche Militärbesatzung und einheimische Bevölkerung in der Sowjetunion 1941–1944* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag), pp. 149 ff.; S. Friedländer (2006) *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden 1939–1945, Vol. II, Die Jahre der Vernichtung* (München: Beck), pp. 262 ff.; S. Berger (2013) *Experten der Vernichtung: Das T4-Reinhardt-Netzwerk in den Lagern Belzec, Sobibor und Treblinka* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition), pp. 24 ff.
28. Nižňanský (2005) *Holokaust na Slovensku, Vol. IV, Dokumenty nemeckej proveniencie* (Bratislava: NMS–ŽNO-VHU), doc. 25, 27.
29. Lipscher (1980) *Die Juden im Slowakischen Staat*, pp. 99–199; Nižňanský (2005) *Holokaust na Slovensku*, Vol. IV, doc. 28, pp. 579–97; Kamenec (2007) *On the Trail*, pp. 196 ff.
30. Lipscher (1980), *Die Juden im Slowakischen Staat*, pp. 129 ff.; Tönsmeier (2003) *Das Dritte Reich*, pp. 152–4; E. Nižňanský (2005) *Holokaust na Slovensku. Vol. VII Vzťah slovenskej majority a židovskej minority. Náčrt problému* (Bratislava: NMS–ŽNO-VHU), p. 97.
31. Hallon (2007) *Arizácia*, pp. 156–8.
32. Nižňanský, Baka and Kamenec (2004) *Holokaust na Slovensku*, Vol. V, pp. 305–29.
33. Lipscher (1980) *Die Juden im Slowakischen Staat*, pp. 152–3.
34. L. Šindelářová (2013) *Finale der Vernichtung. Die Einsatzgruppe H in der Slowakei 1944/1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft), pp. 81 ff.
35. *Slovák*, 7.2.1939; H. Klamková (2010), ‘Slovakizácia židovského majetku: proces zainteresovania slovenskej spoločnosti na tzv. židovskej otázke’ in E. Nižňanský and J. Hlavinka (eds) *Arizácie* (Bratislava: Stimul), pp. 113–41, here pp. 116–17.

36. G. Aly (2005) *Hitlers Volksstaat. Raub, Rassenkrieg und nationaler Sozialismus* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag).
37. Ward (2013) *Priest, Politician, Collaborator*, p. 221.
38. 68/1942 Sl. z.
39. Hallon (2007) *Arizácia*, p. 156.
40. Hallon, Hlavinka and Nižňanský (2010) 'Pozícia', p. 63.
41. J. Hlavinka and I. Kamenec (2014) *The Burden of the Past: Catholic Bishop Ján Vojtaššák and the Regime in Slovakia 1938–1945* (Bratislava: DSH), pp. 57 ff.
42. Tönsmeier (2003) *Das Dritte Reich*, p. 158; Ward (2013) *Priest, Politician, Collaborator*, pp. 221–2; on Augustín Morávek, see St. Mičev (2010) *Augustín Morávek: Od arizácii k deportáciám* (Banská Bystrica: Múzeum Slovenského Národného Povstania), pp. 105–7.
43. Hallon, Hlavinka and Nižňanský (2010) 'Pozícia', pp. 49 ff.
44. Hallon (2007) *Arizácia*, pp. 154.
45. *Slovák* 17.7.1942, cited in Lipscher (1980) *Die Juden im Slowakischen Staat*, p. 70.
46. M. Trančík (1996) *Zwischen Alt- und Neuland: Die Buchhändlerfamilie Steiner in Preßburg* (Bratislava: PT), pp. 227–8.
47. Nižňanský (2005) *Holokaust na Slovensku*, Vol. VII, p. 95.
48. E. Nižňanský (2012) *Piešťany a Trenčín v čase Holokaustu* (Piešťany: Mesto Piešťany), pp. 188 ff.
49. Štatný archív v Bratislave, pobočka Modra (ŠABp Modra), Židia, box 50.
50. Slovenský národný archív (SNA), ÚHÚ, box 22.
51. Klamková (2010) 'Slovakizácia', p. 118; Dean (2008) *Robbing the Jews*, p. 318.
52. Lipscher (1980) *Die Juden im Slowakischen Staat*, p. 69; T. Tönsmeier (2003) 'Der Raub jüdischen Eigentums in Ungarn, Rumänien und der Slowakei' in C. Goschler and P. Ther (eds) *Raub und Restitution. 'Arisierung' und Rückerstattung jüdischen Eigentums in Europa* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag), pp. 73–91, here p. 77; J. Kokorák (2013) *Die deutsche Minderheit in der Slowakei 1918–1945. Die Parteienlandschaft im Spannungsfeld zwischen deutschungarischer Tradition und deutsch-national(sozialistischem) Gedankengut* (Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač), pp. 259–74.
53. Kokorák (2013) *Die deutsche Minderheit*, p. 271.
54. H. Kubátová (n. d.) 'Popular Responses to the Plunder of Jewish Property in Wartime Slovakia', http://www.academia.edu/5219882/Popular_Responses_to_the_Plunder_of_Jewish_Property_in_Wartime_Slovakia, last accessed 5 November 2015; see p. 119.
55. Ľ. Hallon (2008) 'The Role of the Commercial Banks in Aryanization in Slovakia 1939–1945', *Historický časopis* 56, Supplement, 75–92, here 77.

56. Kubátová (n. d.) 'Popular Responses', p. 123.
57. H. Klamková (2010) 'The Universality of anti-Semitism and the Uniqueness of the Holocaust: Slovakia as Case Study', *Historický časopis*, Supplement, 83–120, here 90.
58. M. Szabo (2014) 'Von Worten zu Taten'. *Die slowakische Nationalbewegung und der Antisemitismus 1875–1922* (Berlin: Metropol), p. 19.
59. Szabó (2014) 'Von Worten zu Taten', p. 346.
60. Szabó (2014) 'Von Worten zu Taten', p. 342.
61. Nižňanský (2005) *Holokaust na Slovensku*, Vol. VII, p. 101; Kubátová (n. d.) 'Popular Responses', p. 123.
62. Klamková (2010) 'The Universality of anti-Semitism and the Uniqueness of the Holocaust', p. 104.
63. Ward (2013) *Priest, Politician, Collaborator*, pp. 227 and 234.
64. *Slovák* 18.8.1942. English translation from Ward (2013), *Priest, Politician, Collaborator*, p. 8.
65. Nižňanský (2003) *Holokaust na Slovensku*, Vol. IV, doc. 46, 47, 48. The money was never fully paid to Germany: Lipscher (1980) *Die Juden im Slowakischen Staat*, p. 119.
66. Nižňanský (2003) *Holokaust na Slovensku*, Vol. IV, doc. 55, 57, 58, 62, 67, 68.
67. Kubátová (n. d.) 'Popular Responses', p. 125; SNA, MV, box 178, confiscated belongings 23.3.–7.5.1942; ŠABpM, Židia, box 120, Jewish medical equipment 31.3.1942; SNA, MV, box 215, request for stamp collections Turčianské Svätý Martin 23.3.1942.
68. SNA, MV, box 230, pp. 594–5: request for work permits for Jews 8.4.1942.
69. Trančík (1996) *Zwischen Alt- und Neuland*, p. 228.
70. Nižňanský (2003) *Holokaust na Slovensku*, Vol. IV Doc. 59.
71. Pohl (2011) *Die Herrschaft der Wehrmacht*, p. 285.
72. R. Hilberg (1990) *Die Vernichtung der europäischen Juden* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag), p. 787.
73. Hilberg (1990) *Die Vernichtung*, p. 788; T. Tönsmeier (2004) 'Vom Desinteresse zur Hilfsbereitschaft. Solidarität und Hilfe für verfolgte Juden in der Slowakei' in W. Benz and J. Wetzel (eds) *Solidarität und Hilfe für Juden in der NS-Zeit. Regionalstudien 4. Slowakei, Bulgarien, Serbien, Kroatien mit Bosnien und Herzegowina, Belgien, Italien* (Berlin: Metropol), pp. 15–59, pp. 39–40.
74. BACh, R70 Slowakei/208, pp. 19–20, April 1942; see also A. Hochhäuser (1992) *Zufällig überlebt. Als deutscher Jude in der Slowakei* (Berlin: Metropol), pp. 97–98.
75. Lipscher (1980) *Die Juden im Slowakischen Staat*, pp. 177–80; G. Fatranová (2003) 'Die Deportationen der Juden aus der Slowakei 1944–1945', *Bohemia* 44, 98–117; Šindelářová (2013) *Finale der Vernichtung*, pp. 82 ff.

76. I. Kamenec, V. Prečan and St. Škorvánek (eds) (1992) *Vatikán a Slovenská republika. Dokumenty* (Bratislava: Slovak Academic Press), p. 196 ff, cited in Ward (2013) *Priest, Politician, Collaborator*, p. 255.
77. Ukrývané dieťa Slovensko skupina Košice (2013) *Čo so spomienkami našimi?* (Bratislava: G-ATELIÉR), p. 41.
78. A. Barak-Ressler (2003) *Weine rubig. Eine Geschichte vom Überleben* (Berlin: Berliner Taschenbuch Verlag), pp. 147 ff.
79. E. Nižňanský (2010) 'Arizácie v priesečníku vzťahov slovenskej majoritnej komunity a židovskej minority počas vojny' in E. Nižňanský and J. Hlavinak (eds) *Arizácie v regiónoch Slovenska* (Bratislava: Stimul), pp. 162 ff.
80. Tönsmeier (2004) 'Vom Desinteresse zur Hilfsbereitschaft', pp. 40 ff.
81. Ukrývané dieťa (2013) *Čo so spomienkami našimi?*, pp. 39, 96–7.
82. Tönsmeier, 'Vom Desinteresse zur Hilfsbereitschaft', pp. 44–5.
83. BArch, R70 Slowakei/38, pp. 15–16.
84. Lipscher (1980) *Die Juden im Slowakischen Staat*, pp. 190–3; P. Salner (1997) *Prežili holokaust* (Bratislava: Veda), pp. 70–74; Tönsmeier (2004) 'Vom Desinteresse zur Hilfsbereitschaft', pp. 35–9, 42–3, 56–7; Kokorák (2013) *Die deutsche Minderheit*, p. 252.
85. Salner (1997) *Prežili holokaust*, p. 69; Tönsmeier (2004) 'Vom Desinteresse zur Hilfsbereitschaft', p. 52.
86. P. Salner (2011) 'Židovská komunita na Slovensku' in B. Soukupová, M. Hroch, et al. (eds) *Úvod do antropologie etnických menšin: vybrané texty přednášek magisterského kurzu Fakulty humanitních studií Univerzity Karlovy v Praze* (Praha: Univerzita Karlovy v Praze), p. 75.
87. G. Fatranová (2003) 'Die Deportation der Juden aus der Slowakei 1944–1945', p. 119; I. Kamenec (1998) 'Protizidovský pogrom v Topoľčanoch v septembri 1945', *Acta contemporanea: K pätašedesátinám vilema Prečana* (Praha: Ústav pro Soudobé dějiny ČR), 80–94.

PART IV

Jewish Leadership and Jewish
Councils

Leadership in the Jewish Councils as a Social Process. The Example of Cracow

Andrea Löw and Agnieszka Zajączkowska-Drożdż

The ways in which Jewish Councils (*Judenräte*) reacted to Nazi persecution have been the subject of heated debate ever since they were first created, at the behest of the Germans, in 1939. The Jewish communities they headed often accused the Council officials of collaboration with their oppressors, and sometimes held them responsible for the persecution they experienced, which for a great many ended in annihilation. After the war, the issue was raised again. Did the Councils support the Nazis in executing their programme of degradation and murder—or, at very least, make it easier for them? Dan Michman refers to those who say Yes as the ‘Hilberg School’.¹ In his important, path-breaking book *The Destruction of the European Jews*, which came out in 1961, Raul Hilberg maintained that the Jewish Councils were German tools. In his view, merely by agreeing to work in the Councils, the leaders made themselves part of the German

A. Löw (✉)

Center for Holocaust Studies, Institute for Contemporary History,
Munich, Germany
e-mail: loew@ifz-muenchen.de

A. Zajączkowska-Drożdż

Institute of European Studies, Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland
e-mail: agnieszka.zajaczkowska-drozdz@doctoral.uj.edu.pl

machinery of destruction. Many of the tasks they did to assist the Nazis who gave commands to them were to the detriment of Jewish communities: they created a home register; they organized both ghettoization and forced labour; and they prepared lists for the transports. The Germans used the Jewish Councils and their highly qualified members as tools to complete the complex operations their anti-Jewish policies demanded. The leading members of the *Judenräte* were very useful to them.²

Hilberg, it can be argued, does not make full allowance for the predicament the earlier Jewish leaders were in when the Germans, bringing their anti-Semitic policies with them, invaded the territories where they were settled. When the Jewish Councils were first formed, the leaders adopted a strategy of cooperation with the Germans and set up organized work to assist them, in the hope that by being ‘useful’, the Jewish population would be allowed to survive. Things developed from there, and, ironically, in many cases, the policy of the Councils became closely aligned with German policies. This sad development is at the nub of the problem. Hilberg argues that we should not focus on what the Jewish Councils were at the outset but on what they eventually became.³

Writing in 1962, Hannah Arendt shared Hilberg’s damning view. She even asserted that it would not have been possible to carry out the ‘Final Solution’ on the massive scale it assumed without the active support of Jewish Council leaders like Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski in Lodz. If the Jewish population had remained dispersed, had had no leaders and no organized structure, the Germans would have had a much harder task rounding people up and there would have been fewer victims. For Arendt, the ‘role of the Jewish leaders in the destruction of their own people is undoubtedly the darkest chapter of the whole dark story’.⁴

Starting in the early 1970s, researchers began to enquire into the Jewish Councils in more detail.⁵ They started to examine how the Councils interpreted the situation around them in the confusion of war and occupation, what Council members’ intentions were, and what room they had for manoeuvre. For Isaiah Trunk, a critical moment in any judgement on them is the moment when they learnt the real purpose of the deportations the Germans were ordering and, despite this knowledge, continued to select deportees and get them to the assembly points. Trunk discussed the questions this raises. Should the Councils have informed their people about the aim the deportations had? Should they have participated in the selection of deportees who, they knew, were condemned to die? Were they

really the people who should have been deciding who was to live, and who not? Trunk highlighted how the Council members hoped that their lives and the lives of their families and friends would be spared from extermination. He highlighted too how these leaders believed that, if they were not doing the organizing themselves, the Germans would do it in a much more brutal way. In making selections of deportees, they also wanted to keep the people who contributed most, so that Jewish communities would survive.⁶

Since the 1970s, historians have come to recognize the Councils' efforts at organizing Jewish life and have emphasized that we should not judge the history of the *Judenräte* only from the outcome of events. Their members had no means of knowing what we know today. The Councils' strategies did not succeed, but their leaders were working blindly, and we must take into account the attitudes and intentions they held in the context of their times. Yes, the Jewish Councils failed. Their tactics of bribery, of cooperating and being 'useful' to the Germans, of creating factories to keep Jewish employees and their families safe—all were ultimately useless. But the problem is deeper. Yehuda Bauer reminds us of 'the irresolvable dilemmas these *Judenräte* were faced with'.⁷ The Councils had to operate beyond the 'borders of reason and reality' as Dan Diner has put it.⁸ Placing their hopes on rational action to ensure survival, the Councils, it turned out, were following an illusion. For most Jews, survival was not to be an option, whatever the leaders did.

Jewish Councils might show different patterns of behaviour and adopt different strategies—and some of these have been judged more positively than others. But none of them had any real impact on the course of events or stopped the mass murder the Nazi regime had decided on. The example of German-occupied Cracow demonstrates this. This chapter focuses on the Jewish Council there, and the changes that took place within it over time—especially in the role and characters of the successive chairmen. It asks certain key questions. How did Cracow's Jewish Council react to developments in the Nazis' policy against the Jews? How did it try to organize Jewish life under the terrible new conditions imposed? Was there any room for manoeuvre when the Germans started ordering deportations? And what opinions did others have of the Council? As will be seen, the Germans increasingly reduced the scope of what the Council could do, and, as this happened, the Jewish leaders' ways of dealing with the challenges changed. It is fair to say that both the Council's performance and its integrity went into a downward spiral.

THE JEWISH COUNCIL IN CRACOW BEFORE THE DEPORTATIONS TO BEŁŻEC

Stage One: The First *Judenrat*

On 6 September 1939, the German army entered Cracow (*Kraków*). Within two days, reportedly, *SS-Oberscharführer* Paul Siebert ordered the establishment of a Jewish Council or *Judenrat*.⁹ He gave this order to Marek Bieberstein, a well-respected teacher and activist, saying that he must assume the chairmanship. Marek Bieberstein's brother, the doctor Aleksander Biberstein (his surname differently spelt) wrote the account on which we are relying.¹⁰ According to him, Marek Bieberstein did not want to take the post, but Siebert threatened to have him arrested if he refused, so he gave in. He started looking for fellow Jews who would join the Council, and on 12 September the Gestapo formally announced the Jewish Council's establishment. All Jews in Cracow were to obey it. Bieberstein was the chairman, Wilhelm Goldblatt his deputy, and there were other members. They were held personally responsible for carrying out all orders from the Germans and had to answer to all their demands.

In October 1939, the German occupiers established the so-called General Government in Poland, with Cracow as its capital and Hans Frank as General Governor. Frank got to work quickly. By the end of November he had issued a decree on the establishment of Jewish Councils in key places within his sphere of control. The Council in Cracow was modified to fall in line with the new rulings and was enlarged to 24 members. According to Aleksander Biberstein's account, this *Judenrat* consisted of well-known, highly respected citizens who had been involved in Jewish centres and had contributed much to the community prior to the war. All members were highly educated and had prestige: some were lawyers, some held PhDs, all had proved their worth in getting things done. This was vital, since knowledge of law and social policy was essential for their work—as also was fluency in the German language.¹¹ Henryk Zwi Zimmermann, who worked in the Council's social work section, confirms that members were appointed according to specialist expertise so as to ensure smooth functioning of all they administered.¹² This composition of the Council also gained it a broad acceptance amongst the Jewish population.

From the start, the Jewish Council was faced with an enormously difficult task. It had to organize Jewish life in occupied Cracow and, at the same time, carry out German orders, however harsh the demands. Everything

depended completely on the Germans and their wishes. The Council was subordinated to a department of the Gestapo called the *Judenreferat*. The Council's chairman and deputy—Bieberstein and Goldblatt—were the only Jews allowed to be in direct contact with the Germans. The SS man Siebert had made it clear at the outset that no other Jew was permitted to do so.¹³ These two *Judenrat* leaders, therefore, would meet the occupiers to receive orders and discuss Jewish matters as best they could.

First and foremost, the Jewish Council had to carry out German commands, but it was also responsible for organizing all aspects of Jewish life in Cracow under the extremely difficult new conditions. For both tasks, it built up a complex and extended administration. This had departments for the economy and for taxes, for the care of children and the elderly, for general social welfare, and for schooling—to name but a few of the areas covered. In July 1940, a Jewish police force was established—the *Ordnungsdienst*. Before the war, local Jews had run their own hospital, an orphanage and a home for evacuees, and these too came under the new administration. In short, in Cracow, the Jewish community constituted a small, overcrowded 'city within the city', and the Jewish Council organized its life.¹⁴

Marek Bieberstein was chairman of the Council from the beginning of the occupation until his arrest in September 1940. During this time, he and his colleagues had to deal with a whole range of regulations restricting the rights of Jews. But the situation was made yet more complex by a sudden surge in the numbers under their supervision. This was because (along with Poles) a great many Jews from German-annexed territories were sent to Cracow for 'resettlement'. During the first few months of the war, the population of Jews in the city increased from 56,000 to 68,000. Most of the newcomers arrived without any means of support. Bieberstein and other members of the Council worked hard to help the resettled Jews survive: they created soup-kitchens, night shelters and a sanitary committee; they organized financial support for the homeless and poor.

In public perception, the chairman personified the Jewish Council. He had overall responsibility for its decisions—and, some would say, was accountable for what happened as events unfolded. So it seems appropriate to keep the focus of this chapter largely on Bieberstein and his successors. Unlike many other chairmen of Jewish Councils in occupied Poland, Bieberstein remained a respected personality. He tried to intervene on behalf of the Jewish population when the Germans stepped up their demands—a stance which resulted in his arrest in the summer of 1940.

The crisis behind Bieberstein's attempt at intervention and the German clamp-down was an order from above to expel large sections of the Jewish population from Cracow: according to the order, only 15,000 Jews 'necessary for the economy' were to remain.¹⁵

The Jewish Council tried to bribe the *Stadthauptmann's* representative in the deportation commission, so as to gain permission for more Jews to stay. This particular representative was Eugen Reichert, an ethnic German (*Volksdeutscher*) who wanted to profit from the Jews' miserable situation. With Bieberstein, he settled on a sum of money. However, someone denounced them. Reichert was arrested and, with him, five Jews including Bieberstein. Bieberstein was sentenced to 18 months in prison. At the legal proceedings in September 1940, he said:

I was aware of the illegality of my behaviour. ... If I, despite this, consciously acted against [the law], then I did so because I believed that in this manner I (as chairman) could best help my fellow members of the Jewish race.¹⁶

It is quite clear that the first Jewish Council in Cracow was composed of men whose aim was to help the people under their charge. They wanted to make life for Jews in Cracow as bearable as possible, and did all they could to organize the life of the community and minimize hardships. In his memoir, Aleksander Biberstein praises the first *Judenrat* as an institution composed of ethical and selfless individuals who wanted to protect the Jewish population and its moral values from the actions of the Nazi authorities. To this end, its members were willing to risk their own health and their own lives.¹⁷ As we have seen, their chairman tried to prevent the first deportations—the removal of thousands of Jews from Cracow—and ended up in prison. In June 1941 he was transferred to a prison in Tarnów. When he was eventually released, now with serious heart problems, he had to live in the Cracow ghetto, which was subsequently liquidated. He was transferred to Płaszów concentration camp and murdered there in 1944.¹⁸

Stage Two: Rosenzweig's Dilemma

Bieberstein's successor as chairman of Cracow's Jewish Council was selected by the *Stadthauptmann* of the city in the autumn of 1940. This new leader was the lawyer Artur Rosenzweig, who held the post until June 1942. During his time in office, the situation for Jews deteriorated dramatically. On 3 March 1941, the Nazi governor, Otto Wächter,

announced that a ghetto must be established. The quarter selected was the impoverished district of Podgórze, and the Council was faced with the near-impossible task of finding housing for everyone and organizing the community all over again, but under new and much harsher conditions.

Tadeusz Pankiewicz ran a pharmacy within the ghetto's borders during the whole period of its existence, and many of the ghetto-dwellers came there and talked to him about their predicament and about the actions of the Jewish Council. His pharmacy was on the *Plac Zgody*, which became the collection point for deportations, so he witnessed all that as well. His intimate knowledge of the community and its affairs makes his memoirs very interesting. According to Pankiewicz, Rosenzweig, who had been one of the leading lawyers in Cracow before the war, was an intelligent and very decent man. The duty of being chairman of the Council was a burden to him. Describing the ghetto-dwellers' attitude to Rosenzweig, he writes:

The president [chairman] was reproached for lack of action and decisiveness and for his uncompromising attitude to the different reasoning of his closest collaborators. This was explained by his apathy, resignation and his feeling of impotence against the super-power, negating his faith in the efficacy of any efforts. He was blamed for the lack of activity, and also lack of appeasement towards different views of his closest associates. People explained his behaviour [as due to] apathy, resignation and powerlessness against the violence, which took away from him any faith in the effectiveness of any efforts. He would gladly have resigned from his high position, but he realized the danger of such action.¹⁹

The commonly held impression that Rosenzweig's Jewish Council was less active than the first *Judenrat* arose because of the marked deterioration in the Jews' situation from March 1941. People began to think that the Jewish Council was not working hard enough to protect them. It may well be that Rosenzweig was less active and engaged than Bierberstein had been, and he had a different character, but we have to remember what terrible conditions the Germans were now imposing. They had ordered the creation of the ghetto; they were demanding more and more restrictions on people's lives; there was a shortage of food and medicine; and there were many more hindrances put in the Council's way.

The situation only got worse. Mass deportations to the death camp at Bełżec started in June 1941. In the first eight days of that month, the German police carried out a major *Aktion* in the Cracow ghetto. They shot about 150 Jews on the spot and deported others—a figure of between

5,000 and 7,000. As they had done elsewhere, the Germans ordered the Jewish Council in Cracow to supervise the deportations, making sure that Jews assembled at the collection point and that everything went smoothly. Here, the Jewish Council was faced with an entirely new moral challenge. Artur Rosenzweig did not cooperate to the extent the Germans wanted. We know very little about his thoughts and tactics, since no speeches are documented and there are no extant private papers in which he reflects on his fate or explains his actions. But he was clearly unwilling to obey the new German orders. According to Aleksander Biberstein, the *Judenrat* already knew that Bełżec was a death camp. We cannot verify this and do not know quite what concrete information had got through to them. Biberstein claims that some Polish railway workers had given them word. They had described how trains full of people left a siding, how the rail track then went into the forest, and how, after a short while, the trains came back empty. Whatever lay behind Rosenzweig's hesitancy, the Germans thought he was not organizing the deportations to Bełżec with enough zeal, and he was himself deported and murdered in June 1942.²⁰

A Comparison: Managing the Deportations in Lodz

In subsequent debates about Jewish Councils everywhere, the question of how they behaved when it came to deportations has always been crucial. It is, therefore, worth putting the developments in Cracow in perspective by comparing them with how Jewish Councils dealt with similar challenges elsewhere in Poland.

A famous example of outright cooperation with deportations is the case of Lodz (*Litzmannstadt*), where the *Judenrat* was led by the Elder, Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski. Rumkowski's reasoning was that, in order to avoid the worst from happening, Jews should cooperate. Ever since then, there has been heated controversy about this reasoning and about Rumkowski himself.²¹ There was probably no other Jewish leader who concentrated so much power in his own person. With immense energy, he tried to organize life in the Lodz ghetto and to run it as an economic enterprise. Here we see the head of a Jewish Council who—quite unlike Rosenzweig—overestimated his own role and influence, believing he could keep his ghetto autonomous and control the course of events. In January 1942, deportations were started, with Jews in their thousands being taken to the Kulmhof death camp (*Chełmno*). But Rumkowski continued to cooperate with German orders just as he did before. He wanted

to be sure the Germans would not enter the ghetto to see to the deportations themselves, for he expected them to do it in a much more brutal way than the Jewish administration would. For him, cooperation was a kind of damage limitation.

What were the background factors influencing Rumkowski's thinking at this time? In December 1941, the authorities informed him that they planned to deport 20,000 Jews from the Lodz ghetto. Allegedly these deportees would go to small villages with better living conditions. As for their selection, this was left to Rumkowski and the Council, but the Germans made it very clear, that they would not hesitate to step in themselves, should there be any lack of cooperation. Rumkowski managed to reduce the number of deportees to 10,000—or thought he had—but this was just a temporary concession on the Germans' part. Perhaps they wanted to keep up the idea that Jews could still be saved. This was, of course, mere deception. In a speech delivered on 20 December 1941, Rumkowski informed all in the ghetto that the deportations would take place. Claiming it as a personal achievement, he announced that the planned number of deportees had been halved and that he and his colleagues, not the Germans, were to choose who should go. As the ghetto *Chronicle* reported it:

Through persuasion and request [pleading], the chairman succeeded in having the number of ghetto residents to be resettled reduced by half. The Eldest of the Jews also won permission to decide for himself, on the basis of his authority over the internal autonomy of the ghetto, who is to leave the ghetto.²²

Rumkowski was acting on the assumption that it would be better for the ghetto population if he himself managed the arrangements for the deportations with his own administration. Otherwise there would be brutality and arbitrariness. Also, he wanted to have influence over who would stay in the ghetto and who leave, so as not to endanger the inner stability of what he had built up. He still imagined that the Jewish community could have some autonomy.

The 'resettlement commission' Rumkowski formed faced difficult questions. Should children and the elderly be chosen as the deportees, so that workers in the ghetto factories could stay to do their jobs? Or was it better to chose the strong men in the prime of life, because they would be able to survive resettlement and, maybe, difficult conditions? The members

of the commission did not realize what ‘deportations’ really signified at this stage, so they did not know how to choose. Rumkowski decided to resettle the so called ‘undesirable’ element—people who had had criminal convictions or who were in the main prison (the *Zentralgefängnis*) or who were unemployed and living on social support. Many of the ghetto-dwellers criticized Rumkowski sharply for this decision. People who, out of hunger, had stolen a piece of bread were now to be deported. And, in many people’s opinions, it was Rumkowski who had brought them into this desperate situation in the first place. For the Elder of the Jews, however, the decision was a logical one, and he added to his selection of deportees those who seemed to be opposed to his strategy. Cooperating with the Germans and keeping those who were fit for work, he was trying to secure the survival of the ghetto and as many of its occupants as he could. He did not know that, for most of them, there would be no chance of survival at all. How could he have foreseen what was to come?

By September 1942, the Germans had killed some 70,000 Jews from the Lodz ghetto in Kulmhof death camp. German police had not yet entered the ghetto: at German command, all the selections of deportees had been done by the Jewish administration, and the Jews’ own *Ordnungsdienst* had taken the victims to the Radegast station, from which the trains departed. But in September came the *Aktion* known as the *Sperre*, in which German forces entered the ghetto and carried out the razzia themselves. This *Aktion* was marked by horrific brutality. More than 15,000 children under the age of ten, the sick, and all people over the age of 65 were rounded up and taken to Kulmhof to be murdered.²³

German Determination to Go Through with the Deportations

In Cracow, as we have seen, Artur Rosenzweig reacted to Nazi demands very differently from Rumkowski, and was sent to his death. Whatever resistance he put up, it made no difference. The deportations continued without any changes. This proved to be a typical pattern: if the chairman of a Jewish Council did not work efficiently or refused to obey a German order, he was eliminated, and events just went on as the Germans wanted. They implemented their anti-Jewish policy, come what may.

This pattern can also be seen in the biggest ghetto in German-occupied Poland and the one best known, that of Warsaw. There, the head of the Jewish Council was the engineer Adam Czerniakow. When the Polish mayor of the city first nominated him, Czerniakow wrote in his diary: ‘A

historic role in a besieged city. I will try to live up to it.’²⁴ Yet, once the Germans took over, circumstances prevented any such thing. Up to the summer of 1942, he tried to organize Jewish life in the largest ghetto the Nazis ever set up. But when, on 22 July of that year, they called on him to organize deportations to the Treblinka death camp—including deportations of children—Czerniakow took his own life. This did not deflect the Germans from their plans. Jews still went to their deaths.

This underlines how desperate the situation was for those in the Jewish Councils. There was no way out. Nothing the leaders could do could change the course of events.

Stage Three: Dawid Gutter

In Cracow, it was easy for the Germans to replace Rosenzweig. According to Tadeusz Pankiewicz, Dawid Gutter, who became the chairman’s successor, even approached the Germans during the round-up, talking to them while Rosenzweig was brought to them and deported.²⁵ Gutter was eager to support the Germans and implement their orders with efficiency. He tried to profit from the drastic situation the Jews were in, gaining for himself a kind of social promotion—though only temporarily and at a terrible price. The Germans renamed his position ‘Commissioner of the Ghetto’ and they announced that the *Judenrat* was henceforth to be primarily economic in its nature, due to the structure the ghetto now had, with those fit for work being mainly the ones spared.

Gutter held onto his position as Commissioner right up to the liquidation of the ghetto. Before the war, he had been a salesman, and Pankiewicz describes him as an ‘extremely nervous man, always rushing [about], with uncoordinated movements, clever, glib, energetic and able to follow and execute German orders as well as Spira [the commander of the Jewish police] could, but he was much more intelligent and more critical.’ He seemed to be very proud of being given this position. During the deportations that followed, he was very actively involved in helping the Germans. As Pankiewicz recounts it, ‘he ran crazily from one group of Germans to another, shouting and gesticulating.’²⁶ In the rare cases when Gutter did try to question German policy, he had no success.

Under Gutter’s leadership, with Samuel Streimer as his deputy, Cracow’s ghetto area was reduced. In October 1942, the Germans carried out the second deportation to Bełżec, and they liquidated the ghetto on the 13–14 March 1943. With no advance notice, Gutter received an

order to move all working ghetto-dwellers to the concentration camp at Płaszów. Those not moved there were to be deported the next day.²⁷ Memoirs indicate that Gutter made several attempts to get the authorities to move the deadline, but they would not budge. The last six months in the life of the ghetto were the most brutal in its existence. The Germans' anti-Jewish plans set the framework for this, but Gutter and Streimer seem to have been extraordinarily keen to carry out Nazi orders, giving little thought to their impact on the Jewish population. They carried out their duties in a way that only increased the fear in the Jewish community, and Jews felt bitterly betrayed when they saw their own people join in the Nazi persecution.²⁸

According to the investigations made by Aharon Weiss, the pattern of Jewish leadership in Cracow was a typical one. Weiss distinguishes progressively deteriorating first-, second- and third-stage Jewish Councils. The last were almost universally rated negatively by survivors.²⁹ Nor did those leaders who collaborated with the Germans in the latter stages survive personally. Gutter was aware that the Germans needed him only so long as the ghetto existed, but not any longer.³⁰ He was shot in the Płaszów camp in the summer of 1944, along with Streimer.³¹ As for Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski, the Elder at Lodz, he did not save either himself or his family. He found himself on one of the last trains leaving Lodz for Auschwitz.

CONCLUSION

The judgements on Jewish Councils that dominated historiographical debates when Raoul Hilberg and Hannah Arendt were writing were based on static conceptions of what these Councils were and did. The developments we have seen in Cracow show that such static models make too little of the intricacies in the unfolding situations the Jewish leaders were faced with. We need to analyse the Councils as bodies working within occupied societies, buffeted by the social processes that accompanied war conditions and by the determined anti-Jewish policies of the invaders. And there was ongoing change. The Councils went through various phases. Starting off as though in 'normal times', with firm intentions to help the Jewish communities and support them in all sorts of ways, their aims became deformed due to increased German pressure. They descended into a negative spiral, so that they might end up as bodies whose leadership aimed merely at personal survival.

The three successive chairmen of the *Judenrat* in Cracow were three very different characters and they acted in very different ways in this position. There was a clear development, and it was on the lines Aharon Weiss suggests. While the first chairman strove to help the Jewish community by all means at his disposal, the last one eagerly carried out everything the Germans ordered, obviously concerned with saving his own skin. Between these extremes was Artur Rosenzweig, who was chairman at the critical moment when deportations to the death camp were started up. Rosenzweig did not try to save himself and his family at the expense of his fellow Jews. When he did not organize the deportations in the way the Germans demanded it, he himself was deported and murdered.

Strikingly, in documents Jews have left about Cracow, we find mostly neutral or positive comments about the Council, or no mention at all.³² This is not so in the records of Jewish communities in many other places. Tadeusz Pankiewicz, who knew most members of the Cracow Jewish Council quite well, and in all its various phases, wrote his own balanced judgement on it:

The work in the *Judenrat* was very hateful for conscientious people. It was [not] easy to carry out orders against one's will, to circumvent the law, to play for delays, to quietly and tactfully convince the multitude of people that the *Judenrat* did not issue any orders but, under duress, merely obeyed the Germans' demands. Many people looked with a jaundiced eye at the *Judenrat* activities in the ghetto, although they could not reproach its members—except, of course, in a few cases—with any concrete evidence. After the war I repeatedly heard the opinion expressed that those who held the so-called 'higher positions' should have resigned. Forgotten was the fact that resignation from such a position was tantamount to signing one's death warrant, including [one's] family. After all, someone had to occupy these positions. Was it not better that the majority of the *Judenrat* were fair people—that in their places there might have been appointed characters in the service of the Germans, as ... sometimes happened?³³

The history of Cracow's *Judenrat* confirms the findings of recent historiography on Jewish Councils which we presented at the beginning of this chapter. Dramatic changes in the German anti-Jewish policy influenced the behaviour and attitudes of its members. As options to influence things for the good were progressively closed down, the body changed from an institution trying to help the Jewish community to one blindly executing German commands. This development was also connected with changes

in the leadership taking responsibility. The first Jewish Council in Cracow was composed of highly distinguished men, most of whom had been very active in Jewish communities before the war broke out: they were well-known individuals with great authority, and others trusted them. The institution they founded remained intact, but some of the personnel changed—particularly the three chairmen, who had quite distinct characters. Following the extreme radicalization of their anti-Jewish policy, the Germans needed much more compliance in the Council's leadership. They wanted not competence or individuality, but a willingness to follow orders. So the third chairman was a kind of stooge, having neither the ability nor the remit to organize affairs in the ghetto-dwellers' interests. In a nutshell, the successive chairmen in Cracow offer examples of the whole range of stances Jewish leaders could take up.

It needs stressing that the Jewish Councils had no power to put a brake on the overall policy the Germans had for the Jews. However, depending on their leadership, they could help individuals—or do them harm. At the beginning of the war, it was much easier to help. After a while, however, Jewish officials everywhere were put in a terrible moral dilemma. Boxed in by the situation forced on them, they were faced with 'choiceless choices' (in Lawrence Langer's phrase) in which no 'right' decision was possible: they could not even guarantee their communities' survival. For a long time, neither the Council officials nor the general population knew what the early anti-Jewish measures would lead to. They did not have the foreknowledge to interpret them. At the time, it seemed logical to organize Jewish life under the conditions of occupation as humanely as they could and cooperate with the Germans to minimize the brutality Jews were exposed to.

'Choiceless choices' were indeed all they had at their disposal against the general trend. Different lines of approach did not have any impact on the broad course of events. If a chairman of a Jewish Council did not 'cooperate' in the way expected, if he did not carry out orders with the efficiency required, the Germans simply replaced him. This is what they did in Cracow. In Warsaw, the chairman of the Jewish Council committed suicide, but deportations to Treblinka were set in motion just the same.

However, at another level, choices *were* made. The example a Council chairmen set and the way he presented the anti-Jewish measures to those in his charge certainly made a difference to Jewish communities and to individuals within them. So it is not irrelevant that there were chairmen who seem to have got morally lost. There were some whose conduct has

drawn widespread condemnation. In Lodz, Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski told his people that no one would be deported from the ghetto who had not deserved this fate because of bad behaviour or laziness. Jews have had harsh words to say about this, after the war. Dawid Gutter, the third Cracow chairman has been judged very negatively as well. Both these men tried to use the occupation and the terrible conditions of ghetto life to better their own social position. As they did so, they moved into the moral area Primo Levi referred to as ‘the grey zone’.

But it was the German tyranny that set the frame and brought the Councils to this sorry condition. We need to keep this in mind when we discuss the social dynamics that drove the Jewish Councils’ decisions and ultimately drew them into the machinery of the Holocaust.

NOTES

1. D. Michman (1998) ‘“Judenräte” und “Judenvereinigungen” unter nationalsozialistischer Herrschaft. Aufbau und Anwendung eines verwaltungsmäßigen Konzepts’, *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 46, 293.
2. R. Hilberg (1961) *The Destruction of European Jewry* (Chicago: Holmes and Meier), p. 666. R. Hilberg (1979) ‘The Judenrat: Conscious or Unconscious Tool’ in B. Gutman (ed.) *Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe 1933–1945* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem), p. 33.
3. Hilberg (1979) ‘The Judenrat’, p. 32, p. 38.
4. H. Arendt (1963) *Eichmann in Jerusalem. A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Viking Press), p. 104, pp. 110–11.
5. For the historiography on the topic up to the beginning of the 1970s, see V. Wahlen (1974) ‘Selected Bibliography on Judenraete under Nazi Rule’, *Yad Vashem Studies* 10, 277–94; and, up to the beginning of the 1980s, A. Weiss (1983) ‘The Historiographical Controversy concerning the Character and Functions of the Judenrats’ in I. Gutman (ed.) *The Historiography of the Holocaust Period* (Proceedings of the Fifth Yad Vashem International Historical Conference, Jerusalem, March 1983) (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem), pp. 679–96.
6. I. Trunk (1972) *Judenrat. The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (New York: University of Nebraska Press).
7. Y. Bauer (2001) *Rethinking the Holocaust* (New Haven: Yale University Press), p. 130; A. Weiss (1977) ‘Jewish Leadership in Occupied Poland—Postures and Attitudes’, *Yad Vashem Studies* 12, 335–65; I. Gutman and C. J. Haft (eds) (1979) *Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe 1933/45* (Proceedings of the Third Yad Vashem International Historical Conference, Jerusalem, April 1977) (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem).

8. D. Diner (1992) 'Die Perspektive des "Judenrats". Zur universellen Bedeutung einer partikularen Erfahrung' in D. Kiesel (ed.) *'Wer zum Leben, wer zum Tod ...? Strategien jüdischen Überlebens im Ghetto'* (Frankfurt am Main, New York: Campus), p. 12.
9. For a detailed history of the Cracow *Judenrat*, see A. Zajączkowska-Drożdż (2015) 'Krakowski Judenrat', *Studia nad Autorytaryzmem i Totalitaryzmem* 37, nr 1, 51–77.
10. Aleksander Biberstein was a doctor in the Cracow ghetto and, while it lasted, ran a hospital there. He participated in the Jewish life of Cracow and observed its last days. His memories were published in a book: A. Biberstein (1985) *Zagłada Żydów w Krakowie* (Kraków: Wydawn. Literackie).
11. Biberstein (1985) *Zagłada Żydów w Krakowie*, pp. 16–17.
12. H. Z. Zimmermann (1997) *Przeżyłem, pamiętam, świadczę* (Kraków: Wydawn. Literackie), p. 93.
13. A. Löw and M. Roth (2011) *Juden in Krakau unter deutscher Besatzung 1939–1945* (Göttingen: Wallstein), pp. 15–17.
14. Biberstein (1985) *Zagłada Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 59; Löw and Roth (2011) *Juden in Krakau*, pp. 17–18.
15. D. Agatstein-Dormontowa (1949/57) 'Żydzi w Krakowie w okresie okupacji niemieckiej', *Rocznik Krakowski*, v. XXXI, Kraków, 1949–1957, p. 197.
16. AŻIH, 218/2, Bl. 6–9; printed in Löw and Roth (2011) *Juden in Krakau*, pp. 37–8.
17. Biberstein (1985) *Zagłada Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 17.
18. Löw and Roth (2011) *Juden in Krakau*, pp. 37–8.
19. T. Pankiewicz (1987) *The Cracow Ghetto Pharmacy* (New York: US Holocaust Museum), p. 49.
20. Biberstein, (1985) *Zagłada Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 57.
21. For a summary, see A. Löw (2006) *Juden im Getto Litzmannstadt. Lebensbedingungen, Selbstwahrnehmung, Verhalten* (Göttingen: Wallstein), pp. 14–19; M. Unger (2004) *Reassessment of the Image of Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem). The newest approach is to be found in M. Polit (2012) *Mordechaj Chaim Rumkowski. Prawda i Zmyślenie* (Warszawa: Centrum Badan Nad Zagłada Zydow).
22. S. Feuchert, E. Leibfried and J. Riecke (eds) (2007) *Die Chronik des Gettos Lodz/Litzmannstadt* (Göttingen: Wallstein), vol. 1, p. 311. The quotation here is from the English translation: L. Dobroszycki (ed.) (1984) *The Chronicle of the Lodz Ghetto, 1941–1944* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press).
23. For the *Sperre* (curfew), see Löw (2006) *Juden im Getto Litzmannstadt*, pp. 292–308.

24. A. Czerniakow, ed. R. Hilberg, S. Staron and J. Kermisz (1979) *The Warsaw Diary of Adam Czerniakow. Prelude to Doom* (New York: Ivan R Dee), p. 76.
25. Pankiewicz (1987) *The Cracow Ghetto Pharmacy*, p. 48.
26. Pankiewicz (1987) *The Cracow Ghetto Pharmacy*, p. 49.
27. Agatstein-Dormontowa (1949/57) 'Żydzi w Krakowie w okresie okupacji niemieckiej', p. 218.
28. Biberstein (1985) *Zagłada Żydów w Krakowie*, pp. 66–7, p. 181.
29. Weiss (1977) 'Jewish Leadership in Occupied Poland'.
30. AŻIH 302/8, T. Pankiewicz, (1987) *The Cracow Ghetto Pharmacy*, p. 180; A. Biberstein (1985) *Zagłada Żydów w Krakowie*, p. 82.
31. Löw and Roth, (2011) *Juden in Krakau*, p. 38 and pp. 140 ff.
32. A remarkable exception is Bernhard Rechnitz, who criticized the Jewish Council sharply for confiscating the Jews' belongings while claiming to help them; USHMM, RG-02.069*1, p. 5.
33. Pankiewicz (1987) *The Cracow Ghetto Pharmacy*, pp. 65–6.

The Role of the Jewish Council During the Occupation of the Netherlands

Katja Happe

In one of his articles, Dan Michman discusses the definition of the term ‘Jewish Council’ and reflects on the problems of using it as a general description of the Jewish bodies established by the German authorities in occupied territories.¹ He argues that ‘headship’ would be a more appropriate term to describe the role and function of these bodies, which were established by the German occupiers to link the Jewish communities with the German command, manage communications, and carry out orders. Regarding the establishment of Jewish Councils and the intentions of the German occupiers, Michman certainly has a point. But a look at the social processes within the Jewish Council in the Netherlands—not mentioned in Michman’s article—and a survey of its communications with its surroundings reveals that (at least here) the term ‘headship’ is too one-dimensional. The present chapter focuses on a complex network of interactions, and analyses the different, shifting positions the Jewish Council in the Netherlands took up, as well as its connections with both the non-Jewish and Jewish environment and, of course, the occupying authorities. In addition, I shed some light on the role the Council had in various social processes during the occupation, and in the deportation of 75 per cent of Dutch Jews.²

K. Happe (✉)

Department of History, University of Freiburg, Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany
e-mail: katja.happe@geschichte.uni-freiburg.de

First I deal with the role and status of Jews in the Netherlands before the war, and their place in the framework of events and ongoing processes. Then I outline the circumstances surrounding the foundation of the Jewish Council. In a third step I review the actions and decisions of the Council during the time of occupation and at the start of the deportations. Finally, I summarize the complex net of self-descriptions and ascriptions attached to different actors during and after the war.

Putting the Jewish Council and its actors at centre stage is still not a very easy task and this chapter cannot provide simple, clear explanations or solutions, but I hope it will throw some light on the problems of categorizing actors in social processes in a too one-dimensional way.

JEWIS IN THE NETHERLANDS BEFORE THE WAR

In the 1930s about 1.4 per cent of the Dutch population was Jewish.³ Most of the Dutch Jews—about 80,000—lived in Amsterdam and they accounted for nearly 10 per cent of the city's inhabitants. Quite a few more lived in other sizeable towns in the Netherlands, and a smaller number resided in rural areas. Since the end of the eighteenth century, Jews had been equal with the rest of the population before the law. In background, some of the Dutch Jews were from Sephardic ancestry, their descendants having come from Portugal; others were descendants of Ashkenazi Jews from Central and Eastern Europe who had fled persecution in their homelands and wanted to participate in the economic prosperity of the Netherlands and enjoy the personal freedom to be found there. Most of them integrated quite easily.

The opening of public schools and the industrialization of the towns and cities made it easier for Jews to be part of Dutch society,⁴ even if this society was characterized by the existence of several social and political 'pillars' that were not of their own making. These 'pillars' divided society horizontally rather than vertically, as has always been more common. By the end of the nineteenth century, the four existing ones were the Catholic, the Protestant, the Liberal, and the Socialist. They largely organized the lives of the citizens who belonged to them. Each had its own respective schools, newspapers, parties, radio stations and youth organizations. There was no Jewish pillar, however, since the Jewish population had an identity too low key to feel the need for its own 'pillar'. Instead most Jews either joined the socialist pillar (since many Jews came from a proletarian, working class background) or the liberal one. Contacts between Jews and

non-Jews were regular, natural occurrences in daily life and work. Hence Jews were not a clearly distinct group within Dutch society, but were seen, and perceived themselves, as normal Dutch citizens with national obligations and duties.

Throughout the 1930s, Dutch politics was characterized by a firm belief in political neutrality and social and religious tolerance.⁵ During World War I, the Netherlands had stayed neutral, and in 1918 the system of parliamentary democracy, with its various social ‘pillars’ was safely intact. Right-wing and anti-Semitic parties had little chance of success in this segmented society, even after the NSB (the Dutch National Socialist movement) was founded in 1931. The NSB was modelled on the Nazi movement in Germany, but though it gained 7.9 per cent of the vote in the elections of 1935, it was strongly opposed by the democratic parties, who were against all fascist ideologies. Its political influence remained minimal and it was more or less isolated within the Dutch political landscape.⁶ Nevertheless, from 1934 there was a growth in anti-Semitism. This affected popular attitudes towards Jews and contributed to the more sceptical, cautious approach people began to take towards this group. The harsh economic situation in the Netherlands, resulting from the world financial crisis, also played a significant role in this development. At first glance, the Netherlands of the 1930s has the appearance of being politically stable. It seems to have represented a pluralist society in which both religious freedom and tolerance towards minorities were highly valued and, through a policy of neutrality, it had successfully prevented participation in wars. A closer look, however, shows that the economic and social problems in the country were leading to a general dissatisfaction with the political system and with the structure of society.

After 1933, Jews in the Netherlands had to deal with this dissatisfaction more frequently and they were forced to handle their ‘Jewishness’ in a way that had not been necessary before. This was caused by the developments in Germany. After the onset of Nazi persecution there, many Jewish refugees sought shelter in the Netherlands, a neighbouring country, and several rescue committees were established to offer support. Two of the biggest and best known committees were the *Comité voor Bijzondere Joodse Belangen* (Committee for Special Jewish Needs) and the *Comité voor Joodse Vluchtelingen* (Committee for Jewish Refugees). Leading members of these committees were the Dutch historian David Cohen and the diamond trader Abraham Asscher. Both of them were to play important roles helping out the Jewish community during the

occupation. When the first waves of refugees entered the Netherlands, it went without saying that the Jewish community would take care of them, and their admission and acceptance in the Netherlands proceeded without much turbulence. As from 1926, Germans had had no need of a visa to enter the Netherlands and many simply moved in, bringing their belongings with them. The country had a fairly similar culture, many people understood the German language, and it was thought sensible to stay close to Germany in the hope of eventual return. In some cities refugees tried to establish a life that resembled their life back home: they established ‘German islands’ where German was spoken and there were German shops.⁷ This clinging to the German *Heimat* made it difficult for some of the refugees to adjust to Dutch society. Thus Wilhelm Halberstam, who arrived in Amsterdam in 1939, wrote in a letter to his daughter in Chile, ‘The Dutch psyche is so different from mine that I can’t even understand the people who like it here.’⁸ In a time of economic worries in the Netherlands, this attitude among some of the Germans—expecting life in Holland to be much the same as their former life—led to critical comments: ‘Our sympathy with the refugees is damaged by those refugees who act unpleasantly, not because they are German *Jews*, but because they are *German Jews*.’⁹ Not all Jewish refugees from Germany tried to stick to their former life. There are examples like the Frank family, who came to the Netherlands in 1933 and tried to assimilate quickly. Otto Frank took over a Dutch enterprise and the daughters, Margot and Anne, attended Dutch schools, spoke Dutch and had Dutch friends.¹⁰ Nevertheless, Dutch politics reacted in the mid-1930s and the arrival of refugees was restricted. In May 1938 the borders were closed. The Dutch government feared a worsening in the economic situation and problems in its contacts with Germany. In 1939, a central refugee camp was founded in Westerbork to host most of those who had come in.¹¹ Only in November 1938, when pogroms took place in Germany and synagogues were burned down, was there some relaxation. Several thousand refugees were allowed to enter the Netherlands at this time. In total, about 50,000 Jewish refugees came to the Netherlands from Germany and Austria between 1933 and 1940. Approximately half of them managed to move on to some other country overseas; about 20,000 stayed on,¹² though, throughout the period, Jewish relief committees tried to arrange emigration for as many people as possible. After the outbreak of war in September 1939, many German refugees feared what the future would bring and intensified their efforts

to leave Europe. Others, along with most of the Dutch population, relied on Dutch neutrality and were convinced that the Netherlands could stay out of the coming conflict, as it had in 1914.

There were internal complications too. Jews from Germany had had direct experience of the Nazi regime, and had much greater apprehensions than their Dutch counterparts. Relations between German and Dutch Jews, which had already been fragile, now put the Dutch Jews in a dilemma: should they help persecuted Jews or should they safeguard their own economic positions and social acceptance? This became a topic of great importance in the years that followed.

THE OCCUPATION OF THE NETHERLANDS AND THE FOUNDING OF THE JEWISH COUNCIL

On 10 May 1940 German forces invaded the Netherlands.¹³ The Queen and her government fled the country and established a government-in-exile in Great Britain. The German army advanced at great speed and Rotterdam was bombed. The Dutch army then capitulated after only five days. With little delay, a German civil administration was established under *Reichskommissar* Arthur Seyss-Inquart. The outgoing government ordered Dutch civil servants to stay in place and continue working. At the highest level, the Dutch civil service therefore agreed to work with the Germans, carrying out their orders, and to collaborate loyally as long as the Dutch constitution was not affected.¹⁴ This accord also set standards for the behaviour of the population. Most Dutch people tried to avoid conflict with the occupiers, so they could continue living their lives as normally as possible.¹⁵

During the first period of the occupation, one of the major goals of the ruling regime was to 'Nazify' Dutch society. The Dutch people were seen as a Germanic nation and it was thought that they would take easily to Nazi ideology. The Dutch reaction was initially quite ambivalent. The small group of Dutch National Socialists approved of the occupation, but the majority of people awaited the next German moves with considerable distrust. The Germans declared that they were not planning to take any measures against Jews in the Netherlands,¹⁶ and this was a relief to many who heard it. The Dutch Jews, especially, thought of themselves primarily as Dutch citizens and could not imagine being regarded as Jews first and foremost. Even so, many were very apprehensive. More than 200 Jews

of Dutch and German origin committed suicide following the invasion,¹⁷ and hundreds tried to escape the Netherlands and get by boat to England or overland to Belgium or France.¹⁸ Those who stayed on, Jews and non-Jews alike, tried to get on with their lives and keep their routines as unaffected as possible. On 19 May 1940, a young Dutch Jewish girl wrote in her diary: 'It's not as bad as all that. The last five days seem to me [to have been] like a nightmare. But now it's business as usual.'¹⁹

Another factor that reassured people and seemed to offer some hope of Dutch social unity and political participation during the early period of occupation was the founding of the *Nederlandse Unie* or 'Dutch Union' in July 1940, an 'umbrella' movement for many different kinds of politically active people. It wanted to embrace everyone and do away with the divisions maintained by the four social and political 'pillars'. As it was based on an acceptance of German victory in Europe, the Dutch Union was at first tolerated by the German authorities and thousands of Dutch people became members. But in the summer of 1941, when the Germans demanded unambiguous support from the Union for the attack on the Soviet Union and backing for their Nazi ideology, the leaders refused to toe the line. The *Reichskommissar* thereupon suppressed the movement. This was at the end of 1941 and it destroyed the hopes many Dutch people had had of an occupation period they could find bearable, with their own political participation and with some Dutch national unity.²⁰

The time in which Jews in the Netherlands could live on unmolested and hope the Germans would not harm them came to an end even before this. As early as the summer of 1940 the first anti-Jewish measures had been imposed. Regarding them as 'temporary administrative measures',²¹ the Dutch administration let them be put in place. Further, more severe measures soon followed: Jewish civil servants were suspended, then dismissed; a definition of who counted as a Jew was issued; and in January 1941 all Jews were required to register.

In February 1941 an event took place that escalated such repression and brought about many changes. Riots between Dutch Nazis and Jews in the Jewish quarter of Amsterdam and an attack on a German police troop led to the first anti-Jewish razzia in the Netherlands and 425 Jews were arrested. In protest at the harsh German reaction, Dutch citizens held a general strike in Amsterdam and there were similar strikes in several other towns. This was on 25/26 February. On the second day, German police and military broke the strikes by force.²² For Dutch

society, the strike became a symbol of resistance, but it only made the German repression a great deal more brutal and increased the Jews' fear of what would happen next. As for the German administration, it became clear to them that their hopes of gradually 'Nazifying' Dutch society were misfounded and that they would have to work more ruthlessly to achieve their goals. Attempts to 'persuade' and 'convince' the Dutch did not seem appropriate any more.

The strike and its suppression were accompanied by the blocking of the old Jewish quarter in Amsterdam to create a ghetto. This was where the riots had taken place and where one NSB member had been killed. The German Commissioner for the city, Hans Böhmcker, took this, along with the strike, as an opportunity to blame and punish the Jews. However, the authorities found it impossible to create a closed ghetto for long. Though a lot of Jews lived in the blocked area, non-Jews lived there too (just as many Jews lived in other quarters of the city), and some of the municipal services were located inside the area. Even with the canal bridges pulled up and police posts blocking the streets, the quarter could not be separated from the rest of the city completely, as in some towns in Eastern Europe.²³ After just one day of blockade, the German Commissioner had to give an order that all traffic could circulate again. Only the signs 'JEWISH QUARTER' marked the area off afterwards, but access was obstructed.²⁴

Another result of the riots and the general strike was the establishment of a Jewish Council. This was done by the Germans. The high-ranking administrators wanted to create a body that would govern the Jewish community and act as a link and pathway of communication between themselves and the Jewish population. On 14 February 1941, the German administration informed the city council that a Jewish Council for Amsterdam was to be set up. David Cohen and Abraham Asscher were appointed the leaders.²⁵ Both were known to the Germans for their work helping Jewish refugees in the Netherlands and they were considered leading figures in the Jewish community. The Jewish Council was originally created to serve the city of Amsterdam alone, but by October of its first year it was having to extend its attentions to the whole country. In an inaugural proclamation, Asscher and Cohen described the aims of the new Council in the way the Germans intended: 'to establish order and quiet', and for Jews 'to keep on working and living as undisturbed as possible'.²⁶ These aims became the main credo of the Council in the years to come.

DECISIONS AND ACTIONS OF THE JEWISH COUNCIL DURING THE OCCUPATION

In the following weeks and months, the Jewish Council grew and became, as the historian and Dutch Jewish survivor Jacques Presser puts it, ‘a state within the state’.²⁷ The body was made responsible for almost every task carried out within the Jewish community and it fulfilled these duties more or less willingly. It organized social life, schools, hospitals and cultural activities. The Jewish Council itself functioned rather like an advisory committee and had approximately ten members working with the two leaders. However, the largest part of what ‘the Jewish Council’ came to mean was a mushrooming organizational apparatus that saw that allotted tasks were done.

In the months following the foundation of the Jewish Council, anti-Jewish measures became stronger and stronger. Jews had to register themselves, their businesses, their property and their capital. In a next step, they saw their businesses liquidated: firms had to be sold to a non-Jew or be closed down altogether. Next they were made subject to money restrictions: they were only allowed to have a small sum at their disposal per month. After a while, Jews were no longer allowed to enter parks, swimming pools, public buildings and restaurants; they could not stay in boarding-houses or hotels. From the beginning of 1942, unemployed Jewish men had to register for labour camps in the Netherlands, where they were set to work draining moorland or toiling in agriculture and forestry projects. In May 1942, the Jews’ isolation in Dutch society was made visible: they all had to wear the Yellow Star. Together, these anti-Jewish measures separated Jewish citizens from others in Dutch society, deprived them of civil rights and rendered them victims of economic exploitation. Within one-and-a-half years of the Germans’ arrival in the Netherlands, the level of persecution of the Jews had risen to be almost on a par with that in the Reich itself.

This was not where it all ended. In July 1942 came the start of deportations. The Nazi regime in Germany had decided to exterminate the Jews from all territories under German control and had discussed the organization of this process—the ‘Final Solution’—at the Wannsee Conference, which took place in January 1942.²⁸

It was at Westerbork transit camp that Jews from the whole country were assembled for almost all the deportations.²⁹ The departure of the first train from there changed the aims and tasks of the Jewish Council. Up to that moment, the purpose of its members and employees had been to promote

the emigration of as many Jews as possible, getting them to safe countries. While only a few succeeded in leaving the country legally, buying their way out with large sums of money or valuables, others took a chance on fleeing illegally at the risk of their lives. All this time, the German authorities kept promoting the possibility of emigration to keep the Jewish community calm. Even with the calls for deportation, they disguised the threat: the deportees were to go to 'labour camps in Germany', no mention being made of the extermination camps in the East, which were the true destination. Already during 1941 and at the beginning of 1942, the Jewish Council was finding it impossible to arrange emigration for more than a few. After the deportations had got going, it did continue efforts to get Jews away, but now it shifted its priorities to preventing deportations and keeping its people inside the country. The Council was trying 'to save at least the most important people as long as possible'³⁰ by requesting exemptions for its own employees, for baptized Jews, for workers in the armaments industry and for other categories the Germans might excuse. For those who could not be absolved, the Council tried its best to offer support as they went to the camps. Ceaseless efforts to get emigration permits and (from July 1942) to save Jews from deportation now defined the Council's work.

In order to get a fuller understanding of the status of the Jewish Council and its role in the social processes of the time, we have to look a little deeper, however. The Council tried to achieve its aims not by rejecting German orders out of hand, but by fulfilling them while gaining small concessions. Even at the time, this strategy was sometimes met with open disapproval. Lodewijk Visser was one of the critics. Visser had been a lawyer at the High Court of the Netherlands and now chaired the Jewish Coordination Commission, a body which aimed to help Jews, voluntarily formed by various Jewish organizations in December 1940. On principle, it was against collaboration with the Germans.³¹ The firm stand on this principle brought Visser and his Commission into collision with the Jewish Council. The correspondence between Visser and his friend David Cohen, now one of the leaders of the Jewish Council, illustrates their diverging opinions.³² In a letter to Cohen dated 18 November 1941, Visser explained his point in a nutshell:

The Jewish Council is anxious to please the occupiers ... in the hope of 'preventing the worst'. ... Maybe the occupiers will reach their aims in the end, but it is our duty as Dutch subjects and Jews to stop them from reaching their goals and to put spokes in their wheels. But you don't do that!³³

Cohen, on the other hand, insisted that the non-confrontational approach of the Jewish Council, which won concessions through cooperation, was the right way. He stuck to this conviction all his life.³⁴ Visser's opposition was known to the Germans and, in October 1941, they ordered the Jewish Coordination Commission to suspend its activities; Visser was banned from offering help to Jews and died soon afterwards of a heart attack. Now the Jewish Council was proclaimed the body exclusively responsible for all Jewish issues and came out of the affair with enhanced importance: there was no other organization to challenge its approach. Nevertheless, comments in personal letters and diaries of the time show that, through the entire period of the occupation, there were those who questioned the Council's way of handling things. In a diary entry for December 1942, Joop Voet, a young accountant, asked incredulously why the Jewish Council did not seem to comprehend what was going on: it was made up of outstanding, clever Jewish men, but they were carrying out German orders instead of opposing them!³⁵ Two years later, Sam Goudsmit, a Jewish author, was making comments along the same lines. In his diary he criticized the submissiveness of the Jewish Council. Its decision to obey German orders had been a severe mistake: the body should have resisted.³⁶ The German authorities, of course, were pleased with the Council's attitude. As *Reichskommissar* Seyss-Inquart himself put it in November 1941, it was convenient to have a body following the Germans' directives and, at the same time, maintaining social control over the Jewish community.³⁷

In his diary entry, Joop Voet touched on an important point when he referred to the social background of the main people in the Jewish Council. Most members of the board, the two leaders and the majority of leading figures in the apparatus for getting things done were highly educated men and belonged to the well-off Jewish bourgeoisie. Proletarians hardly had a say in the Council. Immediately after the body's establishment, Ies Voet, a trade union representative for the diamond-workers, was a working-class member, but he had to resign for health reasons after just a few weeks.³⁸ The views of working people from the Jewish community were thus woefully under-represented and went unheard. Later this meant that Jews from the lower social strata had slimmer chances of avoiding deportation or of getting exemptions: there was nobody to speak up for them.

Jewish refugees from Germany and Austria were faced with a similar problem. They too went more or less unrepresented in the Council. Max Brahn, a philosopher from the University of Leipzig who had come to the Netherlands in the early 1930s, chaired the Advisory Board of Jewish

refugees within the Council, but had no vote in official meetings and thus effectively had no influence.³⁹ Of course there were some exceptions to this exclusion, especially inside the wider organizational apparatus. In 1942/43, Vienna-born Edwin Sluzker, for example, was head of the department called *Expositur*, which cared for all those called up for deportation.⁴⁰ But, in general, Jewish refugees did not play any decisive role in the Council.⁴¹ Because of this, and right from the beginning, the Council missed out on learning about Nazi methods of persecution and patterns of communication from German and Austrian refugees. These refugees would have had a lot to tell, since they had experienced National Socialist measures already, knew about the Nazi regime and its rise, understood its methods of persecution and had an idea of how anti-Jewish measures could develop. Their command of the German language and their cultural communication skills were other benefits the Council failed to make use of in a systematic or appropriate manner. Most of the Council members spoke German, but the refugees' knowledge of cultural attitudes and their ability to communicate in a properly 'German' way would have been an advantage in contacts with the occupying authorities. In contrast to these newcomers, the Dutch Jews in the Council were raised during a long peaceful epoch and had never experienced war, persecution and the need to fight for survival, nor had their right to live in the Netherlands been questioned. They did not appreciate how active resistance to the political regime might have been called for or know how it could help.

In summary the leaders of the Jewish Council opted to obey German orders and stay in communication with the German authorities. Like the Dutch administration, they hoped for some sort of accommodation during the time of occupation. When the deportations started and it became clear that the Jews forced to leave Holland were going to an uncertain destination, this trust was destroyed. But by then it was too late. The Jewish Council was unable to change its attitude. Even as the Holocaust unfolded, the leaders of the Council stuck to their conviction that cooperation and obedience would 'prevent the worst' and would help save Jewish lives.

JUDGEMENT ON THE JEWISH COUNCIL

After the War, many people came to regard the actions and decisions of the Council as collaboration, and there was special condemnation of the two leaders.⁴² To me, this judgement appears too simplistic and one-sided, and I would like to use this section of the chapter to situate the actions and

decisions of the Jewish Council in the highly volatile and confused context of the occupation—a context in which, in Dutch society as a whole, there was no overall consensus on how to react.

First and foremost, all members of the Jewish Council were victims of the persecution. At the peak of its activity, its staff numbered about 10,000—with families included, 30,000—and most were deported and murdered in the extermination camps of Eastern Europe, just like other Jewish inhabitants of the Netherlands. In total, some 75 per cent of Dutch Jews met this fate. Both leaders were deported—Cohen to Theresienstadt and Asscher to Bergen-Belsen. These two men survived the war and when, in the post-war years, the popular (but false) myth had grown that almost all Dutch people had resisted actively,⁴³ many people accused them of having ‘collaborated’ with the Germans. Along with other prominent members of the Council they were pushed into a kind of ‘grey zone’ in which the distinction between victims and perpetrators became rather blurred. This accusation of collaboration is perhaps understandable from the perspective of the survivors. Often, they had lost most of their family members in the Holocaust, and they were looking for someone to blame for the events and decisions that had led to such a catastrophe. From a scholarly view, however, judgement on the Jewish Council’s ‘obedience’ and the decisions made within that framework is neither easy nor clear-cut. I argue that several points need to be taken into consideration before we can make a fair assessment.

1. The Jewish Council was not a single-minded body. In contemporary descriptions, it was often assumed to be one group with one single opinion. Thus, in diaries and letters, people refer to ‘the Jewish Council’ saying or doing this or that. But this fails to reflect the fact that the Jewish Council consisted of several thousand individuals acting in difficult times. Its members frequently advanced different opinions and ideas. Though the two leaders were ultimately responsible for the Council’s actions and were the ones whose relations with the Germans had high visibility, internal letters, diaries and notes from other employees clearly show that different opinions were aired on how to act, or react to German orders.⁴⁴ I have already mentioned the disagreement between Cohen and his friend Lodewijk Visser. When, in May 1943, 7,000 of the people working for the Jewish Council (at that time, half its employees with their families) received deportation orders from the Germans, tension at the

Council offices mounted to an extreme pitch.⁴⁵ Several members threatened to resign—even one of the leaders, Abraham Asscher,⁴⁶ though, after discussions, he stayed on. This case exemplifies how strong the differences could be. Just three months later, in August 1943, leaders of the departments were criticizing the sequence of events. In a note, they demanded that both leaders should provide more exemptions for the workers of the Jewish Council, as ‘they couldn’t fulfil their task with the permanent fear of being arrested and deported with or without their families’.⁴⁷ Ultimately, the Jewish Council acted as a representative of the Jewish community and set an example for the individuals within it, but employees and members themselves acted as individuals. They did not *have* to agree with the decisions of the group. The fundamental question, whether to obey German orders or to resist, had to be answered by all Jews in the Netherlands independently of the decisions and actions of the Council as a group. Each individual (with family members) had to decide whether to follow the call to a ‘labour camp’ or whether to hide and try to survive within the Netherlands, with the constant danger of being betrayed. Even the daughter of David Cohen, who worked for the Jewish Council, did not feel she could rely on the position of her father as protection. In 1944 she decided to go into hiding, while her father was unable to prevent his own deportation to Theresienstadt.⁴⁸ In summary, though the resolutions of the Jewish Council appeared to be the consistent decisions of a united group, a closer look reveals that this was not so.

2. The Jewish Council got no clear lead from non-Jewish Dutch society. True, in an early stage of the occupation, great numbers had supported the February Strike of 1941 in an overt protest against the first anti-Jewish *razzia* in Amsterdam, and underground newspapers continued to urge the Dutch people to help their Jewish fellow citizens;⁴⁹ but, as the occupation wore on, the majority of non-Jewish citizens put up no active resistance to the anti-Jewish measures that came into force. For most people, the danger of helping Jews or hiding them in their own homes was just too great. The Germans had announced severe penalties—imprisonment or banishment to a concentration camp—and their general tactics to control the occupied population were working well: on the one hand, with threats of punishment, they had isolated the Jews from Dutch society; on the other, their show of being ‘courteous’ occupiers took the

wind out of resistance. These tactics made it difficult for most non-Jews to stand out and offer courageous help. Attitudes only changed in 1942/3 when *all* Dutchmen, Jews and non-Jews alike, faced very real chances of being deported to Germany as forced labourers. When, in April 1943, disbanded Dutch soldiers and their officers were herded into captivity to be sent to German work camps, a fresh strike broke out, which again was ended by force.⁵⁰ After this, many Dutch people did offer hiding places to endangered individuals—and this included those Jews still in the country. However, by this stage it was almost too late: most Jews had already been deported. To sum up, neither the Jewish Council nor its members could rely on a broad, diversified resistance or help from the society around.

3. Another factor crucially affecting the decisions of the Jewish Council—indeed, the decisions of everyone—was the way the war was progressing. During its first years, the German army seemed unstoppable. It had occupied whole territories with ease, and German supremacy over continental Europe appeared undisputed. To many in the Netherlands, this made opposition to German orders seem futile. For most Jews, neither escape nor emigration was possible, and there seemed to be little choice but to deal with the German regime. It was only after early 1943, when the Germans suffered defeats and lost the Battle of Stalingrad, that hopes of overcoming their tyranny became realistic. It was then that the attitude of many Dutch people changed. Resistance against the Germans (and this included help for Jews) now fell into a wider strategy of weakening the German grip so as to help bring on victory for the Allies. Shortly after this change occurred, the Jewish Council was dismissed—this was in September 1943—and most of its members, and both of its leaders, were sent to Westerbork and, from there, were deported to various camps. Thus, the change in the course of the war came too late for the Council to adapt to the nation's change of mood.
4. During the occupation, the Germans changed their stated aims and plans, and this too made it difficult for the Jewish Council to react. Going against their previous statement that they were not planning anti-Jewish measures in the Netherlands, the occupation authorities followed new orders from Berlin. These, as we now know, called for the deportation of Dutch Jews and their subsequent extermination in the 'Final Solution'.

CONCLUSION

The aspects I have considered in this chapter make it clear that the decisions and actions of the Jewish Council derived not only from its convictions, but were necessarily determined by the intractable situation facing Jews in the occupied Netherlands. The course of the war, the intentions of the German occupiers, the attitudes of non-Jewish Dutch society, and—not least—individual existential choices of outlook affected the decision-making of the Jewish Council. It had to deal with the interplay of all of these. This makes it difficult to cast judgement.

In summary, I want to stress that the story of the Jewish Council of the Netherlands exemplifies the problems the dynamic social processes put on groups. The Jewish Council is still usually categorized as one coherent body which acted in the situation of its time, torn between influences, orders and expectations coming from the German perpetrators and non-Jewish Dutch citizens on the one hand, and its responsibilities towards persecuted Jews on the other. This representation misses out individual actions and decisions. Examination of opinions and reactions at the individual level reveals a much broader approach to the questions and needs that kept arising, and differentiated approaches as to how to respond. The dynamics of social processes can be evaluated more faithfully by looking at the personal level. To judge the Jewish Council as a group is not the most helpful approach.

NOTES

1. D. Michman (2010) 'Judenräte, Ghettos, "Endlösung". Drei Komponenten einer antijüdischen Politik oder separate Faktoren?' in J. A. Mlynarczyk and J. Böhler (eds) *Der Judenmord in den eingegliederten polnischen Gebieten 1939–1945* (Osnabrück: Fibre), pp. 167–76.
2. General works on the Jewish Council in the Netherlands are: H. Knoop (1983) *De Joodsche Raad. Het drama van Abraham Asscher en David Cohen* (Amsterdam: Elsevier); K. P. L. Berkley (1945) *Overzicht van het ontstaan, de werkzaamheden en het streven van den Joodsche Raad voor Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: Plastica); W. Lindwer (ed.) (1995) *Het fatale dilemma. De Joodsche Raad voor Amsterdam, 1941–1943* (Den Haag: SDU).
3. G. Hirschfeld (1991) 'Niederlande' in W. Benz (ed.) *Dimension des Völkermords: Die Zahl der jüdischen Opfer des Nationalsozialismus* (München: Oldenbourg), pp. 137–66.

4. S. Leydesdorff (1984) 'In Search of the Picture. Jewish Proletarians in Amsterdam between the Wars' in J. Michman (ed.) *Dutch Jewish History, Proceedings of the Symposium on the History of the Jews in the Netherlands* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University of Jerusalem), pp. 315–33.
5. I. Schöffner (1982) 'Die Niederlande und die Juden in den Dreißiger Jahren in historischer Perspektive' in K. Dittrich and H. Würzner (eds) *Die Niederlande und das deutsche Exil 1933–1940* (Königstein/Ts.: Athenäum), pp. 61–72; J. Michman, H. Beem and D. Michman (eds) (1999) *Pinkas. Geschiedenis van de Joodse Gemeenschap in Nederland* (Amsterdam and Antwerpen: Contact); J. H. C. Blom, and J. J. Cahen (1995) 'Joodse Nederlanders, Nederlandse joden en joden in Nederland 1870–1940' in J. C. H. Blom (ed.) *Geschiedenis van de joden in Nederland* (Amsterdam: Balans), pp. 247–312.
6. R. te Slaa, and E. Klijn (2009) *De NSB. Ontstaan en opkomst van de Nationaal Socialistische Beweging 1931–1935* (Amsterdam: Boom).
7. L. Dasberg (1998) 'Het "Heimatgefühl" van de Duitse joden' in M. Brands, H. Belien and C. Bertram (eds) *Leven met Duitsland: Opstellen over geschiedenis en politiek* (Amsterdam: Van Oorschoot), pp. 192–210.
8. I. Wojak and L. Hepner (1995) 'Geliebte Kinder ...'. *Briefe aus dem Amsterdamer Exil in die Neue Welt 1939–1943* (Essen: Klartext), p. 64; letter of 15 May 1939.
9. *Het liberale Weekblad*, 15.7.1938.
10. Anne Frank Foundation (eds) (2013) *Anne Frank. Tagebücher—Geschichten und Ereignisse aus dem Hinterhaus—Erzählungen—Briefe—Fotos und Dokumente* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer).
11. B. G. J. de Graaff (1987/88) 'Strijdig met de tradities van ons volk. Het Nederlandse beleid ten aanzien van vluchtelingen in den jaren dertig', *Jaarboek buitenlandse zaken*, 169–87.
12. D. Bronkhorst (1990) *Een tijd van komen. De geschiedenis van vluchtelingen in Nederland* (Amsterdam: Mets); C. K. Berghuis (1990) *Joodse vluchtelingen in Nederland 1938–1940. Documenten betreffende toelating, uitleiding en kampopname* (Kampen: Kok).
13. For a history of the time of occupation, see L. de Jong (1969–1986) *Het koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog* ('s-Gravenhage: Nijhoff). See also 'Introductions' to volumes 5 and 12 of the document collection 'Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland, 1933–1945' (VEJ): K. Happe, M. Mayer, M. Peers and J.-M. Dreyfus (2012) *5. West- und Nordeuropa 1940–Juni 1942* (München: Oldenbourg); and K. Happe, B. Lambauer and C. Maier-Wolthausen (2015) *12. West- und Nordeuropa Juni 1942–1945* (München: De Gruyter).
14. Report of 21 May 1941 by Felix Benzler on the position of the Dutch government; *Akten zur deutschen auswärtigen Politik 1918–1945* (1962), series D, vol. 9 (Frankfurt am Main: P. Keppeler), pp. 329 ff.

15. G. Hirschfeld (1981) 'Collaboration and Attentism in the Netherlands 1940–1941', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 16, 467–86.
16. Protocol of the city council of Amsterdam, 5.7.1940; Stadsarchief Amsterdam, 5181/5148.
17. W. Ultee, R. Luijck and F. van Tubergen (2001) 'The Unwholesome Theme of Suicide: Forgotten Statistics of Attempted Suicides in Amsterdam and Jewish Suicides in the Netherlands for 1936–1943' in C. Brasz (ed.) *Dutch Jews as Perceived by Themselves and by Others* (Leiden: Brill), pp. 325–54.
18. B. Moore (2010) *Survivors. Jewish Self-help and Rescue in Nazi-occupied Western Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 15–18.
19. E. Velmans-van Hessen (1999) 'Ich wollte immer glücklich sein'. *Das Schicksal eines jüdischen Mädchens im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Wien: Zsolnay), p. 42.
20. W. ten Have (1999) *De Nederlandse Unie. Aanpassing, vernieuwing en confrontatie in bezettingstijd 1940–1941* (Amsterdam: Prometheus).
21. Letter from the Dutch secretary-generals to *Reichskommissar* Seyss-Inquart dated 25.11.1940, Nationaal Archief Den Haag, 02.09.56/22 (VEJ 5/46). For the history of the persecution of the Jews in the Netherlands, see B. Moore (1998) *Slachtoffers en overlevenden. De Nazi-vervolging van de joden in Nederland* (Amsterdam: Bakker); J. Presser (1965) *Ondergang. De vervolging en verdelging van het Nederlandse Jodendom 1940–1945* ('s-Gravenhage: Nijhoff).
22. B. A. Sijes (1954) *De Februari-staking 25–26 Februari 1941* (with an English summary) ('s-Gravenhage: Nijhoff).
23. D. Michman (2011) *Angst vor den 'Ostjuden' . Die Entstehung der Ghettos während des Holocaust* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer), pp. 104–12.
24. F. Roest and J. Scheren (1998) *Oorlog in de stad. Amsterdam 1939–1941* (Amsterdam: van Gennep), pp. 335–62.
25. Protocol of the council of Amsterdam, 14.2.1941; Stadsarchief Amsterdam, 5166/1017.
26. Speech by Abraham Asscher, 14.2.1940; Joods Historisch Museum, Doc. 00003186 (VEJ 5/56).
27. Presser (1965) *Ondergang*, vol. 1, pp. 391–526.
28. M. Roseman (2002) *The Villa, the Lake, the Meeting. The Wannsee Conference and the 'Final Solution'* (Harmondsworth: Penguin).
29. Hirschfeld (1991) 'Niederlande', pp. 137–66.
30. Protocol of the meeting of the Central Commission of the Jewish Council on 18 September 1942; NIOD, 182/38 (VEJ 12/79).
31. A. Herzberg (1985) *Kroniek der Jodenvervolging, 1940–1945* (Amsterdam: Querido), pp. 189 ff.
32. J. Melkman (1974) 'De briefwisseling tussen mr. L.E. Visser en prof. dr. D. Cohen', *Studia Rosenthaliana*, VIII, 107–31.

33. Melkman (1974) 'Die briefwisseling', p. 125.
34. D. Cohen and E. Somers (2010) *Voorzitter van de Joodse Raad. De herinneringen van David Cohen (1941–1943)* (Zutphen: Walburg Press).
35. Report by Joop Voet, December 1942; NIOD, 249/366a.
36. Diary entry of Sam Goudsmit for 10 October 1944; Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana, HC-ROS-006.
37. Letter from *Reichskommissar* Seyss-Inquart to his general-commissioners, dated 25 November 1941; NIOD, 077/1312.
38. Presser (1965) *Ondergang*, vol. 1, p. 82.
39. B. Wasserstein (2013) *Gertrude van Tijn en het lot van de Nederlandse Joden* (Amsterdam: Nieuw Amsterdam), pp. 182 ff.
40. Moore (1998) *Slachtoffers en overlevenden*, pp. 132 ff.
41. In the transit camp at Westerbork, this arrangement was reversed. Refugees from Germany, who had lived in the camp since 1939, were given the important posts in the Jewish self-administration. Here they could champion other Germans and try to prevent them from being deported. See E. Moraal (2014) *Als ik morgen niet op transport ga ... Kamp Westerbork in beleving en herinnering* (Amsterdam: Bezige Bij), pp. 221–78.
42. N. K. in't Veld (1989) *De Joodse Ereraad* ('s-Gravenhage: SDU).
43. J. C. H. Blom (2007) *In de ban van goed en fout. Geschiedschrijving over de bezettingstijd in Nederland* (Amsterdam: Bloom).
44. For example, letter from Max Holz to A. Asscher dated 6 March 1942, NIOD, 181j-1d.
45. M. Bolle (2006) *'Ich weiß, dieser Brief wird Dich nie erreichen.'* *Tagebuchbriefe aus Amsterdam, Westerbork und Bergen-Belsen* (Berlin: Eichborn), pp. 140–48.
46. Herzberg (1985) *Kroniek*, p. 151.
47. Note from the department leaders of the Jewish Council to Cohen and Asscher dated 5 August 1943, NIOD, 182/1.
48. Cohen and Somers (2010) *Voorzitter van de Joodse Raad*, pp. 17 ff.
49. See, for example, the following articles: 'Jacht op Joden', *De Vonk*, Augustus 1942, Nr. 8, p. 3; 'De Leidensweg der Joden', *Het Parool*, 21.8.1942, Nr. 21, p. 5; 'De Verdrijving der Joden', *Verzet*, Augustus 1942, Nr. 3, p. 5; 'Een strom van leid over Nederland', *De Waarheid*, End August 1942, p. 5; 'Jodenvervolgning zonder einde', *De Waarheid*, September 1942, p. 7.
50. B. A. Sijes (1966) *De Arbeidsinzet. De gedwongen arbeid van Nederlanders in Duitsland 1940–1945* ('s-Gravenhage: Nijhoff), pp. 249–76.

Negotiating and Compromising. Jewish Leaders' Scope of Action in Tunis During Nazi Rule (November 1942–May 1943)

Sophie Friedl

'The relations with the Krauts have changed perceptibly. ... On several occasions, we've been able to discuss, negotiate and compromise.' These are the words of a leading member of the Tunis Jewish Council, Paul Ghez, on 14 January 1943.¹ His testimony indicates that the Jewish leadership in Tunis retained a fairly astonishing scope of action during Nazi rule.

Indeed, the Nazis failed in fulfilling the extermination plans they had for the roughly 90,000 Jews living in Tunisia. In November 1942, the Wehrmacht occupied the French protectorate together with the Italian army. Two years of anti-Semitic Vichy rule had already led to the expropriation and social exclusion of local Jews. In the following six months of Italo-German occupation, Jews suffered even more extensive expropriation, life-threatening violence and forced labour. Most Jews who lost their lives died as forced labourers on military locations exposed to Allied air raids. Nevertheless, the number of victims to the Nazis was small compared to the losses on European soil.² What are the reasons for this different development?

S. Friedl (✉)

Georg Eckert Institute for International Schoolbook Research,
Brunswick, Germany
e-mail: friedl@gei.de

Though the situation in Tunis was quite unusual, there are striking similarities in the ways Vichy and Nazi rule harmed community life there and how Nazi regimes did so in certain European cases. The community leaders faced sharp accusations of corruption, selfishness, and collaboration, both during and after the occupation. The controversy over these is one reason why the case of Tunis is relatively well-documented. Several members of the Council, like the aforementioned Paul Ghez, published private journals and retrospective memoirs; former forced labourers wrote down their experiences; inquests were conducted, and records from the time of the occupation collected. These sources need to be read carefully, with knowledge of the authors' roles during and after the occupation.

Along with further documents of Tunisian, German, French and Italian origin, most of these sources are archived in the *Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine* in Paris.

They provide the basis for this case study on the Jewish Council in the city of Tunis and its scope of action during the Axis occupation. After outlining the historical background, I will analyse the organization of the Jewish Council, before turning to its goals and strategies and discussing its room for manoeuvre.³

IN THE MIDST OF A COMPLEX COLONIAL SITUATION ...

Tunisia had been a French protectorate since 1881, after which the French left the Bey in place as symbolic head of the Tunisian people. Following the Allied 'Operation Torch', German and Italian forces built up a toe-hold between the city of Tunis and the militarily important port of Bizerte. The interests of the occupying powers in Tunisia and those of the French administration there overlapped only in so far as their interests in the war were aligned. German, Italian, and French interests in Tunisia were, in reality, largely in conflict. Officially, Vichy France remained a sovereign ally of the Axis, but in fact, the occupiers disempowered the French *Résidence générale*, the administration of the protectorate. Meanwhile, both Italy and the emerging Tunisian nationalist movement laid claims to Tunisia. Thus, both French and Italian strategy counted on the loyalty of local Jews and there was good reason to moderate any anti-Semitic policies.⁴

In German strategy, cooperation with both France and Italy was essential. As a result, the German authorities ceded to French appeals and (especially) to repeated Italian diplomatic endeavours to protect Jews. For example, they spared Italian Jews from forced labour until shortly

before the end of the occupation.⁵ In addition, Nazi Germany regarded the Tunisian nationalists of the *Néo-Destour* party as allies against both Jews and the British Empire. Even if Moncef Bey tended to side with the local Jews, not the Nazis, Germany's intense pro-Arab propaganda was a matter of concern for Vichy France and Italy.⁶ In sum, the sole attempt to expand the Holocaust to colonial—and predominantly Muslim—soil took place in a situation where the German authorities had to contend with an opaque mishmash of conflicting interests, sovereignty claims and sensitivities among those they hoped to influence and dominate.

The brevity of direct German rule in Tunis and Tunisia—only six months—certainly limited the destructive effects of Nazi rule there. Yet, brevity alone cannot explain the relatively good outcome for local Jews. The Mediterranean separated Tunisia from the European infrastructure of extermination, and a lack of ships and resources made it virtually impossible to deport Tunisian Jews en masse.⁷ In the tiny Tunisian toe-hold, any mass killings on the spot might have been discovered by nearby Allied troops.⁸ Moreover, the German occupiers faced serious military challenges: they were expecting a major Allied offensive. An SS commando unit, originally intended to exterminate Palestinian Jews, was sent to Tunis. But, once it arrived, it had to adapt its anti-Semitic policy to Wehrmacht necessities, such as the dramatic need for a workforce.⁹ The framework for anti-Semitic persecution was thus set by pragmatic military thinking, and not predominantly by fanatical racism. With this consideration added to the general balancing act the German diplomats were having to perform, this meant that anti-Semitic policy in Tunisia never reached the extermination phase.¹⁰

As for the Jewish community in Tunisia, loyalties and identities varied just as much as the political spectrum did. This was especially so in the capital, where two-thirds of Tunisian Jews lived. There were French and Italian patriots among them;¹¹ but gaps in education and lifestyle probably went even deeper than such loyalties. Poor and often illiterate, the more religious Tunisian Jews tended to live in the old Jewish quarter, the *Hava*. But not all Jews lived there and the quarter was not uniformly Jewish. Assimilated and well-off Jews preferred to live in the modern European quarters of the city.¹² There was no ghetto, not even under Axis rule. The Vichy authorities planned to make Jews wear the Yellow Star but, at least in the Tunis region, this measure was never implemented. (It is probable that Italy intervened to spare Italian Jews from wearing the star and that Vichy and the Bey were then reluctant to privilege the Italians.)¹³ Hence, unlike their counterparts in the occupied territories of Europe, Tunisian Jews were not easily recognizable to those bent on persecution.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE JEWISH COUNCIL

According to Dan Michman's structural analysis, there were two basic types of Jewish government under Nazi rule: 'leaderships' and 'headships'. This distinction is significant because, in Michman's findings, headships had less room for manoeuvre and were more easily controlled by the Nazis.¹⁴ According to him, the Council in Tunis followed the headship pattern. However, this needs to be nuanced.

In pre-war Tunis, a Council of twelve elected members had been responsible for Jewish welfare and religious issues. After the outbreak of the war, the *Résidence* reorganized and renamed the *Conseil de la Communauté Israélite* several times, and appointed the oldest of the remaining members, Moïse Borgel, as its president.¹⁵ In November 1942, *SS-Obersturmbannführer* Walther Rauff, head of the SS Command in Tunis, had the Council dissolved. He ordered the chief rabbi, Haïm Bellaïche, to establish a Jewish Council of nine men, under his (the chief rabbi's) presidency. Rauff declared the Council to be responsible for the organization of Jewish forced labour, including recruitment, supply of food and equipment, and related issues. Massive threats, such as the threat to shoot Jewish hostages or the Jewish leaders themselves, reinforced these demands.¹⁶

So far, in several aspects, the Jewish Council in occupied Tunis indeed qualifies as a headship. The way Rauff announced the order closely resembles the establishment of headship-structured Jewish Councils in European countries. His order was transmitted orally, with no legitimization in law, immediately after the beginning of the occupation. Additionally, the authority of the Jewish leadership was restricted to the Tunis region. Typical of the headship pattern, the SS tried to monopolize communication with the Jewish leaders and their command of them.¹⁷

When it comes to the question of the Jewish leaders' authority, however, their administration does not quite fit into the headship pattern. The authority of the Jewish leaders was not exogenous, assigned by the SS as in typical headship structures, but had its basis in the support of the Jewish population.

Rauff's Council of nine men only ever existed on paper. The SS did not seem to care in the least about the exact formal realization of their order.¹⁸ In reality, the Jewish leaders continued to hold responsibility in much the same way as they had before; and, in addition, proactive men, mostly friends and relatives of Council members, spontaneously joined the existing Council.¹⁹ The result was a partly traditional, democratically rooted community leadership, enlarged and modified.

Interestingly, both Jewish and non-Jewish people continued to refer to this organ by its previous names, *Conseil de la Communauté Israélite* and *Conseil d'administration* or by the common abbreviations these were known by. Likewise, they kept addressing Borgel as 'président'.²⁰ It seems that, even when they had harsh criticism for its policies, Jewish people did not question the legitimacy of the Jewish Council. They generally respected it, viewing it as a continuation of the representation they had had before the war. The same is true of the *Service de Recrutement*, a subcommittee of the Council headed by Paul Ghez. Later on, Ghez and his colleagues suffered verbal and even physical attacks by furious Jews. But not even at this later stage was there any hint that the community regarded the *Service de Recrutement* as an illegitimate institution imposed on them.²¹

Furthermore, in contrast to the headship pattern, the Tunis Jewish Council did not work autocratically. Rather, power was shared by Borgel, Ghez, Henry Sfez, Maximilien Trenner, and others who had important functions and influence on community policies. Various documents reveal that community meetings often led to controversial discussions between members of the Council.²² Nor was the Council a hermetically closed institution. We know of at least two occasions when Jews without any function in the administration participated in decisive meetings. Borgel appears to have been relieved that he could share the heavy burden that lay on his shoulders, and he gladly consulted other members of the Jewish elite.²³

So the Tunis Council differed from the headship pattern in decisive aspects. If Michman is correct in saying that Jewish leaderships had a larger scope of action than headships, then the Jewish leaders in Tunis seem to have had more opportunities to pursue their goals than members of a typical headship structure elsewhere. Its non-autocratic administration presumably allowed for more mutual control and advice. As well as taking some of the pressure off individual leaders, the spread of decision making may have made it more difficult for the SS to blackmail and manipulate Council members.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

The Jewish leaders knew about anti-Semitic atrocities from Allied radio programmes and from hearsay. However, they did not realize what a ruthless, industrialized scale the Holocaust was reaching in Europe and were not aware of the Nazis' plans to deport and exterminate absolutely all people classed as Jews. As a worst-case scenario, they thought that the SS would look for a pretext to initiate a pogrom.²⁴ On this understanding,

they agreed that Jews were in mortal danger and that the leaders' first goal was to keep them safe. On the whole, the leaders were ready to expose a part of the population to danger if that meant they could save the hostages, the community or themselves. A second, at times conflicting, goal for the leaders was somehow to save not only their lives but their essential dignity, despite the moral dilemma they were facing.²⁵

The Jewish leaders' first action was to try to absolve themselves from the obligation to recruit Jews for forced labour, but the SS was insistent. Then, they took to seeing self-government as an opportunity for clandestine resistance and a chance to influence the situation for the better. All their strategies were based on this self-government. If they carried out recruitment and expropriation themselves, this seemed to enlarge their scope of action. In their effort to minimize contact between the Jewish population and its potential persecutors, the leaders pursued a dual strategy: an appearance of obedience but a practice of secret sabotage.²⁶ They tried to delay their responses to German orders and, when these had to be followed, to implement them only partially and inefficiently so as to avoid their full bite. In their way of thinking, it was crucial not to show open resistance, so as to deny the SS any excuse for a resort to massive violence. Consequently, the Jewish leaders tried to suppress protest and to cover up the fact that it was difficult for them to recruit Jewish forced labourers and that some of those recruited managed to escape from the labour camps. Believing that the Allies would liberate them soon, they considered it a prerequisite to win time, so as to achieve their overall goals.²⁷

Self-government enabled the Jewish leaders to make use of the community's established contacts. They attempted to negotiate with nearly all relevant actors in Tunis. At first, the Jewish leaders hoped the *Résident*, Jeanne-Pierre Esteva, would intervene, together with the Bey. Esteva had effectively attenuated anti-Semitic policies up to 1942, and Moncef Bey's administration had shown its solidarity with Jews previously.²⁸ The Jewish leaders' hopes were soon disappointed. Even so, the Jewish Council made an effort to stay in contact with both the French and the Bey's authorities, and, here and there, this showed its effects.²⁹ The Jewish leaders believed the Italian soldiers and administrators would be ready to cooperate—especially if they gained material advantages from doing so. They tried to persuade Italian sentries to improve conditions in work camps and to overlook evasions.³⁰ In rare moments, even the SS could be of help to the Jewish Council. Since it claimed to monopolize Jewish policy, the SS tended not to countenance independent persecution by third parties.

So Jewish leaders reached out for SS intervention when the Bey's administration, the Italian authorities, soldiers of the Axis troops and ordinary French or Tunisian people took advantage of the Jews' peculiar situation.³¹ Considering that any open resistance was out of the question, negotiations and related diplomatic endeavours *with everyone* were the most important ways of working for the Jewish administration.

The sole act of open resistance the Jewish leaders made was a blunt refusal to take on the role the perpetrators had assigned to them. This means that they did not act as helpless victims.³² Ghez, Sfez and Trenner intuited that the Germans perceived themselves as disciplined, honourable soldiers. The members of the Jewish administration tried to make use of this insight, convinced that they gained a better standing in interactions with the SS and the Wehrmacht by highlighting their own self-assurance or military habitus.³³ For example, Ghez, a decorated former French officer, always wore his uniform when meeting the Germans. He believed that overt self-assurance helped him persuade the SS to release Jewish hostages.³⁴ According to Robert Borgel, Roger Temman, one of his colleagues in the Council, succeeded in having several young men officially exempted from forced labour due to the impression of insistence and self-assurance he was able to make.³⁵ In these cases, role-taking refusal was a means of influencing interactions with the Germans. However, it is important to stress that role-taking refusal was a form of resistance as well: it helped the Jewish leaders maintain their dignity and self-esteem. Role-taking refusal explains why these members of the Jewish Council repeatedly brought up the rules of war and humanitarian principles. They insisted on decent treatment of Jews, even though they did not believe that such arguments could convince their counterparts.³⁶ By stoically referring to the principles of morality and military justice, the Jewish leaders in Tunis overtly rejected being treated as outlaws.

ROOM FOR MANOEUVRE

To what extent were the Jewish leaders actually able to pursue their goals under these conditions? Where did their strategies lead them? I will make use of the French historian and political scientist Jacques Sémelin's terminology. He differentiates between (1) 'collaboration' as an affirmative cooperation with the occupying (Nazi) power, and (2) 'adaptation' as adjustment to the occupation. He uses the word (3) 'dissidence' for an individual's maintained critical distance and disobedient behaviour; and

(4) ‘civil resistance’ stands for collective, non-violent rejection of occupation.³⁷ This scale was developed to explain positions taken against the background of foreign occupation. It highlights the states of mind of the actors rather than efficacy or success in what they did. It is, therefore, a useful and appropriate scale to apply to the situation of the Tunis Jewish Council.

Without a doubt, the members of the Council did not *collaborate* with the SS in Sémelin’s sense: their overall goals were always contrary to those of the Germans. When Jewish leaders acted in a way that profited the SS, this either happened against their will, or was part of a double strategy aimed at a higher good; or was sometimes because they had no knowledge of events. As regards *adaptation* and unwilling cooperation, the Jewish leaders did indeed give in to German orders. They formed a kind of self-government accommodating themselves to the situation, and organized forced labour and expropriation. They adapted their argumentation and methods according to their understanding of the circumstances. They seem to have preferred employing family members or friends for administrative work.³⁸ This may have been a way to protect these people from the dangers of forced labour, and, as such, have been a kind of adaptation. Naturally, it also triggered suspicions of corruption and diminished the Council’s authority.³⁹

As for *dissidence*, we do not have sufficient sources on all the leading members of the Jewish administration, but, at least in the well-documented cases, dissidence was very much in evidence. Ghez, Sfez and Trenner all ignored German orders and prohibitions in their private lives.⁴⁰ As already shown, they maintained a self-definition contrary to the role the SS wanted to assign them. They regarded themselves as fighters for the good: they represented a defeated community and were the recipients of humiliating measures, but they certainly did not see themselves as inferiors. Gradually, this outlook helped them risk more initiative and compromise in their interactions with the SS.

As well as the institution as a collective body, the individual members of the Council resisted anti-Semitic policy in an effort to maintain their security, autonomy and dignity. These men actively tried to fight the efficacy of the policy they were assigned to carry out. Although the main reasons for the survival of the Tunis Jewish population were probably the vicissitudes of warfare and the complex political situation, the Jewish leaders seized what opportunities they could, within their scope of action, to protect the community’s safety.

Though it was scarcely adequate, the Jewish Council offered at least minimal medical and other assistance to forced labourers. It spared particularly endangered individuals, such as political opponents, from recruitment.⁴¹ It succeeded in negotiating reductions and, in January 1943, a temporary cessation in the recruitment of Jewish labourers.⁴² Despite an SS prohibition, members of the Jewish Council contacted third parties in order to gain help.⁴³ Due to failures in German and Italian communication and organization, they could seize chances to interfere in arrangements without the knowledge of the SS office in Tunis. They counterfeited records and negotiated with local Italian and German soldiers supervising the camps outside Tunis. In spring 1943, hundreds of forced labourers escaped from camps with the help of the Jewish Council.⁴⁴

Along with prominent protesters, such as the Italian consul and the *Résident*, Esteva, the Jewish leaders negotiated the liberation of all the Jewish hostages who had been imprisoned at the beginning of the occupation. They also effectively helped reduce violence, for example the rape of Jewish women by Axis soldiers. They offered to organize the spoliation of Jewish possessions themselves, in order to minimize direct contact between the population and potential perpetrators. Also, they successfully demanded that the Axis authorities ban their soldiers from the *Hara*.⁴⁵ Last but not least, leading members of the Jewish administration covered up other people's resistance. Some of them were themselves involved in risky endeavours. For example, Sfez smuggled out news to Jewish hostages.⁴⁶

Maintaining careful relations with the occupiers was not the only line of policy determining the Jewish leaders' scope of action. The role played by the general Jewish population has to be taken into account as well. In theory, the Jewish leaders had 'absolute power' over other Jews.⁴⁷ But, as an act of resistance or of dissidence, they restrained themselves from harsh methods. They had scruples and wanted to preserve their moral integrity. For instance, they hesitated to use force to achieve quotas in forced labour recruitment.⁴⁸

Understandably, many people disobeyed the Jewish Council when it conscripted them to forced labour.⁴⁹ As the occupation went on, and the Council faced an ever more disobedient, mistrusting Jewish population as well as increased pressure from the SS, some of the Jewish leaders' moral scruples were overcome.⁵⁰ One could consider this loss of scruples a loss of autonomy, or a progressive adaptation to the constraints of Nazi rule. But—a typical paradox of the leaders' ambiguous situation—it also momentarily enlarged the room for manoeuvre.

The leaders took to more severe methods: they founded a Jewish Police, which arrested hide-aways. This development caused bitter conflicts among the Jewish leaders. The circle around Borgel tolerated (and presumably even helped) some of those who hid from recruitment. By contrast, the *Service de Recrutement* focused on justice and relief for already recruited men. This subcommittee, under Ghez, favoured a stepping up in the enforcement of strict recruitment measures. There were two main reasons for this: they knew that the current forced labourers urgently needed to have others take their place; also Ghez feared that, if the SS lost patience, it might conduct brutal round-ups or seize the occasion for a pogrom.⁵¹ It looks as though the circle around Ghez gave orders to the Jewish police that were contrary to Borgel's orders. With these conflicts besetting the leaders, the efficacy and authority of the Jewish Council risked being diminished.⁵²

CONCLUSIONS

The Jewish leadership oscillated between adaptation and cooperation, dissidence, and civil resistance. Strategies changed according to circumstances and differed internally. Cooperation was deemed a prerequisite for resistance later on. But strategies meant to give room for resistance risked turning into mere adaptation and cooperation. The Jewish leaders aimed to influence the way forced labour recruitment and expropriation were conducted for the benefit of the Jewish population. If they wanted to maintain this scope of action, they needed to compel Jewish men to undergo forced labour and radicalize the means of recruitment. Inevitably, these men became entangled in a moral dilemma.

To a certain extent, the Council was aware that it was working for the benefit of the Germans and was resigned to do so in order to achieve its priorities. But the Jewish leaders were not fully aware of the extent to which Jewish self-government could become an effective instrument of German anti-Semitic policy. What first seemed to enlarge Jewish room for manoeuvre—and in fact did—might turn out to allow even more intensive German influence, as Dan Diner has shown happened in parts of Europe. Self-government risked facilitating more persecution.⁵³ Because of the early end of war activities in Tunisia, we do not know if such developments would have become rampant.

Nevertheless, the case of Tunis shows that the strategies of stalling for time, cooperating to minimize violence, and preventing open resistance

could indeed help save a Jewish population—even if in other situations, similar strategies might have played into the hands of the Nazis. If, then, there were ‘first phases’ of forced Jewish cooperation in European occupied regions, when deportation to death camps had not yet begun,⁵⁴ they need to be considered as such. They should be analysed in the context of the circumstances then prevailing, not as precursors to the genocide.

It is also important to perceive the subtler forms of resistance. Subjective intentions rather than actual efficacy need to be acknowledged. In analysing the stances taken by the Jewish leaders in Tunisia, it has proved fruitful to consider dissident behaviours, such as maintaining independence in definition of self-image: role-taking refusal. The less room for manoeuvre, the more the subtle, individual forms of resistance matter, and these have to be taken into account.

Lastly, this analysis of what happened in Tunisia confirms the finding that the roles of Jewish Councils and Jewish leaders within the Nazi system of oppression are not totally definable. They were subject to external dynamics and developed according to circumstances.⁵⁵ Positions on the scale of adaptation, cooperation, dissidence and resistance were in a dynamic continuum. People could simultaneously cooperate and resist. They could intend to resist, but (unwittingly or not) be cooperating. This complex of overlapping, contradictory roles and functions is obviously not a phenomenon confined to the periods of extermination policy.

NOTES

1. P. Ghez, ed. C. Nataf (2009) *Six mois sous la botte* (Paris: Le Manuscrit, 2009), p. 159. This diary was first published in July 1943 in Tunisia. Translation of the citation by the author. My heartfelt thank goes to Elizabeth F. Newton from the Ohio State University for the marvellous job she did on the proofreading of this chapter.
2. According to Satloff, 2,575 Tunisian Jews died as forced labourers. R. B. Satloff (2006) *Among the Righteous. Lost Stories from the Holocaust's Long Reach into Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs), p. 55.
3. This article is based on my master's thesis supervised by Prof. Margit Szöllösi-Janze, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, and Prof. Alan E. Steinweis, The University of Vermont. For a more detailed discussion of the topic written in German, access the thesis on <http://pub.uni-muenchen.de/24902/>
4. C. Levisse-Touzé (1998) *L'Afrique du Nord dans la guerre 1939–1945* (Paris: Albin Michel), pp. 16, 157, 358 et seq.; F. Petrucci (2011) *Gli ebrei in*

- Algeria e Tunisia* (Florence: Giuntina), pp. 119–22; D. Carpi (1994) *Between Mussolini and Hitler. The Jews and the Italian Authorities in France and Tunisia* (Hanover: University Press of New England), pp. 198 et seq., 204–8.
5. F. Petrucci (2008) ‘Una comunità nella comunità: gli ebrei italiani a Tunisi’, *Altreitalia* 36/37, 173–88, 179.
 6. K.-M. Mallmann and M. Cüppers (2006) *Halbmond und Hakenkreuz. Das Dritte Reich, die Araber und Palästina* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft), pp. 211–17.
 7. H. Abramson (2005) ‘A Double Occlusion. Sephardim and the Holocaust’, in Z. Zohar (ed.) *Sephardic and Mizrahi Jewry. From the Golden Age of Spain to Modern Times* (New York: New York University Press), pp. 285–99, 297.
 8. Mallmann and Cüppers (2006) *Halbmond und Hakenkreuz*, p. 206.
 9. K.-M. Mallmann and M. Cüppers (2007) “Elimination of the Jewish National Home in Palestine”. The Einsatzkommando of the Panzer Army Africa 1942’, *Yad Vashem Studies* 35/1, 111–41.
 10. Report by the High Command of the Army Group Africa to the Armed Forces High Command, 19 April 1943 (Archive of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich, MA 190, vol. 5. IV. OKW/Abwehr II folio 5652968); Commanding General Walther Nehring, order regarding the recruitment of the workforce to Foreign Office representative Rudolf Rahn, 6 December 1942 (ibid., NG 2271); Rahn, telegrams to the Foreign Office, 6 and 24 December 1942 (ibid., NG 3150/NG 4882); M. Trenner (1943) *La Croix Gammée’s aventure en Tunisie*, (CDJC, CCCLXXXVIII-1), p. 13; G. Hayat (2008) *92 ans. Une tranche de vie! Je ne regrette rien. Memoires de Georges Hayat* (n. p.: no publ.), <http://www.lulu.com/browse/search.php?fListingClass=0&fSearch=hayat>, date accessed 5 December 2013, p. 143; Abramson (2005) ‘A Double Occlusion’, p. 288; M. M. Laskier (1994) *North African Jewry in the Twentieth Century. The Jews of Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria* (New York and London: New York University Press), p. 76; A. Kaspi (1991) *Les Juifs pendant l’Occupation* (Paris: Seuil), p. 202.
 11. H. Belaid (2002) ‘Logique ethnique et logique coloniale à travers les associations en Tunisie entre les deux guerres’, in J. Alexandropoulos and P. Cabanel (eds) *La Tunisie mosaïque, diasporas, cosmopolitisme, archéologie de l’identité* (Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail), pp. 199–210, 199, 209; C. Zytnicki, (2002) ‘Les Juifs de Tunisie a l’heure des choix’ in Alexandropoulos and Cabanel (eds) *La Tunisie mosaïque*, pp. 157–69, 159.
 12. Elia Boccaro (2000) ‘La comunità ebraica portoghese di Tunisi (1710–1944)’, *La rassegna mensile di Israel* 66, 25–98, 61, 185.
 13. Laskier (1994) *North African Jewry*, pp. 72 et seq.; D. Carpi (1994) *Between Mussolini and Hitler* (op. cit), pp. 208 et seq.; De Font Reaux, letter to Estéva, 20 March 1943 (CDJC, CCCLXXXVIII-26).

14. D. Michman (1998) “‘Judenräte’ und ‘Judenvereinigungen’ unter nationalsozialistischer Herrschaft. Aufbau und Anwendung eines verwaltungsmäßigen Konzepts’, *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 46, 289–304, 295, 299 et seq.
15. C. Nataf (1992) ‘Les Juifs de Tunisie face à Vichy et aux persécutions allemandes’, *La Revue Pardès* 16, 203–31, 204.
16. Trenner (1943) *La Croix*, pp. 12, 21. Maximilien Trenner, a Jewish Austrian emigrant, joined the Jewish Council in Tunis as a translator on the order of the SS. He wrote this manuscript (presumably in autumn) in 1943 in Tunis.
17. Trenner (1943) *La Croix*, pp. 12–15; Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, p. 143.
18. Trenner (1943) *La Croix*, pp. 13, 15, 26; Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, pp. 60, 64, 159, 169; R. Borgel, (1944) ed. C Nataf (2007) *Etoile jaune et croix gammée. Les Juifs de Tunisie face aux nazis* (Paris: Le Manuscrit), p. 143. Borgel joined the Council as adviser to his father, Moïse. His report was first published in Tunis in 1944. Cf. also M. Abitbol (2008) *Les Juifs d’Afrique du Nord sous Vichy* (Paris: Riveneuve), p. 171.
19. Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, p. 59; Trenner (1943) *La Croix*, p. 62; H. Sfez (c. 1946) report on his activities in the Jewish administration, probably December 1946 (CDJC, CCCLXXXVIII-30); Hayat (2008) *92 ans*, pp. 137, 139.
20. Hayat (2008) *92 ans*, p. 128; N.N., minutes of the reunion of the Jewish leaders, 21 December 1942 (CCCLXXXVIII-21); Sfez, report on the inspection of the forced labour camp Bizerte, 28 December 1942 (CCCLXXXVIII-30); Taïeb, letter to M. Borgel, 24 January 1943 (CCCLXXXVIII-30); Victor Guez, letter to M. Borgel, 11 March 1943 (CCCLXXXVIII-30); Prince Raouf Bey, letter to M. Borgel, n.d. (CCCLXXXVIII-29).
21. The statement closest to such fundamental questioning of an organ of the Jewish Council is a comparison of the Jewish police to the SS. N.N., minutes of the encounter between former forced labourers and members of the Jewish Council, 12 December 1946 (CCCLXXXVIII-30).
22. Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, pp. 54–57, 168; Borgel (1944/2007) *Etoile jaune*, p. 308; N.N., minutes, 21 December 1946.
23. Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, p. 59; N.N., minutes, 21 December 1942; M. Borgel, letter to the *Résident général*, 15 May 1943 (CCCLXXXVIII-34); Nataf (2009) ‘Commentaries’ on and in P. Ghez, *Six mois sous la botte*, p. 116.
24. Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, pp. 74, 81, 166, 276; Trenner (1943) *La Croix*, p. 2 et seq., 10, 13, 15, 26 et seq., 66; Borgel (1944/2007) *Etoile jaune*, pp. 91, 109, 145, 173, 189, 273, 383.

25. Borgel (1944/2007) *Etoile jaune*, pp. 26, 79, 172, 186 et seq.; M. Borgel, letter to the *Résident général*, 15 May 1943; report by the former Jewish administration on the occupation, 15 May 1943 (CDJC, CCCLXXXVIII-4); M. Borgel, report on the occupation, May 1943 (CDJC, CCCLXXXVIII-4); reports on the financial burdens of the occupation by the former Jewish administration to the general secretary of the *Résidence* and the prefect of Tunis, 4 and 12 June 1943 (CDJC, CCCLXXXVIII-4), CCCLXXXVIII-21a and CCCLXXXVIII-22); J.-A. Guez (2001) *Au camp de Bizerte. Journal d'un juif tunisien interne sous l'occupation allemande (1942-1943)* (Paris: L'Harmattan), pp. 23, 200 et seq.; Trenner (1943) *La Croix*, pp. 15, 67.
26. Borgel (1944/2007) *Etoile jaune*, p. 206; M. Borgel, letter to the *Résident général*, 15 May 1943; Trenner (1943) *La Croix*, pp. 18, 47; M. Borgel, report on the occupation, May 1943; Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, p. 58.
27. Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, pp. 57, 65, 85 et seq., 88, 118, 167 et seq., 179, 182, 208 et seq., 221, 279; Borgel (1944/2007) *Etoile jaune*, pp. 26 et seq., 79, 112, 118, 171 et seq., 174 et seq., 185 et seq., 191, 308, 329, 338; Trenner (1943) *La Croix*, pp. 20, 35, 67; N.N., minutes of the encounter between former forced labourers and members of the Jewish Council, 15 December 1946 (CDJC, CCCLXXXVIII-30); N.N., report on the occupation, 15 May 1943.
28. Nataf (1992) 'Les Juifs de Tunisie', pp. 112, 207 et seq., 290.
29. Trenner (1943) *La Croix*, pp. 19, 72; M. Borgel, report on the occupation, May 1943; N.N., report on the occupation, 15 May 1943; Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, pp. 54 et seq., 58, 67, 81 et seq., 223, 229 et seq.; Borgel (1944/2007) *Etoile jaune*, pp. 115, 270, 342, 362; N.N., report on the financial burdens, 12 June 1943; M. Borgel, letter to the *Résident général*, 15 May 1943; M. Borgel, testimony about Esteva to the department of public prosecution of Paris, 2 February 1946 (CDJC, CCCLXXXVIII-6d); Sfez, report, probably December 1946; Nataf (2009) 'Commentaries' on and in P. Ghez, *Six mois sous la botte*, p. 117; Abitbol (2008) *Les Juifs d'Afrique du Nord*, p. 184.
30. Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, pp. 88, 161, 263 et seq., 437; testimony by Paul Ghez to the military tribunal in Tunis, probably November 1944 (CDJC, CCCLXXXVIII-10); Trenner (1943) *La Croix*, pp. 6, 48, 50; Borgel (1944/2007) *Etoile jaune*, pp. 354, 143; N.N., minutes, 15 December 1946; Nataf (2007) 'Commentaries' on and in R. Borgel *Etoile jaune*, p. 144.
31. Trenner (1943) *La Croix*, p. 22; Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, pp. 143, 174; Borgel (1944/2007) *Etoile jaune*, pp. 296, 302; Nataf (2007) 'Commentaries' on and in R. Borgel *Etoile jaune*, p. 300.

32. Referring to the theory of symbolic interactionism, Gil Richard Musolf has analysed how perpetrators force their victims to take over certain roles by means of symbolics. This serves to implement and legitimate oppression. According to Musolf, role-taking refusal is the basis for resistance against oppression. G. R. Musolf (2012) 'The Superiority Delusion and Critical Consciousness: The Paradox of Role-Taking Refusal in the Microfoundation of Dehumanization and Resistance', *Studies in Symbolic Interaction* 39, 71–120, 71, 79; Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, pp. 85 et seq., 118, 159; Borgel (1944/2007) *Etoile jaune*, pp. 79, 118, 186 et seq., 171 et seq.; Trenner (1943) *La Croix*, pp. 15, 35, 67.
33. Borgel (1944/2007) *Etoile jaune*, pp. 151, 291; Sfez, report, 1946; Sfez, report on the inspection of Bizerte, 28 December 1942; Trenner (1943) *La Croix*, pp. 38, 46, 57.
34. Nataf (2009) 'Commentaries' on and in P. Ghez, *Six mois sous la botte*, p. 28; Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, pp. 88, 201, 207.
35. Borgel (1944/2007) *Etoile jaune*, p. 191.
36. Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, pp. 167 et seq., 179, 208 et seq., 221; N.N., report on the occupation, 15 May 1943.
37. J. Sémelin (1989) *Sans armes face à Hitler. La Résistance civile en Europe 1939–1943* (Paris: Payot), pp. 15–18, 51 et seq.
38. Trenner (1943) *La Croix*, pp. 20 et seq.; Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, pp. 61, 67, 72.
39. Abitbol (2008) *Les Juifs d'Afrique du Nord*, 175 et seq.; Hayat (2008) 92 ans, p. 129; J. Krief (published 1997) *Souvenirs: Le camp de Bizerte* (n. p.; n. publ.), http://www.harissa.com/D_Histoire/souvenirs.htm, date accessed 3 May 2015; N.N., minutes, 12 December 1946; G. Gaston (1946) *Nos martyrs sous la botte allemande. Les ex-travailleurs juifs racontent leurs souffrances* (Tunis: n. publ.).
40. Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, p. 276; Trenner (1943) *La Croix*, p. 50; Sfez, report, 1946.
41. Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, p. 93; Borgel (1944/2007) *Etoile jaune*, pp. 301, 344.
42. Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, pp. 99, 143, 145, 153, 169, 213 et seq.; Borgel (1944/2007) *Etoile jaune*, pp. 191, 310; Nataf (2007) 'Commentaries' on and in R. Borgel *Etoile jaune*, p. 300.
43. M. Borgel, Report on the occupation, May 1943; N.N., report on the occupation, 15 May 1943; N.N., report on the financial burdens, 12 June 1943; M. Borgel, letter to the *Résident général*, 15 May 1943; Sfez, report, 1946; Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, pp. 88, 161, 236 et seq., 437.
44. Nataf (1992) 'Les Juifs de Tunisie', p. 221; Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, pp. 88, 263.

45. Borgel (1944/2007) *Etoile jaune*, pp. 176, 281 et seq.; Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, p. 88; Trenner (1943) *La Croix*, p. 48; M. Borgel, report on the occupation, May 1943.
46. Sfez, report, 1946; Borgel (1944/2007) *Etoile jaune*, pp. 192, 319 et seq.; Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, pp. 161, 307. As to Trenner, it is difficult to assess if he really undertook the hazardous resistance manoeuvres described in his manuscript. But some of them are confirmed by other sources.
47. Abitbol (2008) *Les Juifs d'Afrique du Nord*, p. 171.
48. Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, pp. 210, 256, 170, 199; Borgel (1944/2007) *Etoile jaune*, p. 337; Nataf (2009) 'Commentaries' on and in P. Ghez, *Six mois sous la botte*, p. 190.
49. Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, pp. 100 et seq., 160; Guez (2001) *Au camp de Bizerte*, p. 15; E. Boretz (1944) *Tunis sous la croix gammée. 8 novembre 1942–7 mai 1943* (Algiers: Office français d'édition), p. 49; interview with the former forced labourer Charles Pérez, 5 January 2012; Trenner (1943) *La Croix*, p. 60; Hayat (2008) *92 ans*, pp. 133 et seq.; N.N., minutes, 12 December 1946; Krief (1997) *Souvenirs*.
50. Borgel (1944/2007) *Etoile jaune*, pp. 186 et seq.; Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, pp. 170, 199, 182.
51. Nataf (2009) 'Commentaries' on and in P. Ghez, *Six mois sous la botte*, pp. 190, 269 et seq.; Nataf (2007) 'Commentaries' on and in R. Borgel *Etoile jaune*, p. 220; Borgel (1944/2007) *Etoile jaune*, pp. 191, 307; M. Borgel, report on the occupation, May 1943; Trenner (1943) *La Croix*, pp. 26, 47, 60, 65; Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, pp. 93, 160, 165, 182.
52. Ghez (2009) *Six mois sous la botte*, pp. 170, 182, 198 et seq., 210, 243 et seq., 256; N.N., minutes, 12 December 1946; N.N., report on the occupation, 15 May 1943; Borgel (1944/2007) *Etoile jaune*, p. 337; Nataf (2007) 'Commentaries' on and in R. Borgel *Etoile jaune*, pp. 190 et seq.
53. D. Diner (1992) 'Die Perspektive des "Judentrats". Zur universellen Bedeutung einer partikularen Erfahrung' in D. Kiesel et al. (eds) *Wer zum Leben, wer zum Tod...? Strategien jüdischen Überlebens im Ghetto* (Frankfurt et al.: Campus Verlag), pp. 11–35, 15.
54. A 'first generation' or 'phase' is mentioned by Y. Bauer, 'Jewish Leadership Reactions to Nazi Policies' (1981) in Y. Bauer and N. Rotenstreich (eds) *The Holocaust as Historical Experience* (London: Holmes & Meier), pp. 173–92, 178.
55. See, for instance, the case of Zaglembie in occupied Poland. A. Ronen (1992) 'Institutionen, Politik und Identität der jüdischen Selbstverwaltung im Getto von Zaglembie' in Kiesel (ed.) *Wer zum Leben, wer zum Tod...*, pp. 97–113, 102.

PART V

Relations Between Jews and Non-Jews
at a Local/Regional Level

Neighbours in Borysław. Jewish Perceptions of Collaboration and Rescue in Eastern Galicia

Natalia Aleksium

In memory of Dr. Mila Rosenberg-Eker

Of course, all the facts that I gave you were just cold facts with dates, and happenings. But, who can describe the fright, the expectation of death, ... the terrible conditions, the screaming, the choking of children by parents who were hiding and didn't want their children to utter a noise so that they can't be, they won't be shot, [or] caught by whoever it was. And ... the incredible feeling of being hunted by everybody in this world.¹

The 'cold facts with dates' Raoul Harmelin mentions in a sketchy interview he gave in 1992 are those in a neat chronological account of the Holocaust

I would like to thank my colleagues, Dr. Ela Bauer, Dr. Kobi Kabalek, Dr. Regina Fritz, Tomasz Frydel, Ety Lassman, Dr. Simo Muir, Dr. Leonid Rein and Agnieszka Wiercholska, for their comments. I am also grateful to Vincent Slatt, librarian at the USHMM in Washington DC, for his assistance, and to Dr. Katharina Friedla, a Minerva Fellow at Yad Vashem.

N. Aleksium (✉)
Graduate School of Jewish Studies, Touro College, Perth, New York, USA
e-mail: aleksium@touro.edu

as it unfolded in his native town of Boryslaw in Eastern Galicia. He tells of consecutive round-ups, in which Jewish men, women and children, including members of his immediate family, lost their lives. When the interview came close to an end, Harmelin warned his interlocutor about the unavoidable tension between reconstructing a communal history of destruction and conveying the intimate experiences of individuals. It was an admonition against generalized and sanitized accounts. Yet, notwithstanding this reservation, Harmelin tried to describe his personal experience, discussing Jewish, Ukrainian and Polish individuals he had known—actors in the human drama unravelling on the streets of Boryslaw during the three years of German occupation. His interview and other Jewish testimonies ‘bring into history events that would otherwise remain completely unknown, since they are missing from more conventional documentation found in the archives and mostly written by the perpetrators or organizers of genocide.’ ‘Hence,’ writes Omer Bartov, ‘personal accounts can at times save events from oblivion.’²

The present chapter offers a close reading of several Jewish testimonies given in the aftermath of the Holocaust. These testimonies come from survivors’ early attempts to document their experiences during World War II, from Jewish testimonies given in Polish courts, and from accounts written and recorded several decades later.³ While distinct times, contexts and languages in which these documents were produced have methodological implications for interpreting them, this chapter does not differentiate between diaries, memoirs, court statements and testimonies.⁴ The chapter examines what elsewhere I have called ‘intimate violence’ and does so in the local setting of a single community.⁵ I analyse the ways in which the survivors tackled the questions of local collaboration and local assistance and tried to make sense of their strained encounters with people they had known before the war. Not only do the testimonies undermine clear-cut categorizations of ‘victims’ and ‘perpetrators’, they also render ‘bystanders’ virtually non-existent. Last but not least, I address the question of individual and communal memory: how did people look back at a time of extreme crisis that broke a tenuous coexistence among a mixed population and turned former neighbours against one another?

From the middle of the nineteenth century, Boryslaw, located in the foothills of the Carpathian mountains 75 kilometres south-west of Lwów, had experienced rapid growth as a result of the rich deposits of petroleum found there and the development of new methods of oil extraction. Further prospecting for crude oil and the production and refining of petroleum attracted a diverse population, as the town became one of the important industrial centres in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and then in the Second

Polish Republic.⁶ Boryslaw was part of the East European borderlands, which Bartov has described as ‘sites of interaction between a multiplicity of ethnic and religious groups. For city- and town-dwellers, as much as for villagers, living side by side with people who spoke a different language and worshipped God differently was part of their own way of life and that of their ancestors.’⁷ On the eve of World War II, Boryslaw was home to a population of about 45,000, comprised of Poles, Ukrainians and 13,000 Jews. As in other ‘sites of interaction’ in Eastern Galicia, Boryslaw experienced tensions along ethnic and religious lines, which often overlapped with class divisions, ‘bringing with it resentment and envy, status and wealth, poverty and subjugation’.⁸

Like many former Jewish inhabitants, Matys Heilig, who was born in Boryslaw in 1918, describes interethnic relations there as distant or ‘rather cold’ before the war, but devoid of open hostility.⁹ In the interview already quoted, Raoul Harmelin—born in 1924, the son of a Jewish physician, Elkan (Elias) Harmelin—states that ‘generally, the people were living together in peace and harmony, which was also the result of the fact that Boryslaw [had previously] belonged to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and there was reasonable freedom of all nations there’.¹⁰ Matys Heilig’s family, which consisted of his parents, himself and a younger brother, lived comfortably in the neighbourhood of Wolanka, but he recalls that social relations outside Jewish circles and beyond the realm of commerce were quite exceptional.¹¹ Born in 1929 and raised in the same neighbourhood, Aharon Weiss remembers occasional incidents when he had physical and verbal altercations with Polish children, but they also played and studied together.¹² Despite this dominant narrative of people living ‘together and apart’—to quote the title of Shimon Redlich’s book on interethnic relations in Brzeżany—some accounts suggest Jewish families being on friendly terms with their Polish and Ukrainian neighbours. Indeed, at times, class divided Polish, Jewish and Ukrainian inhabitants of Boryslaw more than categories of ethnicity or religious denomination. When Sabina Wolanski—born Sabina Haberman in 1927 and raised in the prosperous middle-class family of a bank director and merchant—reflects on her childhood, she writes: ‘Of course I knew that we were Jewish, but at that time, pre-war, it was hardly central to my identity. We weren’t a religious family. I don’t remember our family going to the synagogue except on special holy days, though my parents never worked on the Sabbath. That was the custom.’¹³ The family celebrated Christmas with her parents’ neighbours and friends, the Staniszewskis.¹⁴

Analysing the results of elections in Boryslaw during the interwar period, Piotr Wróbel concludes: ‘It appears that neither the Polish nor the Ukrainian population ... was particularly nationalistic.’¹⁵

‘How was it that zones of coexistence were turned into communities of ethnic cleansing and genocide?’ This is the question that Bartov asks in his essay ‘Wartime Lies and Other Testimonies’.¹⁶ He reminds us that ‘it was largely external forces, in the shape of occupying states or far-flung national movements that determined the general course of events and provided the ideological impetus for population policies, mass displacement, and mass murder. But the way such policies and ideas were implemented on the ground had to do not only with the interaction between perpetrators and victims but also with the actions and interactions of the different local groups upon whom these policies were enacted.’¹⁷

Interethnic relations in Borysław underwent radical change during World War II, when the town repeatedly came under foreign occupation. In the autumn of 1939 Borysław was briefly occupied by the Germans—until 24 September, when Soviet military units marched in. The Soviets nationalized the oilfields and dissolved almost all Jewish institutions. Living conditions deteriorated, while official propaganda intensified. Adding to the political terror, a citizen militia was formed, which assisted the Soviet apparatus in arresting members of the local elites, many of whom were deported to the east.¹⁸ The Germans re-occupied Borysław on 1 July 1941, and this was followed by a pogrom in which about 300 Jews were brutally murdered and many more died of their wounds. Once order had been restored, the German military appointed a Jewish Council, the *Judenrat*. Headed by Michael Herz, it was forced to supply contributions from the Jewish community along with forced labourers. Mass murder of Jews commenced at the end of November 1941, when the German and Ukrainian police arrested hundreds of Jews considered unfit for labour. On 30 November 1941, these captives were executed in the nearby forests.¹⁹ Many more died from hunger and disease in the severe winter of 1941–1942. The destruction of Jews in Borysław, punctuated by a sequence of *Aktionen*, deportations to the death camp in Bełżec and mass shootings in the nearby forests, constituted an integral part of the ‘Final Solution’ in Eastern Galicia. Borysław’s industrial production, which the Germans were eager to keep going, created a unique situation for the local Jewish and non-Jewish population.²⁰ Berthold Beitz (1913–2013)—a manager with the German ‘Karpathen’ oil company—played an active role in protecting his Jewish workers and their families.²¹ But this did not stop the killing of others. During an *Aktion* in August 1942, some 4,500 Jews were deported to the death camp in Bełżec while 600 more were murdered on the spot. Two ghettos were established in

the districts of Potok Górny and Nowy Świat in September 1942 for the remaining Jews, whose numbers were further reduced after another round-up in October 1942, in which the Germans deported over 1,500 Jewish men, women and children, transporting them to their deaths in Bełżec. Following this operation, the two Borysław ghettos were closed. Skilled workers had to relocate to a separate camp, established in the neighbourhood of Mrażnica. In November 1942 another 2,000 Jews were deported to Bełżec. In early December 1942, about 2,000 Jews remained in the ghettos and 1,500 Jews in the camp, but in February and March 1943, over 1,000 of the remaining Jews were murdered in the Bronica forest. The last Jews in the ghetto were rounded up and murdered toward the end of May, and the labour camp was gradually liquidated the next year, with the only surviving Jews being sent to Płaszów in the spring and early summer of 1944. By July 1944, the camp was liquidated. The Red Army entered Borysław on 7 August.²²

A close reading of Jewish accounts from Borysław sheds light on the disintegration of social order and the shifting norms and loyalties that took place during the German occupation. A microhistorical perspective reveals long pent-up loathing and envy bursting out as local interethnic relations turned sour and anti-Jewish violence became a daily occurrence.²³ Since the publication of Jan T. Gross's *Neighbors* and other studies detailing the savagery, degradation, abandonment and fear Jews experienced at the hands of those they once lived with, we have become increasingly aware of this local aspect of the Holocaust.²⁴ How did the urban space of Borysław shape the behaviour of former neighbours towards the Jews? What happened to Polish, Ukrainian and Jewish neighbours in Borysław?

THE FIRST SUMMER

Writing in Sweden, half a century after the war, Matys Helig reminisced about German soldiers entering his native town on 1 July 1941. Their arrival coincided with the appearance of a Ukrainian militia unit—local youths wearing blue and yellow armbands. On the following day, Ukrainian peasants from the villages surrounding Borysław showed up with sticks, axes and iron pipes. The news of pogroms taking place in the vicinity had spread. Accompanied by residents of Borysław, these peasants attacked Jewish homes, especially those located in the centre of the town. They looted the houses, beat up their inhabitants, and dragged them to the

former headquarters of the NKVD (the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs), where the bodies of political prisoners murdered by the retreating forces had been discovered. The local Jews were forced to wash these corpses, all the while being publicly reviled and abused. The justification given for this pogrom was alleged Jewish responsibility for the Soviet terror and the deaths of the people found at the NKVD headquarters.²⁵ For 24 hours the assailants assaulted and murdered Jews on the streets and in their houses with impunity.²⁶ This outbreak of vicious violence, in which the Germans did not participate directly but merely observed, horrified Matys and other Jewish witnesses. Shortly before the beginning of the pogrom, Matys's older brother, Zvi Heilig, had seen groups of armed peasants with crowbars and sticks shouting anti-Jewish insults in the centre of Borysław. The violence ended as suddenly as it had erupted.²⁷

Despite the complexity of interethnic relations in Borysław before the war, the brutality of the pogrom took most Jewish inhabitants by surprise and instantly put neighbourly relations to the test.²⁸ Jewish survivors held the Ukrainian physician Mikolaj Terlecki responsible for either inciting the pogrom or at least remaining indifferent to the murder and torture of the Jews. Before the war, Terlecki had been a family doctor counting Jews among his patients.²⁹ In a witness statement, a survivor from Borysław, Salomon Rosenberg, testifies that he knew 'the accused personally from before the war. With the incursion of the German army to Borysław, Terlecki was nominated the mayor of Borysław by the Ukrainians (OUN) [Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists] and confirmed by the German occupation authorities.' As mayor, Terlecki was approached by a Jewish delegation imploring him to stop the pogrom. According to Rosenberg and other Jews testifying in connection with Terlecki's trial after the war, he refused to receive it.³⁰ In his account, Heilig claims that Dr Moses Teicher called Mikołaj Terlecki, appealing to him as a fellow doctor, and begged him to intervene, but Terlecki refused to get involved in such matters.³¹

Most Jewish accounts describe a faceless mob but some local participants were identified. Testifying after the war in Ulm, Blima Hamerman recalls her experiences during the pogrom:

One could hear the skulls being crushed. I would have never believed that people were capable of such bestiality. A sixteen-year-old Jewish boy ran away from his Ukrainian school mate, who chased after him throughout the backyard. ... He murdered him with an iron plug of the window shutter. ...

And co-inhabitants of our town with whom we grew up and to whom we never did any harm, or those with whom [we] were not even familiar, stood and threatened us.³²

In the trial records several witnesses testify to the crimes committed during the pogrom by a barber called Michał Wyszatycki.³³ Two of the Jewish witnesses—Salomon Nadler and Samuel Waldam—had known Wyszatycki since childhood, and both remember him working before the war for Jewish barbers in Borysław.³⁴ Izaak Bakenrot states that:

Before the war, I lived in Wolanka and I knew Wyszatycki from there, as he also lived in Wolanka. I know him even from school. He is small with a hunchback, and his sister was slim and straight and worked at Nadler's barber shop. Already before the war, he was a Ukrainian nationalist.³⁵

These witnesses remember Wyszatycki taking an active role in the pogrom and gaining access to an apartment that had belonged to a Jew by the name of Gartenberg, who was murdered by the Ukrainians.³⁶ Wyszatycki was also to take over a Jewish barber's shop 'which had belonged to a Polish citizen of Jewish nationality—a certain Samuel Stempler, who was subsequently liquidated with his entire family at Michał Wyszatycki's special request'.³⁷ Aleksander Hauer remembers Stempler telling him that 'Wyszatycki threatened him [and said] that he would liquidate him in the coming days. And he must have done so.'³⁸ In the court hearings, while Wyszatycki does not deny having been trained by the Jewish barber Moryc Laufer, he claims that he opened his own cooperative in Tustanowice and had nothing to do with the disappearance of Gartenberg. He insists that his accusers have invented the story of his crimes because he 'stemmed from a Ukrainian family'.³⁹ Denying the accusation of instigating the murder of the Gartenbergs, he maintains: 'After the pogrom of Jews, Gartenberg's daughter [Karola], who was still working alone, came to me and asked me to take over the apartment.' Wyszatycki claims that Karola Gartenberg moved to Borysław to her fiancé's and that he paid her three months' rent.⁴⁰

Wyszatycki's case illustrates the ways in which this first outbreak of anti-Jewish violence offered local perpetrators a chance to settle personal vendettas while improving their own economic standing. And there were material gains to be made. Aside from those who participated or sheltered their Jewish neighbours, the pogrom gave people the opportunity to loot

Jewish property as it stood in the abandoned apartments. In her testimony recorded in May 1945, Gina Wieser, a seamstress from Borysław, recalls how ‘the winter came and terrible poverty prevailed in town. Jews for the most part were robbed during the first massacre, when they were hiding in various dens. They returned to bare walls.’⁴¹ Heilig maintains that his family’s neighbours informed on them for allegedly hiding leather from a store that had been liquidated back in 1939.⁴²

Neighbours could become rescuers as well as perpetrators; pre-war relations served as a starting point not only for betrayal but for assistance too. During the pogrom, Jews sought the protection of their gentile neighbours. Raoul Harmelin’s mother turned to her poor neighbour, whom she had helped in the past with occasional gifts of goods and clothing. Eventually, the family hid in their own attic but felt protected by this man who made sure ‘that nobody came and took us out’.⁴³ Meir and Genia Weiss, together with their three children, Aharon (Lonek), Shevach and Mila, hid in Wolanka in the house of their Ukrainian neighbour, a poor widow called Julia Lasotowa.⁴⁴ Likewise, Edzia Szepeicher’s family was sheltered by a Polish neighbour named Stojakowa, who stood in the door and cursed Jews, in order to dispel suspicion.⁴⁵ Dr Juliusz Landau survived the first pogrom in Schodnica (a suburb of Borysław) thanks to his former patient, Iwan Baran, whose life he ‘once saved’. ‘He was a Ukrainian; he took me to the hospital and put a guard by me with the order not to touch me.’ Landau had founded that hospital and was the only physician working there. He was not only well respected but also much needed due to his skills.⁴⁶

The pogrom proved a traumatic event even for those who were spared and whose close relatives survived the violence unhurt. Maks Doner remembers that little sympathy was expressed towards the wounded Jewish victims when they were finally released home by their oppressors.⁴⁷ On the day following the violent scenes, Landau cried while walking in the streets of Schodnica, which was devoid of Jews, since those who had survived the massacre had escaped to Borysław. He continued working in his out-patients’ clinic and the hospital and still saw patients—Jews and non-Jews. Landau resumed work immediately but ‘was unable to forget about the pogrom’.⁴⁸ Irena Peritz describes her mother Rozalia Korec mourning the death of Stefa Auber—her youngest sister—who was killed in Schodnica during the pogrom together with her husband Stefan: ‘Stefa was the first member of our family to lose her life so tragically. My mother was inconsolable. She wept for days. We were overwhelmed with horror

and disbelief at what was happening.⁴⁹ The pogrom put in question the seemingly peaceful interethnic relations Boryslaw had enjoyed before the war. The state of disbelief seems particularly striking in the accounts of survivors who were children or adolescents at the time and who struggled to comprehend this explosion of interethnic conflict. Wolanski confesses, ‘I can honestly say that until war broke out I was blissfully unaware of the volatile ethnic mix in our town, and its potential for bloody mayhem.’⁵⁰ She emphasizes that:

Our attackers weren’t German. They were people we knew, and people who knew us—Poles and Ukrainians. Mostly they were peasants who lived in the surrounding countryside, people who brought their produce to our marketplaces, and whose forested mountain hamlets, like Rybnik, we children from the towns knew as our summer playgrounds. My parents sold flour and sugar and rice to them. And there they were turning the steel blades of their sickles, ordinarily used to swish through swathes of grass and wheat, against human flesh and bone, the flesh and bone of Jewish men, women and children.⁵¹

DURING ROUND-UPS

For Jewish men, women and children interethnic relations continued to play a critical role during round-ups and in their daily lives in the periods of relative respite. There were former acquaintances whom they tried to avoid at any cost because they were considered dangerous.⁵² Before the ghetto was established, semi-normal neighbourly relations continued, though. Heilig notes that, thanks to contacts with neighbours, he often had the opportunity to listen to the BBC at the Czajkowskis.⁵³ During the weeks and months of relative respite, Jews could still visit their gentile neighbours and friends. On 3 May 1942, Wolanski records in her diary that she made a casual visit to her non-Jewish friend Hanka Blocka: ‘We wanted to swap berets. Mine is brown and hers is navy, but hers is too small. It was wonderful to see her home.’⁵⁴

During round-ups, particular individuals gained power of life and death over Jews in the neighbourhood. Wolanski believes that her gentile neighbours pointed out Jews’ homes to their enemies.⁵⁵ In the August 1942 *Aktion*, when she hid with her mother, Wolanski suspected that their Ukrainian neighbour, Fylypiak, had betrayed them.⁵⁶ In December 1942, during the fifth *Aktion*, Harmelin’s mother hid for five weeks in the

home of a former Ukrainian patient. This was in his pantry, where ‘she was standing up in a small cupboard all the time, and let out at night for a short while’.⁵⁷ The rescuer acted selflessly. Especially deadly was the role of the Ukrainian militia, which had been converted into an auxiliary police force (*ukrainische Hilfspolizei*) charged with assisting a unit of the German *Schutzpolizei* or *Schupo*. Its members’ familiarity with the local Jewish community and ‘intimate knowledge’ of the social space made their encounters with former neighbours particularly deadly. For Jewish men, women and children, confronting perpetrators whom they had known before the war, increased their sense of betrayal. During a round-up in November 1941, two Ukrainian policemen took the Heiligs back to their house. One of them, named Wepryk, was an acquaintance. The policemen had seized the Heiligs’ parents and though the father was eventually released, the mother perished, along with other Jews.⁵⁸ Commenting on the actions of the policemen, Heilig remarks: ‘[They] took away people they encountered by chance or whom they knew and wanted to take revenge on for whatever reason.’⁵⁹ During subsequent round-ups, the Ukrainian police dragged Jews to assembly points. Raoul Harmelin states emphatically: ‘The whole Ukrainian police were locals.’⁶⁰ He recognized Babiak, an old school friend, among the policemen who dragged him to the Grażyna cinema in August 1942. Harmelin offered Babiak a string of pearls he had been given by his mother to barter in such emergencies, ‘and he took that away from me, and he beat me up with the butt of the rifle.’⁶¹ Ignacy Goldwasser found out the tragic circumstances of his father’s death in February 1943. When Wilhelm Goldwasser, the father, was put on the last truck taking Jews to be shot, someone gave him a white sheet, so he could disguise himself as a member of the Jewish police and have a chance of surviving. ‘Unfortunately, a Ukrainian policeman passed by, recognized Daddy, knew that he was not a Jewish policeman, and sent him with the others to death in the “Slaughter House”.’⁶² Yet, some encounters with acquaintances, even those known for their brutality, could arouse a degree of compassion for particular Jewish victims. When her bunker was discovered in the summer 1943, Sabina Wolanski was taken to the police station, where she awaited execution. One of the Ukrainian militia men recognized her. ‘He was a former school friend of my brother’s, a Ukrainian boy called Janek. ... He spoke to me, and apologized for not being able to help. He couldn’t let me go, he told me. ... He asked me if there was anything he could do for me.’⁶³

When Jews sought desperately to hide and escape death during German round-ups, the local population could seize the chance to enrich themselves. In September 1942, Clara Eisenstein was captured together with her baby daughter. She managed to escape from the truck unnoticed. In the pouring rain, she approached a lodge by one of the oil wells: 'I knocked at the door. I offered her my ring and she let me in'.⁶⁴ During the *Aktion* of November 1943, Ignacy Goldwasser managed to escape. Seeking refuge, he found himself terrified and confused: 'There was no time to think. Betrayal lurked everywhere. There was a wax mine, and some sandy ground nearby. Here some Ukrainian youngsters spotted me. They approached me [and said I must] buy myself out or they would hand me over to the Germans. I could not do anything, and I gave them my new coat. It was so difficult for me to part with it. Two sweaters I had on me followed the coat.'⁶⁵

In the survivors' accounts, one category of collaborator strikes a particularly painful chord: those who were members of the Jewish police (*Ordnungsdienst*), headed by Bernard (Walek) Eisenstein (1896–1945).⁶⁶ Some testimonies portray the process of moral erosion of its members, who 'initially must have been driven by good intentions. ... They all acted in good faith [but] time and the Germans turned them into executioners and traitors of their own nation.'⁶⁷ Gradually the *Ordnungsdienst* was turned into a force Jews came to distrust and fear. Gina Wieser notes in her testimony about the massive round-up in the autumn of 1942:

Taught by previous experience, Jews began preparing various hide-outs, some very ingenious. The Germans would never discover them; they only searched under beds and in cabinets. But our Jewish police bent over backwards in order to render service to the Germans during round-up[s] and turned in all Jews they could find. They taught the Germans to look in bunkers and dens, dig under the floors and knock down walls.⁶⁸

In the *Aktion* of November 1942, 'hideous trading in people lasted for all five weeks'.⁶⁹ The *Judenrat* freed those from whom they could extract money and substituted poor people instead.⁷⁰ Wieser refers to 'the Jewish Gestapo man Eisenstein', who walked in the forests surrounding Borysław with the Ukrainian police, trying to convince people to come out of their hiding places and report for work.⁷¹ Blima Hamerman calls Eisenstein 'the devil incarnate'.⁷² Walek Eisenstein was deported to Płaszów in April 1944 but returned to be used by the Germans to persuade Jews who had

gone into hiding to return to the labour camp.⁷³ In another testimony, the Jewish police are described as assisting ‘fascist murderers in the pogroms searching for their brethren’.⁷⁴

HIDING

From the spring of 1943, more and more of the Jews remaining in Borysław sought safety by constructing hiding places to use not only during round-ups but also as long-term bunkers that could offer them a chance of survival until the end of the war. Both the bunkers built in the large town and those in the vicinity around it relied on outside assistance.⁷⁵ Harmelin’s family depended on his father’s former patients for help during round-ups. For others, neighbourly relations played a crucial role. Decisions about who to trust when planning survival strategies were matters of life and death. Desperately assessing their options in the autumn of 1943, the Heilig brothers decided against seeking a hide-out in Borysław or in its surroundings because the ‘foresters and forest rangers were primarily Ukrainians’.⁷⁶ Gina Wieser too says that ‘the most convenient [place] was the forest which was directly near the garrison’, but it was guarded by a Ukrainian forester who ‘denounced every bunker’.⁷⁷ Salomon Rosenberg left Borysław with several families to hide in a more distant bunker in the forests near Turka, a remote and isolated location where people seldom went. The site had been chosen specially by a Jewish forester named Tepper who was a member of his group. The group seem to have tried to minimize their contacts with all former acquaintances in Borysław.⁷⁸

Benio Haberman was sheltered by his Ukrainian wet nurse, Hania Proc, who also agreed to hide his cousin, Sabina Wolanski, for a brief period.⁷⁹ A group of Jews hiding in a forest in the spring of 1944 were ‘totally dependent on friends from the town to bring us food, risking their lives with each trip. We had a bit of jam and bread, I think, and some kind of tea. There was no shortage of water, and we had sugar. On good nights, someone would bring us something hot and cooked.’⁸⁰ The group relied on friends of Josek Haberman, one of the young men who had prepared the bunker. In the spring of 1944, Harmelin’s family was offered a place to hide by some Polish acquaintances. Unsure if this would be safe, he decided against their proposition. ‘I thought that they were collaborators, and I didn’t trust them. As it turned out ..., one of them was not only real, but he hid 13 Jews, and he didn’t take any money for it. But ... you

didn't know whom to trust, because a lot of Poles and Ukrainians were hiding the Jews only to rob them and to denounce them to the Germans.' Harmelin's father found a hiding place at a house that belonged to the son of a pre-war acquaintance called Makar. The son hid not only the Harmelins but a whole group of Jews:

We were, of course, paying him for hiding us, but he would not take money for my future wife, Rita, because he was working with her, and he knew that she had no money. So he said, 'For her, I will not take any money.' He had a wife and two small children, and he risked his life all the time.⁸¹

Juliusz Landau was respected as a physician and was offered help by his patients and friends.⁸² In August 1943, together with his mother and sister, he went into hiding after being tipped off about Jews being moved to the ghetto in Borysław. He was assisted by the family of Wiktoria Godzin, and the three Jews remained hidden away for ten months.⁸³ Up to the very end of the German occupation, acquaintances and friends remained the primary network of assistance for Jews desperately seeking refuge.⁸⁴

For Jews in hiding, the fear of denunciation loomed constantly over their lives. In the autumn of 1943, Leon Eisenstein placed his wife Clara and their young daughter Irena with a Polish family in exchange for payment. 'It would [have been] nice, but they started to spend the money we gave them. They had to change the gold coins. They didn't want to wait until the war was over. So somebody denounced them, [saying] that they [were] hiding Jews.'⁸⁵ Survivors recall Ukrainian and Polish adolescent boys as 'a nightmare and terror of all hide-outs'. 'With nothing to do, since there was no school for them, they spent their entire time searching for hidden Jews'.⁸⁶ Gina Wieser stayed briefly in a hiding place near the Borysław power station, which housed over 60 Jews. In the winter of 1943, the Germans had suspicions that there was a bunker in the area but they could not find it. Survivors say they believe that it was discovered due to denunciation by a local Pole called Warchalowski, 'who got famous by denouncing Jewish hiding places and he snooped about and searched everywhere around' (though the bunker could also have been betrayed by a Jew who left it after an internal conflict).⁸⁷ Another survivor describes Warchalowski as someone who 'turned searching for Jews into a sport'. He devoted a whole month to his search for the bunker under the ruins of the power station and was rewarded by the German authorities with five thousand zloty and several litres of vodka.⁸⁸ In the last weeks of the

occupation, some individuals assisted the Jews in the hope of expunging their dubious record of collaboration with the Germans.⁸⁹ Others continued to look for Jewish bunkers. From the testimonies of survivors, it is impossible to assess whether the propensity to rescue Jews increased as the probability of German defeat became clear to everyone.

CONCLUSIONS

Omer Bartov argues ‘for the integration of personal accounts, or testimonies, into the historical reconstruction of the Holocaust as documents equal in validity to other forms of documentation’.⁹⁰ His recommendation proves particularly compelling when we try to understand the social dynamics in small communities on Europe’s eastern borderlands before and during the war.⁹¹ To delve into the fate of the victims and the experiences of survivors under the German occupation, Jewish personal accounts prove indispensable. This chapter has mapped out interethnic relations in the local industrial setting of Boryslaw, looking at how Jewish survivors remembered these relations with others before the war and how they unravelled during the Holocaust. Their testimonies help us understand the ways in which Jews tried to make sense of ‘intimate violence’. Some saw former acquaintances, neighbours and classmates who joined in persecuting them as simply ‘local’ perpetrators, whom they lumped together. Others differentiated between Polish and Ukrainian attitudes, finding these broad ethnic categories sufficient to explain individual behaviour. In one such ethnic generalization, Raoul Harmelin maintains that ‘Ukrainians generally were ... behaving much better toward Jews than the Poles. They may have been brutal ... when beating the Jews ... and a lot of them were helping the Germans and the [militia] Ukrainians ... kill Jews, but generally they behaved much better than the Poles.’⁹² When discussing the local population, most testimonies, however, put more blame on the Ukrainians. Arie Würzberg, for example, testifying in the autumn of 1946, says: ‘The attitudes of Ukrainians to us were murderous. They persecuted Jews at every step like the Germans. There were Ukrainians who busied themselves with searching for Jewish hide-outs.’⁹³ He adds: ‘Attitudes of Poles towards Jews were different.’ According to Maks Doner, in the winter of 1943, before the final liquidation of the Boryslaw ghetto, ‘many Jews found themselves in bunkers or hidden by Polish acquaintances. Only in exceptional cases would a Ukrainian hide a Jew.’⁹⁴ Testimonies suggest that Jews were indeed more afraid of Ukrainians, and this seems to have resulted from the hierarchy that was set in place by the Germans.

During the *Aktion* in November 1942, Ignacy Goldwasser was caught, together with his mother. He testifies that, while the arrested Jews were being led to the assembly point, ‘Poles helped the Jews to escape. Several dozen Poles mixed up with the Jews and in the confusion some managed to escape, among them my mother.’⁹⁵ Although it is almost impossible to generalize about the social behaviour of people in Borysław and elsewhere along static ethnic categories, we may well ask whether the opportunities of collaboration given to Ukrainians—more than to local Poles—transformed local relations. What was the role of German policies in controlling and shaping social processes in this local setting? The Germans and Ukrainians together hunted down, apprehended and murdered most of the Jews hiding in the town and its environs.

Though afraid to hide Jews over a long period of time, some gentile inhabitants of Borysław did let them in to their homes temporarily, so they could spend a few hours indoors in relative safety if they had nowhere else to go. These gentiles risked being denounced to the Germans by their own neighbours.⁹⁶ Indeed, fear of other non-Jews stopped them from helping Jews from the very early days of the persecution and murder. Blima Hamerman remembers that when she was tortured during the first pogrom, along with other Jews brought to the building of the NKVD:

[The] torturers let us stand while they busied themselves with other victims whom others brought to them from the town. Escape was impossible since we were surrounded by hostile faces. Not everyone beat us, but everyone threatened and guarded us. There were also those who [might] have helped us but they also feared the hooligans.⁹⁷

Hamerman also points to the erosion of social norms occurring over time:

[At first] our neighbours still remembered the positions we ... held before, and sheltered us in the early round-ups, expecting that we would show them our gratitude in the future. Later, when our denigration ... reached the absolute low, these very neighbours, having robbed our belongings that we had entrusted [to] them, called the Germans and pointed [to] where the Jews hid.⁹⁸

Mosze Blam insists that the population of Borysław did not have a particularly anti-Semitic attitude: ‘Many Poles helped us all the time. Even later, when we were already in the ghetto, many Christians visited us constantly and brought us food.’⁹⁹ Reflecting on the responsibility for

the destruction of the Jewish community in Boryslaw, Blima Hamerman speaks of ‘evil instincts and greed for Jewish property’ motivating those of ‘our Aryan neighbours who volunteered their assistance [to the Germans] and who must take at least 50 per cent of the guilt’.¹⁰⁰

In Jewish testimonies from Boryslaw, we find an abundance of painful memories of betrayal. The survivors give accounts varying in style and degree of detail, but all describe the role played by the local population in the destruction of the Jewish community. They all make clear how encounters with neighbours, school friends, former business associates and patients had a profound impact on the fates of each individual in Boryslaw under the German occupation.

For three years, following the summer of 1941, in a town where Jews comprised one-third of the population, and where the ghetto was established relatively late, there was a gradual ‘unravelling of interethnic relations’. It found expression during the initial pogrom, in the subsequent round-ups and in daily encounters between the inhabitants of Boryslaw. How did relations between Poles, Ukrainians and Jews shift in the context of the German occupation? Again the question is whether Jews were more likely to receive help from the Poles, since both Jews and Poles were targeted by Ukrainian nationalism. Or did the social milieu play a decisive role in assistance given to Jewish members of the local elite? In many accounts, particularly those from adult survivors, the names of people who played an important role in the fates of their relatives come out. These accounts use several tropes when they try to explain the nature of local collaboration and assistance. Those who participated in the persecution and murder of Jews, or who profited from such acts, might be categorized as members of national collectives—Germans, Ukrainians or Poles. Alternatively the authors might stress that local perpetrators belonged to the social margins, or they might express surprise that ‘respectable citizens’ should turn into Nazi collaborators. Ultimately, however, these categories cannot satisfactorily explain the behaviour of local collaborators vis-à-vis their former Jewish neighbours nor capture the sense of betrayal Jews felt from all around. Social dynamics under the German occupation proved unpredictable. Even former friends and neighbours could turn into perpetrators—or helpers. Who was to know? Jews could never rely solely on former social relations, because, after 1941, these shifted or were completely devalued. They were at the mercy of the Polish and Ukrainian inhabitants of their town. This was the core experience behind the ‘cold facts with dates’.

NOTES

1. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), RG-50.462*0084, 'Oral History with Raoul Harmelin, interviewed by Edith Millman 26 April 1992'. See the transcription, p. 19, http://collections.ushmm.org/oh_findingaids/RG-50.462.0084_trs_en.pdf, date accessed 18 August 2015. See S. Wolanski (with D. Bagnall) (2008) *Destined to Live. One Woman's War, Life, Loves Remembered* (London, New York, Sydney and Auckland: Fourth Estate), p. 58.
2. O. Bartov (2011) 'Wartime Lies and Other Testimonies: Jewish-Christian Relations in Buczacz, 1939–1944', *East European Politics and Societies* 25, p. 487.
3. I rely here on Bartov's broad definition of testimonies, according to which these 'include contemporary accounts and diaries, as well as post-war interviews; written, oral, audio, and videotaped testimonies; courtroom witness accounts; and memoirs. Such testimonies were given by people belonging to all three categories we have come to associate with the Holocaust and other genocides, namely, victims, perpetrators, and bystanders.' Bartov (2011) 'Wartime Lies and Other Testimonies', p. 487. The present chapter is based on a sample of testimonies, but far from exhausting the relatively large number of Jewish accounts from Boryslaw. See C. R. Browning (2010) *Remembering Survival. Inside a Nazi Slave Labor Camp* (New York and London: W. W. Norton), pp. 1–12.
4. For discussion of post-war trials in Poland, see K. Persak (2011) 'Jedwabne before the Court. Poland's Justice and the Jedwabne Massacre—Investigations and Court Proceedings, 1947–1974', *East European Politics and Societies*, vol. 25, No. 3, pp. 410–32; Alina Skibińska (2011) "Dostał 10 lat, ale za co?" Analiza motywacji sprawców zbrodni na Żydach na wsi kieleckiej w latach 1942–1944' in B. Engelking and J. Grabowski (eds) *Zarys krajobrazu. Wiśń polska wobec Zagłady Żydów 1942–1945* (Warsaw: Stowarzyszenie Centrum Badań nad Zagładą Żydów), pp. 313–44; A. Kornbluth (2013), "Jest wielu Kainów pośród nas." Polski wymiar sprawiedliwości a Zagłada, 1944–1956', *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i materiały*, No. 9, pp. 157–72.
5. See N. Aleksion (forthcoming) 'Intimate Violence: Jewish Testimonies on Victims and Perpetrators in Eastern Galicia' in H. Kubatova and J. Lanicek (eds) *Jews and Gentiles in East Central Europe in the 20th Century* (under review).
6. See A. F. Frank (2007) *Oil Empire: Visions of Prosperity in Austrian Galicia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press); V. Schatzker (2015) *The Jewish Oil Magnates of Galicia* (Montreal: McGill University Press); also V. Moskalets (2014) 'The Exodus from Galician Mitsraim: The Unemployment of Jewish Workers in Boryslav and the Rescue Campaign of 1887–1889', *Scripta Judaica Cracoviensia* vol. 12, pp. 59–68. See N. M. Gelber, 'Toldot

- hayehudim be'borislav' (1959), *Sefer Zikaron l'kehikot kedoshot Drohobycz—Borislav ve'hasviva* (Memorial to the Jews of Drohobycz, Boryslaw and Surroundings), ed. Dr. N. M. Gelber (Tel Aviv: Association of Former Residents of Drohobycz, Boryslaw and Surroundings). See N. M. Gelber, *A History of the Jews in Boryslaw*, <http://www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/Drohobycz/dro171.html>, date accessed 18 August 2015.
7. Bartov (2011) 'Wartime Lies and Other Testimonies', p. 486. Piotr Wróbel notes: 'The population of Boryslaw had always been ethnically, linguistically, and religiously mixed. People were so used to this that they did not hide their identities in any way, spoke their native languages openly, and proudly belonged to ethnic organizations of all kinds.' P. Wróbel (2011) 'Polish-Ukrainian Relations during World War II. The Boryslaw Case Study. A Polish Perspective', *East European Societies and Politics*, vol. XX no. X, p. 4.
 8. Bartov (2011) 'Wartime Lies and Other Testimonies', p. 486. 'Jews constituted about 90 percent of all bar and restaurant owners, shopkeepers, and large merchants. Few shops belonged to Poles or Ukrainian cooperatives. ... Undoubtedly, the most striking socioeconomic polarization existed among the Jews. Most workers were of Polish and Ukrainian background. During the interwar period, the elites of Boryslaw, mine and factory directors, engineers, teachers, priests, and municipal clerks, were predominantly Polish.' Wróbel (2011) 'Polish-Ukrainian Relations during World War II', pp. 4–5.
 9. M. Heilig (1997) 'Wspomnienia z lat okupacji niemieckiej niemieckiej 1941–1944', Lund, Szwecja, September 1997, p. 9, <http://www.drohobycz-boryslaw.org/images/attachments/families/heilig/1.pdf>, date accessed 20 August 2015, p. 2. Heilig insists that only in the 1930s were there stores bearing signs 'Polish store of colonial wares'. Aside from infrequent anti-Jewish outbursts, there was no distinctive intolerance on a daily basis. Even in a state high school, Jews were excused from writing on the Shabbat if it were requested.
 10. Harmelin/Millman (1992) 'Oral History with Raoul Harmelin', p. 1.
 11. 'The economic situation of my family can be described as satisfactory. We lived in Wolanka ... in a newly built, modest house of our own. Parents were able to pay for high school education for me (gymnasium) and for the brother (private commercial gymnasium), which was a major financial burden. Relations with non-Jewish neighbours were, in essence, correct.' Heilig (1997) 'Wspomnienia z lat okupacji niemieckiej 1941–1944', p. 3.
 12. See the interview carried out by Krzysztof Bielawski on 28 January 2013 in Dniepropetrovsk: <http://www.sztetl.org.pl/pl/article/boryslaw/16,relacje-wspomnienia/40965,aharon-weiss-ur-1929-o-rodzynie-szkole-synagodze-mykwie-cadyku-z-czortkowa-wojnie-i-okresie-po-1945/>, date accessed 26 August 2015.

13. Wolanski (2008) *Destined to Live*, p. 9.
14. Wolanski (2008) *Destined to Live*, p. 14.
15. Wróbel (2011) 'Polish-Ukrainian Relations', p. 7.
16. Bartov (2011) 'Wartime Lies and Other Testimonies', p. 486.
17. Bartov (2011) 'Wartime Lies and Other Testimonies', p. 486.
18. Wróbel (2011) 'Polish-Ukrainian Relations,' pp. 10–11. For an essay summarizing Polish experience of the German and Soviet occupation during the first two years of the war, see R. Wnuk (2009) 'Polen zwischen Scylla und Charybdis. Deutsche und sowjetische Besatzung 1939–1941', *Osteuropa* no. 7–8, pp. 157–72. According to Wróbel, 'Most militia members were young workers of Jewish background. Some were of Ukrainian extraction. The Poles and most Ukrainians watched them with growing hatred.' Wróbel (2011) 'Polish-Ukrainian Relations', p. 9. See Harmelin/Millman (1992) 'Oral History with Raoul Harmelin', p. 8.
19. Heilig (1997) 'Wspomnienia z lat okupacji niemiecji niemieckiej 1941–1944', p. 9.
20. Jewish survivors reflected on their unique situation. Sabina Wolanski remarks sarcastically that the town was 'not so special though that the Nazis and their collaborators refrained from ripping out its Jewish heart. They simply did so more slowly, so as to keep oil pumping into the war machine for as long as possible.' Wolanski (2008) *Destined to Live*, p. 12.
21. See T. Sandkühler (1996) *Endlösung in Galizien: Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und the Rettungsinisiativen von Berthold Beitz 1941–1944* (Bonn: Dietz). See also Wiesław Budzyński (2005) *Miasto Schulza* (Warsaw: Prószyński i S-ka), pp. 218–31.
22. See 'Borysław' in G. P. Megargee (ed.) (2009) *The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos, 1933–1945*, vol. II B (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), pp. 755–7. See also I. Kysla (2014) *Vyzhyvannia za ekstremalnykh umov: Holokost u Boryslavi (1941–1944)*, <http://uamoderna.com/md/232-232>, date accessed 31 December 2015.
23. On microhistory, see A. I. Port (2015) 'History from Below, The History of Everyday Life and Microhistory' in *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 11, pp. 108–13.
24. J. T. Gross (2001) *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland* (Princeton: Princeton University Press). See also B. Engelking, J. Leociak and D. Libionka (eds) (2007) *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: IFiS PAN); and J. Grabowski (2013) *Hunt for the Jews: Betrayal and Murder in German-Occupied Poland* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press); A. Bikont (2015) *The Crime and the Silence: Confronting the Massacre of Jews in Wartime Jedwabne* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux).

25. About this trope, see D. Pohl (1997) *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944: Organisation und Durchfuehrung eines staatlichen Massenverbrechens* (München: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag), p. 55. Following the pogrom, in which attacks on Jews had been excused as revenge for alleged Jewish collaboration during the Soviet occupation, Leon Knebel remembers ‘local denunciators who, in July 1941, volunteered to point out Jews allegedly sympathetic to communism’. Archiwum Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego (Archives of the Jewish Historical Institute, AŻIH), 301/679, Leon Knebel, born 1903, protocol taken on 2 July 1945 at the Historical Commission in Przemyśl, p. 2.
26. Heilig (1979) ‘Wspomnienia z lat okupacji niemieckiej 1941–1944’, pp. 4–5.
27. Heilig (1979) ‘Wspomnienia z lat okupacji niemieckiej 1941–1944’, p. 5.
28. On the wave of pogroms, see K. Struve (2015) *Deutsche Herrschaft, ukrainischer Nationalismus, antijüdische Gewalt. Der Sommer 1941 in der Westukraine* (München: De Gruyter-Oldenbourg); W. Mędykowski (2012) *W cieniu gigantów. Pogromy 1941 roku w byłej sowieckiej strefie okupacyjnej: kontekst historyczny, społeczny i kulturowy* (Warsaw, ISP PAN); W. Mędykowski (2004) ‘Pogromy 1941 roku na terytorium byłej okupacji sowieckiej w relacjach żydowskich’ in K. Jasiewicz (ed.) *Świat niepożegnany: Żydzi na dawnych ziemiach wschodnich Rzeczypospolitej w XVIII-XX wieku* (Warsaw: ISP PAN-RYTM), pp. 759–809.
29. Aharon Weiss remembers Terlecki coming to check on him and his siblings. Phone interview with Aharon Weiss, 6 September 2015. About the family’s relationship with Terlecki, see also S. Weiss (2002) *Ziemia i chmury. Z Szewachem Weisssem rozmawia Joanna Szwedowska* (Sejny: Fundacja Pogranicze), pp. 37–8.
30. Salomon Rosenberg, AŻIH, 301/3119, Protokół spisany w Komitecie Żydowskim w Bytomiu w dniu 29 listopada 1947 na okoliczność przestępczej działalności Dra Terleckiego Mikołaja podczas okupacji niemieckiej w Borysławiu, 29 November 1947, Bytom, p. 1. See also the testimony given by Jonas Frysz on 2 December 1947 in Bytom, Yad Vashem Archives (YVA), M 49 E, file 3120, pp. 1–2.
31. Heilig (1979) *Wspomnienia z lat okupacji niemieckiej 1941–1944*, pp. 5–6. According to Heilig, Dr. Teicher committed suicide, together with his wife and two daughters, when they were locked up during one of the round-ups. According to Edzia Szeicher’s testimony Teicher and his family were denounced by a Ukrainian director of the hospital. AŻIH, 3359, p. 2.
32. YVA, M1.E/2492, p. 2.
33. See Instytut Pamięci Narodowej we Wrocławiu (The Institute of National Remembrance in Wrocław) IPN Wr 488/458, t. 1, Akt oskarżenia przeciwko Michałowi Wyszatyckiemu o czyny z art. 1 pkt. 1 i 2 oraz art. 2 dekr.

- z 31 VIII 1944, Prokuratura Sądu Apelacyjnego we Wrocławiu, nr S 151/50, 31 May 1950, signed by vice-prosecutor Dr Pallan, pp. 2–5.
34. IPN Wr 488/458, t. 2, Protokół przesłuchania świadka, 25 March 1950, Wałbrzych, p. 15 verte. Ibid., Protokół przesłuchania świadka, 27 March 1950, Wałbrzych, p. 18 verte.
 35. IPN Wr 488/458, t. 2, Protokół przesłuchania świadka, 7 March 1950 in Wałbrzych, Nr akt Ds Sz. 13/50, p. 7.
 36. Bakenrot notes that he did not see it with his own eyes, since he ‘worked as a tailor for the Germans and was not able to move around the city of Boryslaw freely’. IPN Wr 488/458, t. 2, Protokół konfrontacji, Wałbrzych 18 March 1950, p. 11 verte.
 37. IPN Wr 488/458, t. 2, Protokół przesłuchania świadka, Aleksander Hauer, 28 March 1950, p. 22 verte. See the testimony submitted for Stempler, The Central Database of Shoah Victims’ Names, [http://db.yadvashem.org/names/nameDetails.html?itemId=1945555&language=en#!prettyPhoto\[gallery2\]/0/](http://db.yadvashem.org/names/nameDetails.html?itemId=1945555&language=en#!prettyPhoto[gallery2]/0/), date accessed 1 May 2015.
 38. IPN Wr 488/458, t. 2, Protokół przesłuchania świadka, Aleksander Hauer, 28 March 1950, p. 22 verte. See the testimony submitted for Stempler, The Central Database of Shoah Victims’ Names.
 39. IPN Wr 488/458, t. 1, Protokół rozprawy głównej 24 July 1950, Sąd Apelacyjny we Wrocławiu, Sygn. Akt III K 99/50, p. 69. See also IPN Wr 488/458, t. 2, Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanego, Michał Wyszatycki, 3 April 1950, Wałbrzych, pp. 23–24 verte.
 40. IPN Wr 488/458, t. 1, Protokół rozprawy głównej 24 July 1950, p. 69 verte. The name of Karola Gertenberg appears in the Central Database of Shoah Victims’ Names. Wyszatycki was initially sentenced to death but the sentence was successfully appealed against and was commuted to a prison sentence. IPN Wr 488/458, t. 1, Sentencja wyroku w imieniu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, Sąd Apelacyjny we Wrocławiu, 25 July 1950, Sygn. Akt III K 99/50, pp. 87–88 verte. See IPN Wr 488/458, t. 2, Wyrok w imieniu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, 26 April 1951, odpis, nr II K 213/51, pp. 31–31 verte.
 41. AŻIH, 301/176, p. 2. Testimony was taken 31 May 1945 in Cracow. Gina Wisner was born in Boryslaw on 3 August 1916.
 42. Heilig (1979) *Wspomnienia z lat okupacji niemieckiej 1941–1944*, p. 9.
 43. Harmelin/Millman (1992) *Oral History with Raoul Harmelin*, pp. 9–10.
 44. See the interview carried out by Krzysztof Bielawski on 28 January 2013 in Dniepropietrowsk, <http://www.sztetl.org.pl/pl/article/boryslaw/16,relacje-wspomnienia/40965,aharon-weiss-ur-1929-o-rodzynie-szkole-synagodze-mykwie-cadyku-z-czortkowa-wojnie-i-okresie-po-1945/>, date accessed 26 August 2015.

45. AŻIH, 301/3359. Edzia Szepeicher, born 1914, embroiderer by profession. The testimony was recorded in Wałbrzych, 6 March 1948.
46. J. Landau (1999) 'Leczyłem żandarmów' in *Losy żydowskie. Świadectwo żywych, vol. 2* (Warsaw: Stowarzyszenie Żydów Kombatanatów i Poszkodowanych w II wojnie światowej), p. 167.
47. YVA, O.3/1323, p. 4, testimony of Maks Doner—a drawing technician born in Borysław in 1922. He was interviewed in Israel in 1959.
48. Landau (1999) 'Leczyłem żandarmów', p. 167.
49. I. Peritz, (1995) 'Irena's Diary. My Wartime Memories', p. 9. USHMM, Irena Peritz Papers, 1995.A.1064, <http://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn501032>, date accessed 31 December, 2015.
50. Wolanski (2008) *Destined to Live*, p. 8; and see p. 33: 'The first pogrom, which began on 3 July 1941, only two days after the German army entered our town, tore my world apart in a way that two years of Russian occupation hadn't achieved. ... I don't remember many details of this first, and for me, most traumatic slaughter in our town. ... Nothing in my life had prepared me for this, for the killing, the mutilation, the rape and torture which happened in the streets of our town over those 48 hours.'
51. Wolanski (2008) *Destined to Live*, pp. 33–34.
52. Salomon Rosenberg, AŻIH, 301/3119, p. 1.
53. Heilig (1979) *Wspomnienia z lat okupacji niemieckiej 1941–1944*, p. 11.
54. Wolanski (2008) *Destined to Live*, p. 64.
55. Wolanski (2008) *Destined to Live*, p. 49.
56. Wolanski (2008) *Destined to Live*, p. 71.
57. Harmelin/Millman (1992) *Oral History with Raoul Harmelin*, p. 17.
58. Heilig (1979) *Wspomnienia z lat okupacji niemieckiej*, p. 8. (28 November 1941).
59. Heilig (1979) *Wspomnienia z lat okupacji niemieckiej*, p. 9.
60. Harmelin/Millman (1992) *Oral History with Raoul Harmelin*, p. 21.
61. Harmelin/Millman (1992) *Oral History with Raoul Harmelin*, p. 14.
62. AŻIH, 301/2193, Ignacy Goldwasser, 'Niemcy w Borysławiu, pp. 4–5. The testimony was taken in Wałbrzych on 16 February 1947. Born in 1932 in Borysław, he survived in Borysław, Drohobycz and in hiding in the forest. See the Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names, [http://db.yadvashem.org/names/nameDetails.html?itemId=9265662&language=en#!prettyPhoto\[gallery2\]/0/](http://db.yadvashem.org/names/nameDetails.html?itemId=9265662&language=en#!prettyPhoto[gallery2]/0/), date accessed 19 December 2015.
63. Wolanski (2008) *Destined to Live*, p. 96.
64. The Herbert and Esther Taylor Oral History Collection, Cuba Family Archives for Southern Jewish History at the Breman Museum, Atlanta, Georgia: Clara Tilleman Eisenstein, 1 December 1995, OHC10173, p. 2.

65. AŻIH, 301/2193, Ignacy Goldwasser, 'Niemcy w Borysławiu', p. 3. Later on, the same youths found Leon's hide-out. Each one received a bribe of 100 zloty each, which was handed over by Hammerman.
66. See A. Wiess (1979) 'The Relations Between the Judenrat and the Jewish Police' in *Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe 1933–1945: Proceedings of the Third Yad Vashem International Historical Conference, Jerusalem, April 4–7, 1977* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem), pp. 201–17. See the Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names, [http://db.yadvashem.org/names/nameDetails.html?itemId=4329839&language=en#!prettyPhoto\[gallery2\]/0/](http://db.yadvashem.org/names/nameDetails.html?itemId=4329839&language=en#!prettyPhoto[gallery2]/0/), date accessed 19 December 2015.
67. YVA, M1.E/2492, Blima Hamerman, p. 5.
68. AŻIH, 301/176, p. 4.
69. AŻIH, 301/176, p. 4.
70. AŻIH, 301/176, p. 4.
71. AŻIH, 301/176, 'Gina Wieser born 3 August 1916 in Boryslaw', pp. 9–10. See also Wolanski (2008) *Destined to Live*, p. 118.
72. YVA, M1.E/2492, Blima Hamerman, p. 28.
73. Wolanski (2008) *Destined to Live*, p. 118.
74. Ghetto Fighters House 4480, file 02420, p. 3. Arie Wurzburg, born 1930 in Borysławiu, son of Józefa and Mina (de domo Spiegel). His father was an office clerk. Testimony taken 7 October 1946 at Lindenfels.
75. AŻIH, 301/679, p. 4.
76. Heilig (1979) *Wspomnienia z lat okupacji niemieckiej niemieckiej 1941–1944*, p. 20.
77. AŻIH, 301/176, p. 9.
78. Recollections by Mila Rosenberg-Eker and Martin Wilder, recorded by Shuki Ecker, private collection.
79. Wolanski (2008) *Destined to Live*, p. 87.
80. Wolanski (2008) *Destined to Live*, p. 115.
81. Harmelin/Millman (1992) *Oral history with Raoul Harmelin*, p. 22. On the shifting behaviour, see J. Tokarska-Bakir (2008) 'Sprawiedliwi niesprawiedliwi niesprawiedliwi sprawiedliwi', *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i Materiały* 4, pp. 170–214.
82. Landau (1999) *Leczylem żandarmów*, p. 168.
83. Landau (1999) *Leczylem żandarmów*, p. 169.
84. Sabina Wolanski describes her attempts to find a place to hide on 22 July 1944, just weeks before the liberation of Boryslaw: 'I remembered those friends of ours, the Staniszewskis, with whom Josek and I had shared Christmas as children. ... I kept walking until I reached the Staniszewskis. I asked if they would take me in. Jurek and his mother were all right, but Mr. Staniszewski was terrified when he saw me. One night only, I pleaded. I would go in the morning. He agreed. I had a bath, my first bath in I don't

- know how many months or years. I slept in a bed, and ate with them, and in the morning I left. I remember Mrs. Staniszewski hugging me, but her husband was keen for me to be gone.' Wolanski (2008) *Destined to Live*, p. 124.
85. Clara Tilleman Eisenstein, December 1, 1995, OHC10173, p. 3.
 86. YVA, M1.E/2492, testimony of Blima Hamerman, p. 23. See also, p. 36.
 87. AŽIH, 301/176, p. 7.
 88. YVA, M1.E/2492, Blima Hamerman, pp. 36–7.
 89. See YVA, O.3/1771, testimony of Szmuel and Bluma Weingarten recorded in Israel in 1961, pp. 39–40.
 90. Bartov (2011) 'Wartime Lies and Other Testimonies', p. 487.
 91. Bartov, (2011) 'Wartime Lies and Other Testimonies', p. 487.
 92. Harmelin/Millman (1992) *Oral History with Raoul Harmelin*, p. 37.
 93. Ghetto Fighters House 4480, file 02420, p. 3.
 94. Yad Vashem Archives. O.3/1323, p. 8.
 95. AŽIH, 301/2193, p. 3.
 96. YVA, M1.E/2492, testimony of Blima Hamerman, p. 36.
 97. YVA, M1.E/2492, testimony of Blima Hamerman, p. 2.
 98. YVA, M1.E/2492, testimony of Blima Hamerman, p. 36.
 99. YVA, O.3/1814, p. 5, Moshe Blam's testimony given in 1961. Born in 1899, he was an oil technician employed in Boryslaw.
 100. YVA, M1.E/2492, testimony of Blima Hamerman, p. 36.

Beyond the Bystander. Relations Between Jews and Gentile Poles in the General Government

Agnieszka Wierzcholska

In October 1942 Alter S., a 17-year old Jewish teenager, sneaked out of the Tarnów ghetto to the store his father had owned, grabbed some goods and fled. The store was now in the hands of Franciszek O., a gentile Pole, who took it over when, in the summer just gone, its Jewish proprietors had been forced to move into the ghetto. Franciszek O. immediately alerted the Polish ‘blue’ police, accusing Alter S. of burglary. The police searched for the teenager in vain. He managed to get away and was never heard of again.¹ Another Jewish store in the town, in Narutowicza Street, was ‘ownerless’ after the deportation and murder of its Jewish proprietors during the first *Aussiedlungsaktion* in Tarnów. Two non-Jewish Tarnovians disputed who should ‘inherit’ it. The case was a heated one and, in August 1942 was being argued in court.² In December 1942, the dead body of a Jewish boy was found near Tarnów’s railway station. The Polish lawyers

I owe much gratitude to Natalia Aleksium for her valuable comments on this article and for the ongoing discussions on the topic.

A. Wierzcholska (✉)

Institute for East European Studies, Free University of Berlin, Berlin, Germany
e-mail: a.wierzcholska@fu-berlin.de

suspected that he had been killed by non-Jewish Tarnovians who had at first tried to help him but who then decided to get rid of him in this way.³

All these cases occurred in a short space of time in one town, Tarnów, which lies some 80 kilometres east of Cracow. The present analysis aims to unveil the social processes that developed among the indigenous population under German occupation. The examples just given show a range of possible forms of behaviour the non-Jewish population could adopt. In the first two cases, though the local Poles had not assisted the German occupiers in destroying the Jewish community, they were nevertheless willing to profit from anti-Jewish policies by taking over Jewish stores, and they were eager to defend and maintain what they had newly acquired. The second example shows how competition and envy were rife among those who expected profits when material goods were considered 'ownerless' and hence 'fair game' for appropriation. Rivalry for social and material benefits among the gentile Polish population is crucial for understanding the social dynamics of the township in these times of war, violence and shortages. The examples also point to a shifting of social norms. If we believe the conclusions the Polish court made in the third case, gentile Tarnovians who initially consented to help a Jewish child could eventually bring themselves to murder him. This murder occurred after three extremely brutal *Aussiedlungsaktionen* (resettlement operations) which German forces carried out in Tarnów in 1942 before the eyes of the gentile Polish population. Their witnessing of the massacres and atrocities against Jews certainly had an impact on them. Thus, the radicalization brought about by German occupation is a crucial factor in the following analysis.

In this chapter, I take Tarnów as a microcosm for examining social processes under the occupation. I look closely at relations between Jews and gentile Poles. Jew–gentile relations at this time currently attract considerable interest in historical research. Since Jan T. Gross's groundbreaking study of the Jedwabne massacre,⁴ which questioned affirmative concepts of history and collective memory in Poland, scholars have increasingly been devoting their attention to the happenings of everyday life and to the social dynamics between Jews and non-Jews.⁵ They have scrutinized documents from the law courts, the 'blue police' and the post-war trials of collaborators.⁶ This examination of Tarnów aligns with recent studies that show the social dynamics taking place within particular occupied towns. I act on the assumption that the German occupiers did not find a blank canvas when they took the town, but a rich fabric of social relations which they then subverted. Social processes were set in motion that have yet to receive the full attention due to them. We already know a fair amount

about the bigger cities and about some regions during the time of German occupation, but the complexities of everyday life for populations of other areas in Eastern Europe require further research.

Taking a close-up view of one town changes the perspective as well as the categories used to describe historical actors, and yields new insights. We see social processes with their temporal dynamic, with shifts and sometimes inconsistencies, and this provides a better understanding of relationships among the occupied population, taking in both Jews and non-Jews. Static categories fail to explain much of what went on. Thus, looking from this micro-historical perspective, some of the terms and premises we use when discussing the Shoah require modification. The triad of ‘victims’, ‘perpetrators’ and ‘bystanders’ has helped us understand specific actors in the Shoah, but recent research questions these categories—and rightly.⁷ In this chapter I argue that the concept of ‘bystander’ becomes obsolete when we see the Shoah unfold from a micro-historical perspective. When half a town’s population—its Jewish inhabitants—was physically annihilated, *everyone* was in some way involved. The violence was immediate and proximate: no one could stay passive or unmoved. In addition, static categories make social roles seem as though they never changed. This does not fit the facts of individual behaviour. Any one person could assume several roles during the course of the war. The lines between perpetrators and victims, between those who helped Jews and denounced them or killed them were sometimes blurred or non-existent.

Moreover, static categories or terms only marginally take into account the dynamics of occupation. For example, giving assistance to a Jewish neighbour in Tarnów in 1940 was a gesture made in a completely different context from the one obtaining in December 1942. By that time the townspeople had seen extremely brutal *Aussiedlungsaktionen* in their streets, Jews had been forced to live in the ghetto, and the German *Kreishauptmann* had issued warnings that all gentile Poles who hid Jews would be executed.⁸ Extreme terror prevailed and severely affected relations between Jews and gentile Poles. The situation changed dramatically again after the liquidation of the ghetto in September 1943, when only a few hundred Jews remained in Tarnów, having to clear up the remains of the ghetto. And who still dared help Jews in hiding after Tarnów was declared ‘*Judenrein*’ (‘free of Jews’) in February 1944?⁹ Some decided to show compassion only as the Red Army approached, perhaps to have better chances themselves after the German retreat, while others may have been inclined to echo the words of a gentile woman who had profited from the occupation: ‘Let’s pray that the Germans win, otherwise the

rabble from the East will kill us all.¹⁰ The ever-changing situation and the increasing radicalization of occupation had a vast impact on people's behaviour. Tarnovians had constantly to reassess their circumstances, and adapt to the needs of the moment.

The focus of this microstudy is set on relationships between the Jewish and non-Jewish populations in Tarnów. Although both Jews and gentile Poles were oppressed by Nazi rule, they were 'unequal victims'.¹¹ Jews were put on the lowest level of the racist order set up by the National Socialists, who ultimately aimed at their total physical annihilation. In this town, while the entire population was severely oppressed and terrorized, definite social hierarchies developed: certain groups were favoured; others were doomed to destruction. This chapter asks what happened as a result. Due to its focus, it will not broach the issue of ghetto life or the movement towards the Shoah in Tarnów. Rather, the study concentrates on how the non-Jewish population reacted to developments. The gaze of the perpetrators is deliberately left aside, though it is of great importance to stress that the German occupation in the General Government established the framework of terror and set up the social hierarchies that determined whether people lived or died. It was the German occupiers and their brutal policies of oppression, exploitation and annihilation that set in motion the social processes I describe.

These social processes fell into phases. I begin by introducing Tarnów and by depicting the first years of occupation. Next I move to the time of the first *Aussiedlungsaktion* and the establishment of the ghetto in 1942. Here I illustrate the proximity of violence within the town. After June 1942 and the so-called *Aktion Reinhard*, the trajectory moves on to a time when the occupiers aimed at the total extermination of Jews in the General Government. The period between 1942 and 1943 is crucial. The occupation became more radical, as Jews were publicly shot dead or deported to death camps. The Jews who survived maintained highly risky contacts with gentile Poles. Examining interactions between these two groups, I unveil how social relations between them developed under extreme terror and against the background of genocide.

What kind of sources tell us about everyday encounters between Jews and gentile Poles in an occupied town? Documents from the time are scarce, but very revealing. (1) The examples cited in the beginning of this chapter come from the files of Polish lawyers working at Polish courts, which still functioned within the General Government, although in a restricted manner and only on cases concerning the indigenous Polish population. Polish lawyers would open an investigation if gentile Poles

were accused of robbery, denunciation, extortion or murder. The documents they have left are a valuable resource, since they originate from the time when the Shoah was unleashed. These documents are now in local archives. (2) After World War II, Poles accused of crimes against Jews were brought to justice on the basis of the ‘August Decree’, issued by the PKWN (Polish Committee for National Liberation) on 31 August 1944. This enabled prosecution of crimes against the civilian population and against prisoners of war as well as dealing with acts of treason against the Polish nation. The files from these prosecutions can be found at the Institute for National Remembrance (IPN) and in local archives. They contain interrogations and investigations that took place retrospectively once the war was over. Because these sources concern criminal investigations, they bring out the sinister aspects of relations between Jews and gentile Poles and this chapter follows this line, only marginally considering cases where gentiles helped Jews—the object of study elsewhere.¹² (3) Published and unpublished accounts of surviving Jews collected by the Jewish Historical Commission in post-war Poland, as well as oral history interviews, complete the source material I have used.

TARNÓW UNDER GERMAN OCCUPATION

Tarnów is a middling-sized town in Western Galicia. Before World War II, its population stood at around 50,000. The Jews made up 47 per cent of those living there, and—as everywhere in the Second Polish Republic—the people were very heterogeneous in their political, social and religious affiliations.¹³ German forces entered Tarnów on 7 September 1939 and a reign of terror was established immediately. The town’s council deputies were detained as hostages¹⁴; ordinary Tarnovians fled en masse.¹⁵ The first civilians killed on the street were two gentile Polish boys.¹⁶ Later, in May 1940, a massive operation targeted the town’s intelligentsia¹⁷: teachers, politicians, lawyers—a total of 753, Jews and gentiles alike—were imprisoned and then became one of the first groups to be transported to Auschwitz,¹⁸ where most of them met their deaths. In addition, Poles were taken away for forced labour in the German Reich: by August 1940, some 108,000 Poles from the Cracow district had been enlisted in this way.¹⁹ The round-ups became increasingly violent during the course of the war. Arbitrary shootings were commonplace,²⁰ and terror and threats spread everywhere. But it was the Jewish population that was the most severely affected.

From the very beginning of the German occupation, Jews fell prey to racist oppression. As elsewhere in the General Government, they had to wear white armbands identifying them as Jews; they had to mark their stores as Jewish; and they were forbidden to walk in certain streets or enter certain establishments.²¹ The hours when Jews were allowed to buy groceries were more restricted than those of their Polish neighbours.²² Jewish schools were closed, and so were Jewish bank accounts.²³ Jews were compelled to register with the authorities and were forced to work. In November 1939, in an extravagant show of violence, German forces burnt, demolished or blew up all the synagogues: witnesses recount hair-raising scenes.²⁴ In addition, the German occupying forces demanded special contributions from the Jewish population. These could be in the form of ‘taxes’, valuables or winter fur coats.²⁵ The searching of houses and businesses to ‘requisition’ Jewish possession became common, and it was not only the *SS-Totenkopfverbände* (December 1939) and the *Sonderkommandos* (1940) who did it. Gentile Tarnovians working for the German-controlled local administration joined in too.²⁶ To the German authorities’ way of thinking, it was something of a reward for Poles to partake in robbing Jewish houses, since they could enrich themselves in this way.

Thus the Germans set up strict social hierarchies, subverting the fragile social fabric of the multi-ethnic town. Jews, placed at the very bottom of the racist order, suffered most. Though gentile Poles endured oppression and violence, they were well above Jews in the new pecking order, and some gentile Poles were privileged above others. The German occupiers thus opened a narrow window of opportunity for a restricted group of people. These people had chances to profit materially and could also enjoy a certain sense of power over others. This prompted them to take control in times of arbitrary violence, and it set in motion a social process that induced rivalry, violence and harassment within the occupied population. This was a form of social manipulation set up by the occupiers.

The sharply differentiated social hierarchies were highly visible but, at the same time, Jews and non-Jews lived their day-to-day lives in close proximity to each other. Until the summer of 1942, there was no ghetto in Tarnów. Though some Jews were forced to move out of their apartments and were successively banned from certain areas in town, many still lived as neighbours of gentiles. They shared the same buildings; so that, in the records, we find a Jewish girl remembering how she still had a *shabbes-goy*, a non-Jewish girl, as her neighbour right up to the spring

1942.²⁷ Trading continued in the stores and the marketplace. Some witnesses recall that Jews still took the tramway, and, in October 1941, there is a record of a German officer who was quartered with Jews when his wife came to visit him.²⁸ Jews and non-Jews continued to work in businesses together. Nevertheless, such proximity combined with difference in rights and status invited extortion or robbery from gentile Poles with whom Jews mingled. Andrzej W., who described himself as Ukrainian (though his declared nationality did not remain constant), used his position as a businessman cooperating with the German authorities to eliminate competing businesses of Jews. He took over their apartments and eventually, having cleared all Jews from the first storey of a big tenement building, was able to own a twelve-room residence in the town centre even at the high point of the German occupation.²⁹ Blanka G. remembers how, when her family had to leave their apartment in 1941, gentile Tarnovians immediately rushed in to grab their belongings, even while they were still there to watch.³⁰ Gizela G., a young Jewish woman, tells how she received a letter from a gentile Pole who threatened to denounce her for selling illegal goods in the store where she worked. Gizela had non-Jewish customers there and knew that the threat came from someone very close. She did not know how to protect herself and went to the Polish police to complain.³¹

There are other cases, however, in this first period of occupation where neighbours, working acquaintances and customers tried to help Jews—forging false papers, perhaps, or providing opportunities for hiding.³²

THE PROXIMITY OF VIOLENCE: *AUSSIEDLUNGSAKTIONEN*

The systematic physical annihilation of Jews in the General Government began in 1942 in the operation code-named *Aktion Reinhard*. From March 1942 on, Jews from Lublin and Lwów were deported to the extermination camp at Bełżec.³³ This camp was temporarily shut down so that larger gas chambers could be built, but, after June of the same year, a wave of *Aussiedlungsaktionen* spread from Cracow eastwards.³⁴ This German term literally means ‘resettlement operations’ but it was really a euphemism for mass murder. The first *Aktion* in Tarnów began on 10 June 1942 and lasted about a week. Jews were dragged from their homes, assembled in central places, deported to Bełżec or shot at the Jewish cemetery or in nearby forests. The survivors were herded into the ghetto, which was then closed off. Both Jewish and non-Jewish witnesses describe scenes of excessive violence in the centre of town and in the surrounding areas.

Since the *Aktion* started before the ghetto was closed off, killings took place everywhere. Many Jews were dragged from their homes and put to death in the Tarnów streets. One of the Jewish survivors remembers how ‘Poles fainted’ as they witnessed the atrocities.³⁵ The main site where Jews were made to assemble was the town square, and some people were brutally killed on the spot. Gentile Poles observed clandestinely what was happening at the *rynek*, the central market place, but even more remote witnesses remember how blood ran down from the assembly point to adjacent streets.³⁶ The *Aktion* at the *rynek* took on a symbolic character—Tarnów’s Jews were being exterminated in the central square of the town, amidst the non-Jewish population and in what had been the traditional space for Polish-Jewish interaction and trade.

Mass shootings in the other parts of Tarnów and its surroundings took place as well, continuing late into the evening.³⁷ Floodlights were used at the Jewish cemetery, so that the killings could carry on after dark. The Germans were given alcohol to numb their senses.³⁸ To finish off the procedure, the *Baudienst* (construction service), a squad composed of young gentile Poles recruited by force, helped dig a mass grave and throw earth over the Jewish victims.³⁹ Nearby forests served as places for mass shootings too. Non-Jewish witnesses from Zbylitowska Góra described the massacres years later, the memories vivid, burnt into their minds.⁴⁰ Among the victims were many Jewish children. After the massacre, some witnesses report, human remains were still sticking out of the ground.⁴¹

Thus, the gentile Tarnów population were immediate witnesses to the extermination of Tarnów’s Jews. The numbers of casualties in the first *Aktion* are hard to assess, but the highest estimates reach to between 10,000 and 12,000 Jewish victims within the space of one week.⁴² Around 3,000 Jews—again an approximate calculation—were shot at the *rynek* or on the streets of Tarnów, and 6,000 in the vicinities.⁴³ Two other *Aktionen* followed—in September and November 1942. In September 1943 Amon Goeth arrived in Tarnów. The ghetto was surrounded by Gestapo, SS and Ukrainian police, and in the following days it was ‘liquidated’ with exceptional brutality.⁴⁴ All the *Aktionen* were violent massacres performed publicly. Repeatedly both Jewish and gentile witnesses recall how the German perpetrators had to wash their hands and clean their clothes of blood.⁴⁵ Thus, the Shoah did not only consist of ‘industrial’ killing in faraway extermination camps; in large parts of Eastern Europe it took place before people’s eyes. Omer Bartov has written about ‘communal massacre’ in Eastern Galicia.⁴⁶ Some of the characteristics of what he describes, such as

the immediate experience of violence and the impossibility of remaining uninvolved, can be found in Tarnów's case as well.

What does it mean for a town's population to witness such excessive violence? Passivity is not an option when people are directly confronted by genocide taking place in their own home town. The Tarnovians saw it; they heard the shots; they smelt death at the killing sites; they passed corpses and might stumble over human remains. These gentile witnesses could not be 'just bystanders'; they were forced somehow to react to this drama being played out in the familiar streets and squares of their town. Roles were largely designated by the German occupiers, but some limited scope of action was possible. How did the gentile witnesses use the scope of action? As we shall see, reactions were manifold: some looked the other way; some profited from the situation; others were asked for help and either gave or refused it. However, such reactions were not static. People made choices but might then revise them, often changing patterns of behaviour through the course of the war. They did not act consistently in these unsteady times. With more and more radicalization, social norms shifted constantly. Continuing violence on a massive scale affected the whole population.

ZONES OF INTERACTION AFTER JUNE 1942

After the establishment of the ghetto in the summer of 1942, Jews and non-Jews were physically segregated. But they still had contact with one another. They met in extremely asymmetrical encounters: the non-Jewish Poles had just witnessed the persecution of Jews, their dehumanization and mass murder. Since Jews were now enclosed in the ghetto, they depended on gentile Tarnovians to get food for them or find them hiding places. Two questions arise. How did gentile Poles, themselves harshly oppressed, react to this challenge? And which zones of contact can be identified? I will look at three spheres of contact: the ghetto and its barriers; workshops where Jews and non-Jews worked together; and apartment blocks. The time span I take is essentially from the summer of 1942 (after the first *Aussiedlungsaktion* and the establishment of a closed ghetto) until September 1943, when the ghetto was 'liquidated'. This period was the most crucial phase in the annihilation of the Tarnovian Jews—and indeed of Jews in all of Poland.

The ghetto was closed off in June 1942, but generated a highly asymmetrical web of interactions at the extremely dangerous and yet permeable barrier. Although strictly forbidden, trading continued at the ghetto fence.⁴⁷ Little is known about the quality of these transactions or the prices

charged by the gentiles in Tarnów itself. We thus cannot say whether extortionate sums had to be paid by those suffering from extreme malnutrition. Some gentiles helped and smuggled food into the ghetto.⁴⁸ Underground organizations from outside the ghetto are said to have had contact with the ghetto inmates and clandestine groups.⁴⁹ However, interventions from the 'Aryan side' were not solely positive. For example, gentile youths would sneak into the ghetto in broad daylight to steal goods.⁵⁰

At times, Jews also managed to leave the ghetto. Some adept smugglers made regular sorties in order to trade outside and bring back food and other products.⁵¹ Some went out in order to hide, but came back when they ran out of money or places where they could stay concealed. In a middling-sized town such as Tarnów it was not the physical barrier that prevented Jews from going over to the 'Aryan side'; rather, it was the question of what to do once they were outside the ghetto. All Jewish survivors speak of the ever-present fear of being denounced by gentile Poles.⁵² They knew that gentile Poles could identify Jews much more easily than the Germans could, and that often they did not hesitate to betray them to the perpetrators.⁵³ It was a bitter experience to feel they were left 'without sympathy' and forsaken by the gentile townsfolk.⁵⁴ Thus, any decision to leave the ghetto depended on an assessment of the Polish environment. Such decisions also relied on the quality of the contacts Jews were able to maintain with gentile Poles. Did they know someone who organized places to hide? Could they trust them? In Tarnów, the ghetto mapped the asymmetrical relations between the Jewish and gentile inhabitants. Not only was the ghetto a space of physical segregation; it was an area whose barriers were also built of fear—a fear emanating from the gentile Polish environment.

After the ghetto was established in June 1942 and thousands of Jews had been killed, Jewish-owned apartments and stores beyond its boundaries were left abandoned. Material goods, living and working spaces, even whole production sites—all were now considered 'ownerless'.⁵⁵ They quickly became objects of desire for the Polish population. In the lawyers' files, there is a significant increase in records of looting, robbery and theft in the second half of 1942. The examples cited at the beginning of this chapter exemplify the many things that happened in the town. Gentile Poles took the Jews' possessions, their furniture, whole apartments and the former Jewish stores.⁵⁶ Neighbours would break into abandoned apartments and take away whatever they could carry. Polish gentiles broke into production sites to steal the machines.⁵⁷ The Polish

police registered these lootings but hardly ever found the culprits. Those registered as *Volksdeutsche* or of Ukrainian nationality had easier access to the goods, as did those who worked for the German authorities, but they were not the only ones to profit from the situation: neighbours and ordinary Tarnovians also participated in seizing all that was available. There was even a new word coined for these spoils—they were ‘*po-żydowskie*’, which can be freely translated as ‘one-time Jewish’. After the liquidation of the ghetto and with German consent, Tarnovians were holding public auctions to sell off all remaining items.⁵⁸

How is it that former neighbours—Tarnovians among whom Jews had lived for years—could rob and profit from the mass murder happening in their town? We can only assume that gentile Tarnovians had had their sensibilities numbed as they witnessed more and more atrocities. Traditional, accepted, social norms were certainly eroded in the most radical manner. What had seemed unthinkable a few years, or even months, before had now become a daily reality. The meaning of ‘decency’ had to be re-evaluated; circumstances had to be constantly reassessed. Profiting from the situation came to seem like petty crime. After all, taking over ‘ownerless’ furniture seemed of secondary moral significance when compared with the murder of 10,000 people within a week. Secondly, in this realm of violence, oppression and mass murder, it was impossible to stay passive. As Bartov writes: ‘What is the meaning of passivity when you move into a home vacated by your neighbours whom you have just heard being executed, when you eat with their silverware, when you tear about their floorboards to look for gold, when you sleep in their beds?’⁵⁹ The German occupiers set up a strict social hierarchy with malicious intent. Opening a ‘window of opportunity’ to profiteers meant that the whole town population became implicated in the process of annihilating half of Tarnów’s inhabitants. No one could escape the social dynamics so brutally set in motion; no one could stay neutral. Each individual had to make choices within the limited range of options ascribed to them in the circumstances of occupation. If we look at the choices from everyday, mundane perspectives, the questions posed could be very pragmatic. If my neighbour takes goods from Jewish apartments, why don’t I? If others profit, where will I end up if I miss out on things? Rivalry for social status, for material goods or for some sense of control—these came to drive the town’s population. At the same time, personal ethical choices were not long-lasting, once-and-for-all decisions. Quick selections of alternatives had to be made repeatedly, even daily, throughout the course of the war, and, as it went on, they became more

and more radical. This explains the variant trajectories and positioning of individuals in the face of genocide.

What role did anti-Semitism play in the way gentiles acted and reacted to the Shoah taking place in their home town? Even before the outbreak of the war—and especially in the years 1935–1939—post-Piłsudski Poland had drifted to the right. This could be seen in economic and social spheres, as well as the political. The OZN (Obóz Zjednoczenia Narodowego, or Camp of National Unity) and other groups implemented discriminatory anti-Semitic policies. Jews were successively pushed out of professions, university posts, positions in the economy and participation in nearly all areas of public and social life. A discriminatory discourse directing hatred at Jews was widespread in the media, in churches, and in political speeches. Direct action came in the wake of this: universities segregated their Jewish students, and there were violent outbreaks in these places of learning as well as pogroms in some Polish cities.⁶⁰ This has led the historian Emanuel Melzer to maintain that the period between 1935 and 1939 was ‘distinct’ in the ‘history of interwar Poland as well as in the history of the country’s Jewish community’.⁶¹ At a local level, the shift to the right poisoned social relations. In Tarnów, anti-Semitic pamphlets were distributed in great quantities; radicalized youth attacked Jews on the street with knives; and, in March 1936, there was an orchestrated rampage of smashing the windows of Jewish shops in the town centre. A little later in the same year, the Jewish vice-mayor was dismissed from office, and deputies in the town council openly discussed anti-Jewish policies. The Catholic diocese poured oil on the fire by publishing hate-speeches and inflammatory articles in its journal.⁶² Society was becoming polarized. The far right party of National Democrats were loud and aggressive in Tarnów, and yet they did not manage to rally a strong enough group of supporters. In 1939, they gained only two seats in the city council elections: the majority of seats went to the ‘club’ of the Polish Socialist Party and the Bund.⁶³ Despite such representation, by the late 1930s, the Tarnovian people were well used to arguments distinguishing ‘real’ Poles—the Catholics—from the allegedly ‘harmful’ Jews, and were inured to the segregation of the latter group. These prevalent narratives created their own reality, and parts of the population made use of them: they knew who, among their neighbours, was a Jew (and hence ‘the other’) and this could be used to stigmatize.

Thus, when German forces entered Tarnów and began to segregate Jews and non-Jews systematically, they were cementing policies that had already been put in motion and were legitimizing an exclusionist worldview that

was familiar to some segments of Tarnovian society. Yet, the radicalism and the murderous aims of the Germans were new.

During wartime, working places were an important area for interactions between Jews and non-Jews. Tarnów's Jews worked mostly outside the ghetto. Germans or *Volksdeutsche* escorted them to their working places, and then back to the ghetto at the end of the day. Jews and non-Jews worked together in workshops, in companies and in petty businesses. 'We mingled with the Poles,' remembers one of the Jewish survivors.⁶⁴ This mingling was crucial—help for Jews often came from contacts made in workplaces. Here, trade between Jews and non-Jews flourished. It was an effective way of getting food for the ghetto. Transactions centred especially round essential foods like eggs, butter and bread.⁶⁵ Of course, it was known that zones of interactions between Jews and gentiles were used for trade and transactions. In some companies, security guards—often gentile Poles appointed by the German authorities—searched Jews as they entered or left their workplace: they were well aware of the exchanges of valuables against food that were being made.⁶⁶ In small businesses, gentile Polish employees might search Jews coming in on their own behalf.⁶⁷ It was an essential skill to know about trade transactions, and where and when they took place. This knowledge could, in turn, be used for personal benefit, and, after 1942, sites of interaction between Jews and Gentiles were crucial hotspots in people's efforts to get by.

During the years 1939–1942, gentile and Jewish Poles lived together as neighbours, albeit unequal ones. But after 1942 the gap widened considerably. The conditions in Tarnów had changed dramatically. Poles, who had already witnessed brutal massacres of Jews, now realized that the German occupiers aimed at annihilating the entire Jewish population, and 'suspect' Poles might be the next group to be targeted. Jews were forced to live in the ghetto. If they ventured outside, they feared being recognized as Jews. Nevertheless, a good many managed to flee and to find hiding places. Jews caught in hiding were sentenced to death—both for being Jews and for daring to hide on the 'Aryan side'. But the Poles themselves were coming under increasing threat. The German authorities in Tarnów, under their *Kreishauptmann*, issued warnings announcing the death penalty for helping or hiding Jews, and reprisals against the gentile Polish population increased. Violent round-ups intensified. In a quite arbitrary fashion, people were taken from the streets and sent to forced labour, or shot on the spot. Thus, after the summer of 1942, hiding Jews outside the ghetto was a matter of extreme risk—and gentile Poles who might have assisted

were already under threat and had had their sense of humanity blunted by the atrocities that had become a routine part of life.

In these desperate times, apartment blocks outside the ghetto became fragile contact zones where hiding Jews met gentiles. There were different ways of going into hiding. Many of the Jews who fled the ghetto moved to another town so that acquaintances or former schoolmates could not recognize or denounce them.⁶⁸ Those who had the opportunity to hide in town stayed in an apartment with their helpers, living clandestinely. Some of these Jews in hiding (often from other towns) obtained false papers and rented, or lived in, other apartments, pretending to have a Christian identity. They were in great danger if anyone suspected they were Jewish. There were some Jews who tried to hide on the 'Aryan side' without arranged help. They lived in attics and cellars and were even more endangered, being wholly at the mercy of arbitrary helping acts from gentiles in the apartment block. Apartment houses thus became a microcosm of social interactions between Jews and non-Jews, with all the varieties of human response—ranging from help and charity to blackmail, theft, denunciation and rape.

What ensued in the apartment blocks where Jews were hiding, utterly dependent on helpers to bring them food and conceal them? First of all, in all accounts of survivors the fear of denunciation by gentile Poles is omnipresent. Most of the Jews in hiding had to move at least once, or leave their hiding place temporarily due to fear of their neighbours. What happened when suspicions were aroused? Of course, there were cases when neighbours discovered Jews in hiding but neither denounced nor blackmailed them; but others in the apartments might use the power acquired through such knowledge to extort money, goods or food.⁶⁹ A fugitive girl recounts how once, when her gentile helpers were out at work, a woman from next door entered the apartment to steal food and discovered her. She did not denounce her, but afterwards came back regularly to steal with impunity.⁷⁰

Second, under the harsh conditions of terror and threat, gentile Poles were well aware of their power vis-à-vis the Jews. They knew that the lives of the Jews being sheltered were dependent on their good will and mercy. Even those who did not hide a Jew but found out about a neighbour who did became involved. Knowledge of hiding Jews made them privy to a great secret and put them in a position of power. They had to decide what to do with this knowledge. Should they denounce, or could they keep the secret, risking a high penalty if the Gestapo was alerted? Although the

penalty was laid down by the German occupiers, the more immediate fear was of other gentiles in the apartment block. It was an essential skill to be able to estimate who knew what and how that person was likely to react if it was found out that Jews were being hidden. Knowledge thus gave individuals a sense of power but also made them accomplices and put them under great pressure. There were many ways in which this asymmetrical power relation was (mis)used. Some tried to use their knowledge to extort money or rings, jewels and other valuables in exchange for silence.⁷¹ In one instance, a woman accompanied by two men, entered the apartment of a Jewish woman hiding with ‘Aryan papers’ and simply took the furniture away.⁷² In another case, a *Volksdeutscher* forced a Jewish father hiding in the cellar to surrender his 14-year-old daughter to him for a night⁷³: the father finally gave in. Jews were easy prey since they were in such a vulnerable position, utterly dependant on others helping or keeping silence.

In this dense microcosm, social rivalry also came into play. The pre-war stereotype of ‘wealthy Jews’ persisted. A belief that Jews must somewhere be hiding valuables was widespread, and explains why youngsters broke into the ghetto to steal. It was known that help to Jews was often not just altruistic but that they were often paying large sums for hiding opportunities. Jan Grabowski has thrown brilliant light on the ‘industry’ of paid helping.⁷⁴ From it, social rivalry arose among the gentiles. Helpers were always suspected of making good money from hiding Jews, and this provoked envy amongst those who were not ‘in the game’. Rivalry, fed by the wish to profit from the process of the Shoah, as it developed in the neighbourhood, invited extortion, betrayal and denunciation.⁷⁵ Acts of betrayal were also motivated by the remuneration people expected from the Germans, since many believed they would be rewarded for denouncing Jews to the Gestapo. We find references to this over and over again in the records of post-war trials. Some mention two kilogrammes of sugar per Jew caught, others that gentile Poles could receive half the belongings of any Jew they turned in.⁷⁶

For Jews in hiding, the danger came not only from neighbours who might denounce them, but even from helpers. There was a constant risk that the helpers might ‘turn’ and betray them. The case of the Jewish boy presented at the beginning of this article illustrates how helpers could become murderers. In less drastic changes of role—there were many different shades⁷⁷—helpers could prove untrustworthy. Often Jews had to change hiding places when they ran out of money. In one case from 1944, a woman who had probably made an advance deal with the Polish police

lured a Jewish man into a trap under the pretext of helping him. The policemen she called murdered the man in her kitchen, dragged his body down two flights of stairs, disposed of it and then ordered the janitor to clean the blood off the staircase.⁷⁸ The woman and the two policemen probably joined in robbing the man. At the time, the ghetto had long been liquidated and hardly any Jews were left in the city, except those in hiding and highly vulnerable. This case vividly demonstrates the shifting of socially accepted norms. Apparently, the culprits felt no need to take much trouble concealing the murder of the Jewish man. The woman was acquitted in a post-war trial due to lack of evidence; the two policemen were never indicted.

CONCLUSION

This microstudy of Tarnów during the time of German occupation has laid bare the social dynamics of relations between Jews and gentiles. It has gone beyond static categories—such as ‘bystander’—and has taken a process-orientated approach so as to grasp what happened to the social fabric of a middling-sized town in the General Government. The proximity of the violence taking place in this town meant that the indigenous gentile population were witnesses with direct experience of the genocide taking place. There was no room for passivity in the face of the extermination of half the town’s population. Everyone was in some way involved in the process, even those who would have preferred to stay away. At the same time, the extreme violence generated a blunting of conscience, a degree of adaptation to the increasingly radicalized circumstances of occupation and a shifting of social norms. Profiting from the Jews’ situation seemed a venial sin compared with the horrors people had witnessed in the *Aussiedlungsaktionen*. The gentile population could not take a passive position: under the ever-changing circumstances of occupation, they had to make choices.

Although both gentile Poles and Jews were oppressed and lived under constant terror, they were unequal victims. Jews were progressively dehumanized and ultimately doomed to extermination, while the Poles only witnessed this process. Some gentiles, such as those working for the German authorities, the *Volksdeutsche* and Ukrainians, were more privileged than the others, who were already a step above the Jews. The hierarchies the German occupiers set up, which determined the food rations people got and also determined life or death, were a form of social manip-

ulation. Against a background of terror, a restricted group of people was privileged, and this caused enmity and rivalry among the gentile population. Sometimes the people's envy resulted in developments the German authorities may not have intended. The widespread belief that one could make good money by hiding Jews, for instance, encouraged the growth of blackmailers. Knowledge was an important asset. People who knew who was hiding Jews and what kind of transactions Jews were making with gentile Poles became privy to a secret, and this gave them power. What to do with this power was a matter for each individual. A desire to profit from the situation combined with extreme fear of the terror the occupiers had imposed seem enough to have driven parts of the gentile population to denunciation, extortion and even murder.

NOTES

1. APT (Archiwum Państwowe w Tarnowie) 33/98 PSOT (Prokuratura Sądu Okręgowego w Tarnowie) 26/I DS 599/42. I cannot trace what happened to the boy after he left Tarnów in the fall of 1942.
2. APT 33/98 PSOT 26/I DS 419/42.
3. APT 33/98 PSOT 30/I DS 88/43.
4. J. T. Gross (2001) *Neighbours. The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
5. B. Engelking-Boni (2003) *Szanowny panie gistapo. Donosy do władz niemieckich w Warszawie i okolicach w latach 1940–1941* (Warszawa: IFiS PAN); B. Engelking-Boni (2011) *Jest taki piękny słoneczny dzień ... Losy Żydów szukających ratunku na wsi polskiej 1942–1945* (Warszawa: Centrum Badań nad Zagładą Żydów); B. Engelking-Boni, J. Leociak and D. Libionka (eds) (2007) *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim* (Warszawa: Centrum Badań nad Zagładą Żydów). For Eastern Galicia, see Natalia Aleksiuin in this volume and O. Bartov (2011) 'Wartime Lies and Other Testimonies. Jewish-Christians Relations in Buczacz, 1939–1944', *East European Politics and Societies* No. 25, 486–51.
6. J. Grabowski (2013) *Hunt for the Jews. Betrayal and Murder in German-Occupied Poland* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press).
7. O. Bartov (2011) 'Wartime Lies'; Cf. A. Löw and F. Bajohr (2015) 'Tendenzen und Probleme der neuen Holocaust-Forschung' in A. Löw and F. Bajohr (eds) *Der Holocaust. Ergebnisse und neue Fragen der Forschung* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer), pp. 9–30.
8. A. Pietrzykowa (1984) *Region tarnowski w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej. Polityka okupanta i ruch oporu* (Warszawa and Kraków: PWN), p. 190.

9. G. Schafft (2004) *From Racism to Genocide. Anthropology in the Third Reich* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press), p. 28.
10. IPN (Instytut Pamięci Narodowej) Kr 502/368.
11. This phrasing refers to the important book, I. Gutman and S. Krakowski (1986) *Unequal victims: Poles and Jews during World War Two* (New York: Holocaust Library).
12. On the phenomenon of help and rescue in Tarnów, cf. A. Wiercholska (n.d.) 'Helpers, Antisemites or Blackmailers? Divergent Paths of Behavior under German Occupation in a Polish-Jewish Town' (Holocaust Studies, in print).
13. APT 33/1/ZMT: 44 Ewidencja ludności; A. Wiercholska (2013) 'Relations between the Bund and the Polish Socialist Party from a Micro-historical Perspective: Tarnów in the Interwar Period', *East European Jewish Affairs* No. 43, 297–313.
14. S. Potępa (1988) *Tarnów międzywojenny. (Kronika) 1918–1939* (Tarnów: Muzeum Okręgowe w Tarnowie), p. 167; Pietrzykowa (1984) *Region tarnowski*, p. 81.
15. Schafft (2004) *From Racism*, p. 27.
16. Potępa (1988) *Tarnów międzywojenny*, p. 167.
17. Ankiety Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, IPN BU 2448/503, pp. 103–6, pp. 375–6, p. 421, pp. 433–5; Pietrzykowa (1984) *Region Tarnowski*, p. 159.
18. Pietrzykowa (1984) *Region Tarnowski*, p. 176.
19. Pietrzykowa (1984) *Region Tarnowski*, p. 142.
20. Ankiety Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, IPN BU 2448/503, pp. 121–2, pp. 145–6.
21. H. Scharnberg (2015) 'Der gelbe Stern, der blau war. Zur Kennzeichnung der Juden im Generalgouvernement', *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 63, No. 2, 167–82; cf. Bekanntmachung der Verordnung, gez. E. Kundt, APT 33/1: Akta Rady miejskiej/ZMT0 33: Afisze dotyczące życia społecznego, p. 441; cf. Account of Józef K., AŻIH (Archiwum Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego) 301/4600.
22. Pietrzykowa (1984) *Region tarnowski*, p. 92.
23. Pietrzykowa (1984) *Region tarnowski*, p. 185.
24. Account of Izaak I. AŻIH 301/818; account of Janina S., AŻIH 301/2081; account of Lila W., AŻIH 301/2053.
25. Pietrzykowa (1984) *Region tarnowski*, p. 109.
26. IPN Kr 502/232; Pietrzykowa (1984) *Region tarnowski*, p. 109.
27. YVA (Yad Vashem Archives), Department of the Righteous Among Nations, M.31/3043.
28. Zygmunt M. 'Urlop z getta' AŻIH, ARG (Archiwum Ringelbluma) 721.
29. IPN Kr 502/368.

30. Account of Blanka G., AŻIH 301/2059.
31. APT 33/98: State attorney file PSOT 26/I DS 270/42.
32. YVA, Department of the Righteous Among Nations, M.31/1179; M.31/3009; M.31/3043; M.31/1329.
33. R. Kuwałek (2013) *Das Vernichtungslager Bełżec* (Berlin: Metropol), pp. 150–3.
34. K. Mallmann (2004) ‘“Mensch, ich feiere heut’ den tausendsten Genickschuß”. Die Sicherheitspolizei und die Shoah in Westgalizien’ in B. Musiał (ed.) *‘Aktion Reinhard’. Der Völkermord an den Juden im Generalgouvernement 1941–1944* (Osnabrück: Fibre 2004), pp. 353–82, here p. 364.
35. Account of Janina S., AŻIH 301/2081.
36. Ankiety GKBZHwP, IPN BU 2448/503, S. 137–8; Account of Blanka G. AŻIH 301/2059; R. Jagiencarz (2008) ‘Wspomnienia Romana Jagiencarza’ in A. Bartosz (ed.) *Wspomnienia ocalone z ognia* (Tarnów: Muzeum Okręgowe w Tarnowie), pp. 16–20; E. Michalik (2008) ‘Wspomnienia Eugeniusza Michalika’ in Bartosz, *Wspomnienia ocalone z ognia*, p. 12.
37. Pietrzykowa (1984) *Region tarnowski*, p. 188.
38. Ankiety Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, IPN BU 2448/503, pp. 459–60; R. Jagiencarz (2008) ‘Wspomnienia’, p. 17.
39. R. Jagiencarz (2008) ‘Wspomnienia’, p.17; Ankiety Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, IPN BU 2448/503, pp. 465–6. The *Baudienst* was an organization set up by the German authorities in May 1940. Young Polish men were recruited according to their year of birth and were forced to serve in it for some months. Pietrzykowa (1984) *Region tarnowski*, pp. 145–6.
40. J. and A. Żmud (2008) ‘Wspomnienia Janiny i Augustyna Żmudów’ in Bartosz, *Wspomnienia*, pp. 14–15.
41. S. Dychtoń (2008) ‘Wspomnienia Stanisława Dychtonia’ in Bartosz, *Wspomnienia*, pp. 13–14, p. 14, p. 15.
42. Account of Józef K. AŻIH 301/4600; account of Izaak I., AŻIH 301/818.
43. Pietrzykowa (1984) *Region tarnowski*, p. 188; Kuwałek (2013) *Das Vernichtungslager*, p. 150, p. 341.
44. Pietrzykowa (1984) *Region tarnowski*, p. 194; account of Renia F. AŻIH 301/436; account of Samuel G. AŻIH 301/1090; account of Erna L. AŻIH 301/1591; N. Blumental (ed.) (1947) *Proces ludobójcy Amona Leoplda Goetha przed Najwyższym Trybunałem Narodowym* (Warszawa: Centralna Żydowska Komisja Historyczna w Polsce).
45. Account of Marian H. AŻIH 301/580; account of Erna L. AŻIH 301/1591; account of Józef K., AZIH 301/3433.

46. Bartov, 'Wartime Lies', pp. 486–511.
47. Interview with Rahel K., 24. May 2013; account of Józef M., AŻIH 301/570.
48. YVA, Dep. Righteous Among Nations, M.31/3490.
49. Account of Adolf B., AŻIH 301/1101; account of David F. AŻIH 301/4055; Załącznik do listu U. Bleiweisa do CK Bundu w Warszawie, AAN (Archiwum Akt Nowych) 1214: Ogólno żydowski Związek Robotniczy Bund w Polsce 1900–1948, 30/IV/2, tom 6: Korespondencja z Tarnowem, 1945–1949; Birken, Józef: Udział szomrów tarnowskich w ruchu oporu: APT 33/226:Waria/60: Organizacje młodzieżowe, 27; A. Chomet (1954) 'Der umkum fun yidn in Tarne' in A. Chomet (ed.) Tarne. Kiem un hurbn fun a yidisher shtot (Tel-Aviv: n. p.), pp. 808–70.
50. APT 33/98: PSOT 30/I DS 33/43; APT 33/98: PSOT 30/I DS. 52/43.
51. Account of Józef M. AŻIH 301/570; account of Melech P. AŻIH 301/791; account of Emil S. AŻIH 301/4031; account of David F. AŻIH 301/4055; account of Jakub A. AŻIH 301/5788.
52. Account of Renia F., AŻIH 301/436; account of Józef M. AŻIH 301/570.
53. Account of Blanka G. AŻIH 301/2059.
54. Account of Leon L. AŻIH 301/4598.
55. I prefer to put 'ownerless' in quotation marks, since the term implies a seemingly innocent state of non-possession but does not hint at the fate of the proprietors. In fact, the rightful owners were first expropriated and discriminated against, then detained in the ghetto or murdered.
56. IPN Kr 502/3804; APT 33/98: PSOT 26/I DS. 589/42; APT 33/98: PSOT 26/I DS. 419/42; APT 33/98: PSOT 26/I DS. 599/42; APT 33/98: PSOT 26/I DS. 427/42; APT 33/98: PSOT 26/I DS506/42.
57. APT 33/98: PSOT 26/I DS. 556/42.
58. IPN Kr 502/1918.
59. Bartov (2011) 'Wartime Lies', p. 492.
60. J. Żyndul (1994) *Zajścia antyżydowskie w Polsce w latach 1935–1937* (Warszawa: Wydawn. Agencja Scholar).
61. E. Melzer (1989) 'Antisemitism in the Last Years of the Second Republic' in Y. Gutman and E. Mendelsohn (eds) *The Jews of Poland between the Two World Wars* (Hanover, London: University Press of New England), pp. 126–37, here p. 126.
62. *Nasza Sprawa*, 1936–1939.
63. A.Wierzcholska (2012) 'Polen, Juden, Tarnowianer? Die Politisierung von Ethnizität im Polen der 1930er Jahre', *Osteuropa* 62, 10, 41–53.
64. Cesia R. Interview 2367, Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation (30.3.2015).
65. Account of Marian H. AŻIH 301/580; IPN KR 502/4065; IPN Kr 502/232.

66. IPN KR 502/4065.
67. IPN Kr 502/232.
68. Account of Halina K. AŻIH 301/3228.
69. APT 33/98 PSOT 30/I DS 105/43; IPN Kr 502/3679.
70. YVA Dep. of Righteous Among Nations M.31/1179.
71. IPN Kr 502/3679.
72. IPN Kr 502/3679.
73. IPN Kr 502/2331.
74. J. Grabowski (2008) 'Saving Jews for money—the help industry' in *Holocaust. Studies and Materials* 4, 81–109.
75. IPN Kr 502/3852.
76. IPN Kr 502/3151.
77. IPN Kr 502/2342; APT 33/98 PSOT 30/IDS88/43.
78. IPN Kr 502/2342.

The Transformation of Jewish–Non-Jewish Social Relations in a Gendarmerie District of Hungary, 1938–1944

Izabella Sulyok

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the effects anti-Jewish legislation in Hungary had on the relations between Jews and non-Jews. It focuses on developments between 1938 and 1944 in the Third (Szombathely) Gendarmerie District, which covered four counties in north-western Hungary: Sopron, Vas, Veszprém and Zala. This district was chosen because, more than anywhere else, the four counties within it represent the full variety of Hungarian Jewry and its relations with non-Jewish society.

Hungary had ten gendarmerie districts, each led by a colonel. Geographically, they corresponded with the layout of the 1944 military districts, shown on the map at the end of this contribution. The gendarmerie came under the supervision and control of the nation's Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Defence. There were approximately 20,000 gendarmes, and this force played a significant role in the rounding-up

I. Sulyok (✉)

Department of History, University of Szeged, Szeged, Hungary
e-mail: sulyoki7@gmail.com

and deportation of Jews after 1944.¹ Most of the gendarmes at that time were deployed in the collection camps and deportation centres, but others sought Jews out and arrested them.

In World War II, Hungary was an ally of the German Reich. The Hungarian political elite and the regent Miklós Horthy hoped that, through this alliance, they could bring about a revision of the Trianon Peace Treaty² and retrieve the territories Hungary had lost in 1920. By the late 1930s their tactic seemed to be working: in the 'First Vienna Award' of 1938, Hungary got its Upper Province back; the next year it gained Carpatho-Ruthenia; and, with help from the Germans and Italians, it won Northern Transylvania in 1940 (the 'Second Vienna Award'). Hungarian military forces entered World War II in April 1941, attacking Yugoslavia; but seeing the defeats Germany was suffering from 1942 onwards, the Hungarian government, led by Miklós Kállay, planned to make its own peace with the Allies. When Nazi Germany became aware of this, it sent in troops. This was on 19 March 1944. From that moment Hungary was under German occupation. This opened the door to a new ruthlessness in the treatment of the Jewish population. Their exclusion from economic life was not enough. Now the programme was for their physical annihilation.³

THE JEWISH POPULATION IN THE THIRD GENDARMERIE DISTRICT

The four counties in the Third Gendarmerie District had 1,289,052 inhabitants in 1941, and out of these people, 23,103 were Jewish (including those who had converted to Christianity but were legally considered to be Jews).⁴ This figure accounted for 1.8 per cent of the whole population of the district—a proportion slightly decreased from the 2 per cent registered in the 1930 census and certainly lower than the national average of 5 per cent. However, the decrease was not unique to the area: the numbers of Jews had gone down throughout Hungary between 1930 and 1941 and went on doing so during the period from 1941 to 1944. Some of this was due to conversions to Christianity and to emigration, but there was also a declining birth rate. The only exception to this decrease in the Third Gendarmerie District was at its centre in Szombathely and the surrounding Vas County, which had the largest Jewish community of the region. Szombathely, a city of some 40,000 people, had 4,000 resident Jews in 1944, a number about double the Hungarian average and one which had grown from the 3,600 registered in 1941. As for Vas County,

including the city, its figure of 6,500 Jews in 1941 had gone up to nearly 7,500 by 1944.⁵ Further research is needed to establish why this exceptional growth took place.

In all four counties there were both Neolog and Orthodox Jews⁶—the Neolog denomination being the one with a more modern outlook. The Orthodox community was strongest in Sopron County, while the majority of the Jews in the other three counties were Neolog. In Zala county only four of the fifteen Jewish communities were Orthodox, all of them based in small townships.⁷

As for Zionism, it was generally very weak in Hungary. This was especially so in the Third Gendarmerie District because of the high level of assimilation of Jews into Hungarian society. Zionist organizations did exist in bigger towns but only with a few members, mostly from the younger age group. Local organization of Zionism was at its most active in the city of Sopron. According to a witness who was a member of the Zionist organization in Sopron at the time, the organization was not hindered by the local authorities, who only implemented ministerial decrees that gave explicit instructions for interference in such activities.⁸

INDICATORS OF ASSIMILATION

Mixed Marriages

How assimilated were the Jews in our area of study? The sociologist Victor Karády holds that mixed marriages indicate the ultimate degree of integration in Jewish–non-Jewish social relations.⁹ The percentages of mixed marriages in the counties of the Third Gendarmerie District show no significant difference from general national tendencies. The proportion of mixed marriages reached its peak in 1931–35. There was then a sharp drop following the enactment, in 1938, of the so-called ‘First Jewish Law’ (which was really, of course, an anti-Jewish law). Thereafter, there were only a few further mixed marriages before the ‘Third Jewish Law’ of 1941 put a stop to them altogether.¹⁰ But mixed marriages had not been uncommon in the past.

Between the counties we are studying, there were significant differences in the numbers of mixed marriages, and this deserves deeper analysis.¹¹ To get an overview of the varying trends in Sopron, Vas, Veszprém and Zala counties, I examined registries of marriages for the years 1930–41 in 24 townships that had significant Jewish populations, together accounting for

67–86 per cent of the Jews in the counties.¹² Differences in proportions emerged between the counties because in Veszprém and Zala Counties higher numbers of Jews lived in townships so small that they fell out of the scope of the review. Here there were communities of only 20–70 people, and weddings were quite rare events. By contrast 80 per cent of the Jews in Vas County, and 86 per cent in Sopron County lived in the big towns.¹³ As might be expected, the numbers and proportions of mixed marriages were everywhere higher in bigger towns than in small villages. Only four of 21 mixed marriages were registered in Sopron County outside the town of Sopron, its main centre.

Sopron County was in fact the area with the lowest proportion of mixed marriages. Between 1930 and 1941, 352 marriages were registered there involving Jews,¹⁴ but only 21 of these were mixed marriages—approximately 6 per cent of the total. This contrasts starkly with the figures in Zala County where, out of 514 marriages involving Jews, 114 were mixed marriages—as many as 22.2 per cent. This must surely indicate that in Zala County, throughout the ten years from 1930 to 1941, relations between Jews and non-Jews were gradually becoming more and more natural and cordial. Generally, mixed marriages imply that the wider families on both sides had had opportunities to socialize with each other, and certainly some launched joint businesses, as did Endre Csemesz with his wife, and other couples mentioned in the records.¹⁵

Children's Religion

Where there were mixed marriages, the couples had to decide in advance on the religion their future children would be brought up in and sign an agreement on this. If they failed to sign the agreement, baby boys were automatically assigned the religion of their father in the records, and baby girls the religion of their mother.¹⁶ The national tendency was for babies to be given the religion of the non-Jewish parent. This tendency was not due to anti-Jewish legislation, but had long been a strategy of assimilation, as previous research has shown.¹⁷ However, in several cases, the birth registries record babies as being of the Jewish religion. Sometimes this may be because the parents failed to make a statement on behalf of their offspring—some parents only realized in 1944 that their sons and daughters had been registered Jewish in religion even though they were baptized and attended Catholic school. But there are cases where babies were

recorded as being of the Jewish religion following an opposite-sex parent, and this seems to show that it was the parents' deliberate choice.¹⁸

Conversions

Another important indicator of the level of assimilation Jews had in the community was the number and proportion of conversions to Christianity. Although we do not have sufficient sources to track the dynamics of conversions, the census results of 1941 do enable us to examine the situation in that year, since people's religions were registered and they had to declare if they were considered 'Jewish' by the definition of the anti-Jewish laws. We can thus see how many people formally registered 'Christian' by religion were Jewish in background. Although it is not possible to follow how proportions may have changed in the years prior to 1941,¹⁹ it can be assumed that the higher the proportion of Christians legally considered Jews, the higher the level of Jewish assimilation into non-Jewish society must have been. Again, the highest proportion is to be found in Zala County. There, approximately 10 per cent of those falling under the scope of the Third Jewish Law were registered as being of the Christian religion. In Sopron County, by contrast, the proportion was insignificant.²⁰

By the indicators studied, therefore, Zala County emerges as an area where Jews were highly assimilated, and this could make a difference to how they came to be treated.

ANTI-JEWISH LEGISLATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Between 1938 and 1944 the Hungarian parliament enacted several laws limiting the professional and economic opportunities of Jews.²¹ These laws and the political climate surrounding them progressively altered the social relations between Jews and non-Jews. The laws not only affected the Jews' economic and professional relations, but significantly reduced their participation in local non-religious associations, societies and clubs.

Exclusion from Trades

The primary aim of the anti-Jewish legislation was to diminish the Jewish share in the economy. By the terms of the First Jewish Law and the Second Jewish Law, passed a year later, licences in certain trade sectors could no longer be issued to Jews if they had more than 6 per cent representation

in that trade.²² This was a disastrous development for Jews in the Third Gendarmerie District because, in all four counties, Jews had between 20 and 30 per cent of the trading licences in 1938–1939. Moreover, in order to accelerate the exclusion of Jewish competitors, non-Jewish tradesmen deluged the local authorities with complaints about them.

An example of such complaints is to be found in the records of Zala County. There in 1938, non-Jewish tradesmen from Zalaszentgrót filed a grievance against Jewish tradesmen. The Jews, they said, would not sell them cloth. The petitioners assumed that the reason behind this was Jewish hostility towards Christians and Hungarian nationalists, the local authorities adding that they had read about a Jewish boycott on Christian tradesmen in a newspaper.²³ There is no information on the outcome of this specific case, but János Hoffmann, a Jewish tradesman from Szombathely, shared his memories about a similar situation in a diary entry for December 1940, following the Second Jewish Law. He relates how Jewish tradesmen were unable to get cloth, and how he feared that their shops would be empty in a few months, Jewish employees would have to be licensed and non-Jewish employees paid off. Hoffmann adds ironically that ‘this is the most efficient way of practically [carrying out] the persecution of Jews’ and asks, ‘Why would a third Jewish Law be needed?’²⁴

These cases shed light on how normal communication between non-Jewish tradesmen and their Jewish fellow traders had ceased and how hostilities had been strengthened. No one seemed to take into account the general dearth in textile supplies that Hungary experienced during those years. Hostility was intensified by the activity of the local Baross Associations (*Baross Szövetség*)²⁵ and other Christian-nationalist groups.

Exclusion from Associations

Several types of associations and clubs flourished in the Third Gendarmerie District in the 1930s and 1940s. First, there were religious associations for women, charitable organizations and such like, mostly founded in the nineteenth century or even earlier. These were homogeneous in the religion of their members: there were Jewish associations and Catholic associations, for example. Beside religious associations, there was a range of professional associations for ‘professional people’, tradesmen and artisans. These had mixed membership because members were admitted regardless of their religion. However, Jews tended to be over-represented, because high numbers of them were in trades and professions. A third type of association was non-religious and non-professional. It included

choirs, amateur theatrical societies, and cultural groups; also groups concerned with the development of cities. These associations also had many Jews in them, because their membership was mostly recruited from the bourgeoisie.²⁶

While in religious and non-professional associations there were practically no conflicts between Jewish and non-Jewish members, the situation in professional associations was different. In these associations, Jewish members were often thought of as rivals to the non-Jews. In order to minimize the influence and positions the Jews held, several professional associations were founded during the 1920s and 1930s which were specifically Catholic. Thus, even before the enactment of the First Jewish Law of 1938, associations had been formed to which Jews had no admittance. This development did not, however, hamper the activity of non-religious professional associations nor, for quite a time, were they affected by laws or decrees. They remained strong in the local communities,²⁷ and Jews could enjoy membership.

All this stopped in 1942. From that date, associations had to hand in lists of their members and submit protocols of the sessions they held to the local authorities. If they refused to do so, they were banned. This is what happened to the Civil Club (*Kaszinó*) in Letenye (Zala County) in 1943. The local administration judged the activities of the association to be against the national interests of Hungary, and it was dissolved. In fact, the real reason for the closure was because the *Kaszinó* had ‘half-Jewish’ members, including its leader Dénes Csemesz.²⁸

RELATIONS BETWEEN JEWS AND NON-JEWS AFTER 19 MARCH 1944

The Isolation of Jews

After the German invasion of Hungary on 19 March 1944, the isolation of Jews reached a new level and turned to active persecution. While previous Hungarian governments believed that the exclusion of Jews from economic life was a sufficient ‘solution to the Jewish Question’, the government of the new prime minister Döme Sztójay resolved to follow the German example. The Sztójay government collaborated enthusiastically with the German invaders and, within a few weeks had issued several anti-Jewish decrees. The aim of these decrees was not only to accelerate the spoliation of Jews but also to isolate the Jewish population from non-Jews completely. From 5 April 1944 Jews were forced to wear the Yellow

Star, and soon they were being herded into ghettos and collecting camps.²⁹ The plan was to sever all relations Jews had with non-Jewish society.

The Jewish Councils

The new situation required new coping strategies from the Jewish communities, and the selection of the members of Jewish Councils is a good example of these. Jewish Councils were established in March 1944, on the orders of the Special Operations Command Eichmann. The main purpose was to facilitate communication between the German and Hungarian authorities and the Jewish communities, but the responsibilities also included organizing the internal life of ghettos—getting provisions in and arranging elementary medical care. Ghettos only existed for between three and seven weeks in the Hungarian countryside, so the Jewish Councils had neither opportunity nor time to organize any kind of cultural or community life.

Though the establishment of Jewish Councils was forced on them, local Jewish communities were allowed to select who should be members. In the largest Jewish community of the gendarmerie district, that in Szombathely Vas County, Manó Vályi was chosen as leader of the Jewish Council. Though Vályi was a practising Jew, he was also a decorated veteran of World War I. As a result, he was officially immune from discriminatory laws and decrees. This was indeed the reason why the Jewish community in Szombathely entrusted him with the leadership: they hoped that Vályi's personal immunity would be of advantage to them during future negotiations with the German and Hungarian authorities. However, SS Sergeant (*Scharführer*) Arndt, who was representing the German occupying forces, was informed of Vályi's war honours at his very first meeting with the senior circle of the Council. As several members who were present later testified, Arndt immediately sent Vályi home, saying, 'He does not belong here.'³⁰

Imre Wesel was delegated to lead the Jewish Council in Manó Vályi's place. Wesel was known to get on well with the mayor of Szombathely, Hugó Mészáros, and this was believed to be an advantage. A few weeks later, however, in early April, Wesel was arrested by the German authorities (although he managed to escape). So the Jewish Council needed yet another leader to be his successor. Iván Hacker was selected for the post.³¹

As it turned out, the mayor had no intention of heeding requests from Hacker and the Jewish Council. In May 1944 the Council was struggling to add more buildings to the Szombathely ghetto because several hundred Jews had arrived from other ghettos in the county. The mayor rejected requests for

help and, after some weeks, ordered his secretary to tell Hacker he was ‘not available’, every time he tried to call.³² This case was by no means unique: Jewish leaders elsewhere in the Third Gendarmerie District had to face similar problems, despite the fact that their communities had chosen those most integrated into non-Jewish society to represent them.³³ Thus, prominent Jewish citizens who had previously had good social relations with local administrative officials could now find these relations broken and useless.

The Ghettos

Having reasonably good relations with the authorities, gained from previous assimilation into non-Jewish society, could matter vitally for the preservation of life conditions in the ghettos and for the possibilities ghettoized Jews had to keep contact with the outside world. The establishment of ghettos in the Third Gendarmerie District was ordered on 6 May 1944 following the ministerial decree 1610/1944.³⁴ The sub-prefect, mayors, town clerks and representatives of the police and gendarmerie had been informed of the ghettoization plans at a meeting held prior to the issue of the decree. Within a few weeks, 22 ghettos were established in the Third Gendarmerie District. Six collection camps were set up as well—at Szombathely, Sárvár, Sopron, Pápa, Nagykanizsa and Zalaegerszeg. It was from these that about 17,000 Jews were deported between 4 July and 6 July 1944.³⁵

The decree on ghettoization issued by the Ministry of the Interior did not actually stipulate what ghettos should look like or formulate internal regulations for life inside. And, as the central administration paid no attention to the manner in which ghettoization was implemented, local administrators had the opportunity to decide on their establishment and regulation. Although the brief decrees issued by the prefects or sub-prefects of the different localities were very similar, the ghettos themselves were very different in the four counties.

In most cases ghettos were railed off from other parts of town. Jews were not allowed to leave and non-Jews were forbidden to enter, so as to minimize the Jews’ contacts with the outside world. During certain hours of the day, a few selected Jews were permitted to leave the ghetto to shop for food. This was the pattern in most ghettos in Sopron, Vas and Veszprém Counties, but some survivors later made it clear that there were a few ghettos that were not entirely separated from the non-Jewish environment. In Sárvár (Vas County) the ghetto was established in a street next to the sugar factory. It was a place where a lot of factory workers

had lived—both Jews and non-Jews—and, although the non-Jews had to move out, some of them kept up contact with their former colleagues and neighbours, bringing them food.³⁶ The survivors of the Sárvár ghetto did add, however, that this willingness to keep contact was not widespread, and this may indicate that only strong, close previous relations could motivate non-Jews to help Jews out and keep in touch with them.

In contrast to Sárvár, the most extreme isolation of Jews occurred in Szombathely. On 1 June 1944, on the instruction of the mayor, Hugó Mészáros, the police issued a new ghetto regulation prohibiting even provisioning groups from leaving the ghetto.³⁷

The situation in Zala County was entirely different. Though the local administrators in all four counties tried to implement ghettoization in a way that did not cross the interests of the non-Jewish population, in Zala County such a policy was impossible. This was because of the high proportion of mixed marriages there, and ghettoization tore families apart. As a consequence, the authorities saw to it that Jews in the ghettos of Zala County were not separated hermetically from the outside world. Several testimonies taken during People's Tribunal trials prove that non-Jewish relatives had the opportunity to visit their Jewish family members in Zalaegerszeg ghetto.³⁸ In Sümeg, the street the ghetto was established in was not closed off.³⁹ And the Pacsa ghetto, which contained only about a hundred people, was the most exceptional of all. Those living in it were allowed to leave its confines to go to work, go to the doctor's surgery and make other errands. Non-Jewish family members could visit the ghetto regularly. There was even a non-Jewish hairdresser who came to the ghetto once a week.⁴⁰ Thus, as a result of lenient treatment from the local administration, Jews in Zala County could keep contact with their non-Jewish relatives and with the outside world.

CONCLUSIONS

Jews were very successful in interwar Hungary and often well integrated into their surrounding communities. But the anti-Jewish legislation passed between 1938 and 1944 eroded relations between Jews and non-Jews and the process of erosion reached its peak in the spring of 1944 after the German invasion of Hungary. By that time even the strongest personal bonds with local administrative leaders were no guarantee that Jews would receive any help to save them from their misery. Jews, together with those Christians who were now legally classed as Jewish, had to rely on what informal help they could get from their non-Jewish friends or colleagues.

Such informal help, however, was usually only available to individuals and their families, not to any complete community.

The Jewish population in Zala County alone benefited from a local administration inclined to treat it favourably. Probably this was at least partly due to the high level of assimilation and integration Jews had achieved there.

However, even this was insufficient to prevent the deportation of countless Jews to Auschwitz in July 1944.

APPENDIX

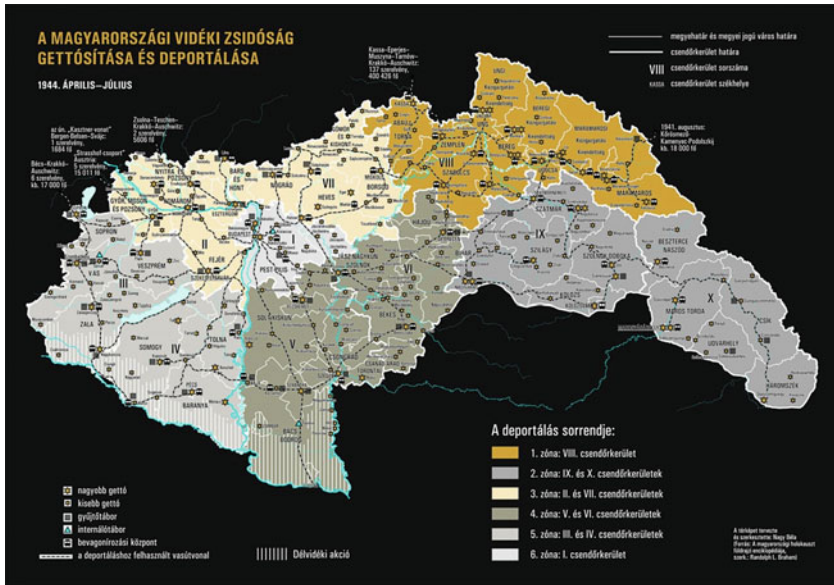


Fig. 16.1 Ghettoization and deportation of the Jews in Hungary, April–July 1944 (Source: http://www.hdke.hu/files/imagecache/mapf/images/maps/3_terkep.jpg, last accessed 14 January 2012)

NOTES

1. J. Molnár (1995) *Zsidósors 1944-ben az V. (szegedi) csendőrkörületben* [The Jews' Fate in the Fifth Gendarmerie District in 1944] (Budapest: Cserépfalvi Publishing), pp. 36–7.
2. The Trianon Peace Treaty, signed on 4 June 1920, officially ended Hungary's participation in World War I. By the treaty, Hungary lost two-thirds of its pre-war territory and population. The new conservative political elite that came to power in Hungary could not accept the conditions of the treaty. Its main goal throughout the interwar period was to regain lost territories. For more information on the Trianon Peace Treaty, see I. Romsics (2007) *A trianoni békeszerződés* [The Trianon Peace Treaty] (Budapest: Osiris Publishing).
3. For details, see, for example, K. Ungváry (2012) *A Horthy-rendszer mérlege* [An Appraisal of the Horthy Regime] (Pécs-Budapest: Jelenkor Publishing—OszK).
4. For the data of the census in 1941, see J. Kepecs (ed.) (1993) *A zsidó népesség száma településenként: 1840–1941* [Statistics of the Jewish Population in Hungary by Townships, 1840–1941] (Budapest: Központi Statisztikai Hivatal).
5. L. Mayer (ed.) (1994) *Források a szombathelyi gettó történetéhez, 1944. április 15.–1944. július 30.* [Sources for the History of the Ghetto in Szombathely] (Szombathely: Vas County Archives), pp. 11–13.
6. Hungarian Jewry became officially divided into three separate denominations in the nineteenth century following the Hungarian Jewish Congress of 1868–1869, which aimed at achieving institutional renewal of Judaism. The three denominations were: Neolog (modernized and progressive), Orthodox (conservative), and Status Quo Ante (conservative with some progressive elements, and essentially opposed to the schism itself). The denominations became institutionally independent. The conflict that had led to the schism in the first place had been based on the differing attitudes different groups had taken towards the emancipation of Hungarian Jews in 1867.
7. R. L. Braham (ed.) (2007) *A magyarországi holokauszt földrajzi enciklopédiája* [Geographic Encyclopedia of the Holocaust in Hungary] (Budapest: Park Publishing), p. 1315.
8. A. Katona (2008) *Zsidóság és zsidókérdés Vas vármegyében, 1910–1938* [Jewry and the Jewish question in Vas County, 1910–1938] (Pécs: PhD dissertation), pp. 233–6. and Decree Nr. 174.289. VII. b. B. M. issued by the Ministry of the Interior on the dissolution of Jewish organizations on 25 April 1944. See R. Vértés (ed.) (2002) *Magyarországi zsidótörvények és*

- rendeletek 1938–1945* [Anti-Jewish Laws and Decrees in Hungary 1938–1945] (Budapest: PolgART Publishing), p. 337.
9. V. Karády (2001) *Önazonosítás, sorsválasztás. A zsidó csoportazonosság történelmi alakváltozásai Magyarországon* [Self-identification, Choice of Fate. Historical Changes in Jewish Identity in Hungary] (Budapest: Új Madátum).
 10. Vértés (2002) *Magyarországi zsidótörvények és rendeletek*, pp. 149–52.
 11. Mixed marriages had been socially accepted in Hungary since their legalization in 1895. Unfortunately, no detailed memoirs, diaries or testimonies are available on this topic within the geographical area this chapter covers.
 12. Sopron County: Beled, Csepreg, Csorna, Kapuvár, Sopron. Vas County: Celldömölk, Jánosháza, Körmend, Kőszeg, Sárvár, Szombathely, Vasvár. Veszprém County: Devecser, Pápa, Várpalota, Veszprém. Zala County: Keszthely, Nagykanizsa, Pacsa, Sümeg, Tapolca, Zalaegerszeg, Zalalövő, Zalaszentgrót.
 13. Calculations based on data in the national census of 1941.
 14. Only actual, current religions were noted in the registries, so it is possible that some marriages are missing from my calculation. These would be ones where one or both partners had converted to the Christian religion but were considered Jewish by the legal definition of the anti-Jewish laws.
 15. People's Tribunal trial of Béla Buzás. Nb. 45/1945. Records of the People's Tribunal in Zalaegerszeg, Zala County Archives (ZCA).
 16. Law XXXII/1894 on the religion of children, <http://www.1000ev.hu/index.php?a=3¶m=6556>, date accessed 28 July 2015.
 17. V. Karády (1997) *A felekezetek közötti házasságok szociológiája a régi rendszer idején* [Sociology of Interreligious Marriages in the First Half of the Twentieth Century] in V. Karády (ed.) *Zsidóság, modernizáció, polgárosodás* (Budapest: Cserépfalvi Publishing), pp. 196–248.
 18. From the birth registries, no significant differences can be shown between the four counties in parents' choices on their children's religion.
 19. There are no records on the exact number of people who were technically Jewish but had converted to Christianity prior to 1941. There are two reasons for this: (1) the definition of 'Jew' was different in 1938, 1939 and in 1941 so Christians who were not considered Jewish on the basis of the first anti-Jewish law could easily be considered Jewish by the second one; (2) details of legal status with regard to the anti-Jewish laws were not required when filling out official documents before 1941, which only asked for 'religion'.
 20. Estimation by the author based on the data of the 1941 census and also the data cited in the sections dealing with the counties in question in Braham

- (2007) *A magyarországi holokauszt földrajzi enciklopédiája*, pp. 891–932 and pp. 1314–72.
21. For an analysis of the Hungarian anti-Jewish laws and decrees see L. Karsai (2004) 'A magyarországi zsidótörvények és – rendeletek 1920–1944' [Anti-Jewish Laws and Decrees in Hungary, 1920–1944] in *Századok* (Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat) 138. 2004, pp. 1285–1304.
 22. Vértés (2002) *Magyarországi zsidótörvények és rendeletek*, pp. 19–32. and pp. 44–66.
 23. Complaint against Jewish tradesmen. 60/1938. Records of the prefect in Zala County, (ZCA).
 24. 'A gyakorlati zsidóüldözés legcélravezetőbb módja ez ... minnek ide III. zsidótörvény?' (translated by the author of the present chapter); J. Hofmann (2001) *Ködkárpit* [Curtain of Mist] (Szombathely: City of Szombathely), p. 29.
 25. On the activity of Baross Associations, see L. Margittai (2011) *A Baross Szövetség szerepe a zsidótörvények és –rendeletek végrehajtásában* [The Role of Baross Associations in the Implementation of the Anti-Jewish Laws and Decrees] in P. Strausz and P. K. Zachar (eds) *Sorsfordulók és mindennapok* (Budapest: Heraldika Publishing), pp. 212–31.
 26. For the list of associations, see the records of the relevant county archives in their respective fond X.
 27. Katona (2008) *Zsidóság és zsidókérdés Vas vármegyében*, pp. 51–5 and pp. 228–30.
 28. People's Tribunal trial of Béla Buzás. Nb. 45/1945. Records of the People's Tribunal in Zalaegerszeg, ZCA.
 29. For details on the anti-Jewish measures following the German occupation of Hungary, see Molnár (1995) *Zsidósors 1944-ben az V. (szegedi) csendőrkerületben*, pp. 34–57.
 30. Testimony of Iván Hacker. O33/5941. 6. Yad Vashem Archives (YVA) and People's Tribunal trial of Hugó Mészáros. Nb. 398/1946. Records of the People's Tribunal in Szombathely, Vas County Archives.
 31. Mayer (1994), *Források a szombathelyi gettó történetéhez, 1944. április 15.–1944. július 30.*, p. 36.
 32. Testimony of Iván Hacker. O33/5941. 6, YVA.
 33. For example, Zoltán Kovács (a typical Hungarian name). He was the leader of the Jewish Council in Keszthely. The Zalaegerszeg Council was led by Imre Berger, but unlike in other councils, a special representative for issues regarding converts was appointed. This was János Wollák, a lawyer who had converted to Christianity.
 34. Decree published in I. Benoschofsky and E. Karsai (eds) (1958) *Vádirat a náciizmus ellen* [Arraignment against Nazism] (Budapest: MIOK), pp. 170–81.

35. László Ferenczy's report to the Ministry of the Interior on the subject of deportations from the Third Gendarmerie District on 9 July 1944. Published in L. Karsai and J. Molnár (eds) (1994) *Az Endre–Baky–Jaross per* [The Endre–Baky–Jaross Trial] (Budapest: Cserépfalvi Publishing), pp. 519–22.
36. Testimonies of Márta Szántó and Terézia Hajós. O93/49579 and O93/51836, YVA.
37. Ghetto regulation II for the Szombathely ghetto was published in the local daily newspaper *Vasvármegye*, 2 June 1944, p. 5.
38. People's Tribunal trial of Béla Buzás. Protocol of testimonies. Nb. 99/1947. Records of the People's Tribunal in Nagykanizsa, ZCA.
39. Braham (2007) *A magyarországi holokauszt földrajzi enciklopédiája*, p. 1352.
40. General records of the Pacsa district. 3512/1944. ZCA.

PART VI

The Aftermath. Post-War Returnees

Returning Home After the Holocaust. Jewish–Gentile Encounters in the Soviet Borderland

Diana Dumitru

The end of World War II was greeted with euphoria by millions of people. Nevertheless, both the victors and the defeated were aware of the dramatic changes their societies had undergone during the war and the looming difficulties they would face on the road back to ‘normality’. Ruined economies, staggering numbers of displaced persons, and new reconfigurations on the political stage absorbed most official government attention, leaving a plethora of other ‘smaller’ issues to be tackled by ordinary citizens themselves. Jews were among the many brutalized and devastated groups left to grapple with the unanswered questions raised by a multitude of war crimes, and to ponder their future in societies and places where great numbers of their community had been sent to their deaths.

This chapter aims to unravel the intricacies of Jewish–gentile encounters in the aftermath of the Holocaust in the territories of Bessarabia, Bucovina and Transnistria—regions that had been administered by Romanian authorities between 1941 and 1944. Using oral history

D. Dumitru (✉)

Department of World History, Ion Creangă State Pedagogical University,
Chişinău, Moldova

e-mail: dumitrudi@gmail.com

interviews with Jewish survivors as well as archival material, it seeks to examine the peculiar social environment shaped by Jewish awareness of instances when, during the war, civilian gentiles had collaborated with the murderous authorities. It tracks the efforts Jewish survivors made to attain a degree of post-war justice and to recover lost property. At the same time, the chapter analyses the ways in which gentiles had to face the important legal and moral implications of their actions as perpetrators of crimes against their fellow citizens that had taken place in their communities, or as onlookers to these deeds. The chronological limits of this study fall within the post-war Stalinist years, but I refer back to earlier periods when necessary.

‘THE PLACE WAS DIFFERENT, AND SO WAS I’

An International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania has established that between 280,000 and 380,000 Jews were victims of genocidal acts undertaken by the Romanian and German military in the territories that were under Romania’s control during World War II.¹ In the spring of 1944, tens of thousands of Jews held captive in the camps and ghettos of Transnistria were liberated by the Red Army. Their journeys home lasted for weeks and sometimes months, hindered by continued military operations in the territories from which they had been displaced, by the abysmal situation of the civilian transport systems, and by their own weak physical condition. When they reached their destinations, many discovered that their ‘homes’ had become very different places from what they had known before the war. Often they had to reassess whether they could continue to live there.

On arrival back in their towns or villages, the survivors found empty homes and transformed localities. Their extended families and the local Jewish communities had been wiped out. Soon feelings of utter devastation replaced the euphoria they had experienced, as survivors, at their liberation. This comes across clearly in the interviews. A Jewish native of Transnistria explains that her initial burst of happiness when Soviet soldiers freed her from the ghetto in the village of Ozarintsy quickly vanished: ‘Later the sad memories of the lost ones overwhelmed us. Almost every Jewish family in Ozarintsy [had] lost someone to the war.’² Another Transnistrian, Anna Ivankovitser, a former inmate of the Shargorod ghetto, recalls how difficult it was to think about continuing to live in that place after the war: ‘We didn’t want to stay in Shargorod. There were

too many terrible memories from living there.’³ Moreover, this family, like other Jewish families that had come through, had no food, no money, and no relatives who could help them rebuild their lives. Consequently, Anna’s sister went to Chernovtsy to see whether it was possible to move there. She learned that numerous apartments had been left vacant in the city, since many of the local residents had made a quick exit to Romania in anticipation of the closure of the Soviet border. Anna’s family was soon able to move into a four-room apartment in the centre of the city, and felt lucky to meet locals who treated them with kindness and friendliness. Because of such people, the Ivankovitsers started to ‘feel at home’ again after the war.

Like the Ivankovitsers with their bad feelings about Shargorod, the Seillers, a Jewish family from Chernovtsy, did not perceive the city they had come from with the same eyes after the Holocaust. It had taken weeks for Melitta Seiller, her mother and sister to walk back from Transnistria—only to find their apartment entirely empty, except for an iron bed. All three of them slept in this bed after their arrival. They did not know that their home was being used by Russian soldiers as well, until one night they woke up to the sound of soldiers inside the apartment. Nothing untoward happened during that night, yet the fear of rape lingered for a long time afterwards with the two teenage girls and their defenceless mother. Without their father’s protection—he had died in Transnistria—and with no means of subsistence, their lives in post-war Chernovtsy seemed too hard to endure. In 1946 they had the option of choosing between two brutal regimes, the Romanian and the Soviet. They decided to move to Romania. As Melitta explains, they ‘had already experienced the Russians back in Cernăuți’, and knew ‘what they were capable of’. In their minds, they had ‘two examples’ of how the Soviet regime treated its citizens: (i) in 1940, ‘some rich people in Cernăuți, some of them Jews, some of them Romanians ... were taken to Siberia, and they were never heard of again’; (ii) in 1944, when the family came back from Transnistria, ‘the NKVD roamed the streets and made raids in houses during the night, taking people to forced labour in the Donetsk mines’.⁴

Suggestively, after the war, Chernovtsy looked more appealing to Jews who had been born and raised in the Soviet Union than to Jews who were natives of the city. Some Soviet citizens, finding their houses destroyed in the fighting, chose to resettle in other parts of the country, including the territories incorporated into the Soviet Union after the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. Concurrently, native residents of the territories annexed

in 1939–1940 were trying to escape Soviet rule. The people from these borderland territories frequently harboured both anti-Soviet and anti-Jewish sentiments, and this caught some of the arriving Jews by surprise. For instance, after a convoluted journey to Lviv, the Transnistrian Rosa Gershenovich was at first wholly enchanted by the city’s European allure and its architecture. But soon she realized that ‘the local population hated Soviet power, but were scared of Stalin’. In her interview, she also observes that ‘at first the locals were afraid of the Jews, but then anti-Semitism burst out there. There were inscriptions everywhere on the walls: “Yids, get out of Ukraine!” and “Get out of Lvov!”’⁵

In truth, by the end of war, even in the places that had previously seemed the most accommodating to Jews, signs of significant anti-Semitism began to be seen among the population. On returning home after his imprisonment in a Transnistrian camp, Leonid Averbuch, a native of Odessa, was quick to notice that the city ‘was different, and so was I.’ He still had Jewish classmates and Jewish teachers in his school, but they were mostly unknown to him (presumably the old ones had died or had left). And, most markedly, ‘there was anti-Semitism’ in his city, which he assumed had been picked up from the fascists during the occupation. Leonid says that, during this period, people were often heard saying: ‘The Jews are back telling us what to do.’⁶ The return to Odessa was not easy for Leonid’s family. Their apartment was now inhabited by Melnichenko, the chairman of the Water Transport District Council of the locality. He occupied all six rooms, which had accommodated two families before the war. When the Finegold family arrived as another set of co-tenants, Melnichenko vacated two rooms for the Finegolds and two rooms for the Averbuchs, but he remained in the apartment himself for quite a while.⁷ After liberation from the camps, Naum Balan’s family faced a similar situation: when they got home to Tiraspol, they discovered that neighbours had taken all their belongings and that three other families were living in their house. Moreover, Romanian soldiers had been keeping their horses in this place during the war years, so the entire house and courtyard were in a terrible condition. Nevertheless, with help from the town council, the Balan family managed to repossess the house and carry on with their lives in Tiraspol.⁸

In Bessarabia and Bucovina the returning survivors suffered additional layers of distress, especially connected with memories of abuse suffered at the hands of gentiles in the summer of 1941. One Bessarabian deportee, still scarred by the treatment he had received on his way back

to Transnistria, recalls the hostile reception: 'You go through the village. From both sides local residents are standing with long sticks. They hit whoever they can reach.'⁹ Tsylya Podstavkin also had unpleasant memories of these times. When Romanian troops entered the territory of Bessarabia, the local gentiles launched themselves into a mass plunder of Jewish possessions. Tsylya recalls how, during this period, her uncle went outside the house, but then returned barefoot almost at once: a Moldovan had come up to him and had robbed him of his boots.¹⁰ Likewise, she has painful memories of her march to Transnistria: on a cold rainy day she fell into a trench full of mud and water. She cried to passers-by to help, but nobody came and, in the end, she only just managed to get out through her own efforts.¹¹

There are other harrowing recollections from Jewish survivors about the abuse they suffered: humiliations, massacres, rapes and beatings. These things left such trauma that it became next to impossible to remain in the places where they had happened. Along with other more practical problems, anxieties left after the treatment they had received from gentiles in the summer of 1941 led some to leave their homes behind. Such was the case with a Jewish family from the village of Corpaci (Bessarabia), who, after surviving the ghetto of Ternovka in Transnistria, returned to their home village in 1944. According to their statement, what they experienced in the village when they returned home 'was even more horrific than what we had faced in the ghetto'. Their house had been completely plundered, with no clothes or belongings remaining; all they could find was an old prayer book thrown on the floor and pieces of shattered brick and glass. But this was not the worst aspect. The real devastation came from learning what had happened in the village in the summer of 1941, after the family had left—terrible goings-on that were common knowledge in Corpaci. One of the survivor's mother's close friends was among the first to steal from Jews when the German and Romanian units arrived in the village. This gentile woman also bragged that she would chop up her friend 'like a cabbage' if she ever came back. The family also learned how local peasants had drowned two Jews from the neighbourhood in the Prut River nearby. Learning about all this, the returnees could only conclude that 'one can never be sure about what is happening in the mind of the person you call a friend'.¹² The revelations were unbearable things to face, and there seemed no way out but to leave their home behind and move away to build a new life in a place less emotionally charged with desolation and dismay.

SEEKING POST-WAR JUSTICE

While some Jewish survivors chose to try to erase the painful memories from their minds or leave them deeply buried, others pressed for justice and worked to secure punishment for those who had committed crimes against the Jewish people. Immediately after the war, when many more survivors were still living, a significant number of Jews gave evidence in court as witnesses against such perpetrators. For example, during the trial of the men who had been guards in the Făleşti ghetto, a number of former detainees testified against Gheorghe Frăţescu and demanded that he receive a harsh punishment.¹³ According to the survivors' statements, this man had shown despicable behaviour when in charge of the ghetto, beating and starving the Jews housed there. The survivors reported that Frăţescu had enjoyed having 'fun' at the expense of his detainees. When columns of Jews were marched to their work site and passed through puddles, Frăţescu would order them to lie down in the mud; and when they passed groups of non-Jews, he would force the Jewish women to undress and dance. What is more, many of the women were raped by him and the other guards.¹⁴

In another trial, a survivor of the Dumbrăveni massacre, who had been stabbed 32 times during the carnage but had miraculously survived, told the investigators how Romanian Army soldiers, local residents and villagers from nearby settlements had 'started massacres against the Jewish population. The frenzied gentiles looted all houses, took everything they could lay their hands on, and for several days brutally hunted down Jews, beating to death or shooting them when they were caught'.¹⁵ A Jewish woman who had survived the same massacre came to court to support this evidence on the crimes committed, but had to admit that, because of the severe beatings she had suffered, she could not remember even the faces of her aggressors.

There were also Jews who conducted their own 'investigations' and who persuaded gentiles to share their own knowledge about criminal acts with the courts. Motel Hasner, a survivor of the Ciudei (Bucovina) massacre, came home after the war and went to great pains to bring to court those who had harmed Jews or who had robbed Jewish property. During the massacre in his village over 400 Jews had been killed and their entire property had been looted by the local gentiles and by peasants from the neighbouring areas. Eyewitnesses recalled how, in the heat of this plundering spree, villagers had carried the stolen goods to Ciudei's central stadium, where each marked out a patch where they could store the loot,

amass even more, and then find a horse cart to take it all home. Hasner found two gentile witnesses, including a Polish resident of Ciudei, and persuaded them to join him in testifying against Mikhailo Ion, who, at the time, was the chairman of Ciudei's kolkhoz. The witnesses made depositions regarding Mikhailo's plundering of Jewish property during the war, and upheld that he 'threw a stone at the "icon of Stalin."' ¹⁶ Mikhailo was arrested and nobody ever saw him in Ciudei again.

Numerous perpetrators of the crimes committed in 1941 were arrested, both with and without the assistance of Jewish survivors. After the war, the Soviet authorities incarcerated thousands of local civilians, charging them with 'anti-Soviet behaviour', which included anti-Semitic violence and plunder. One NKVD report informs us that, in the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic (MSSR), in the last quarter of the year 1944, no fewer than 350 civilians were convicted for anti-Soviet activities. The report states that these offenders amounted to 79.5 per cent of all those brought to justice, describing them as 'traitors, helpers, denounciators, policemen, [former] mayors, village elders, and other scum'. ¹⁷ The next report, for the period between January and March 1945, indicates that 739 people were arrested, and that of these 73.8 per cent fell in the same categories. ¹⁸ In May 1945, in the Orhei district alone, 345 people were arrested. ¹⁹ Some of the captives' crimes were clearly acts committed against Jews, and this is briefly mentioned in the NKVD documents: in 1941 Guzun Grigore had betrayed the Jewish Zamoisky family; Mişin Daniel had participated in the search for Jews, handing them over to the Germans; Maznic Timofei had had a hand in shootings. ²⁰ The trials of gentiles who had participated in the killing of Jews were mostly undertaken without public access. Some of those found guilty in these cases were executed in their native villages—usually by hanging. This 'form of justice' was mostly implemented towards the end of the war and was carried out by SMERSH units (*Smert' Shpionam*, Death to Spies). Presumably, the public executions were meant to play an 'educational' role for the local population, and contribute to the consolidation of Soviet power in the reconquered areas.

Several excerpts from NKVD/KGB-produced notes suggest that at least some Jews followed the Soviet post-war trials closely and viewed them as a legitimate tool of state justice. For instance, a student named Shapirov expresses his excitement at seeing such trials take place: 'At last, retribution has begun for the Jewish blood that was spilled. It's a pity, they don't try enough people.' Shapirov also wonders if it is 'only in Moldova that so many criminals exist?' ²¹ The accused in the Soviet public trials were

primarily Romanian and German soldiers, since that fitted best with the official narrative of what the war crimes committed against the Soviet people had been. Remarking on this, a Jewish resident of Chişinău expresses only half-hearted approval of such selective punishment: ‘These Germans and Romanians are rightly put on trial, but those who helped them in their atrocities ought to be put on trial with them.’²²

By the end of war, a good many gentiles were very much afraid of the mighty Soviet state, which was now turning its attention to post-war justice, knowing that this included punishment of those who had committed crimes against Jews. Some were also filled with apprehension that Jews who had been wronged might take retribution into their own hands. An incident reported by a gentile resident in the village of Onişcani illustrates this situation vividly. In 1941 a peasant called Ion Balercă had killed an old Jewish woman, Ida; but he had somehow managed to escape any investigation into his crime. One day Balercă fell ill, and went to the Călăraşi district hospital. There the chief medical officer was Ida’s sister, Rosa. While he was in the hospital, the story goes, ‘Balercă received an injection, came home, sat on his bed, and was gone [dead].’ The narrator of this incident relates that, a while later, Balercă’s son also fell ill and went to the same hospital: he died too. When the narrator’s own brother-in-law, who shared the Balercă name, in turn felt sick, he refused to go to the hospital, saying that ‘all Balercăs die’ who go there.²³ Though the truth of this story may perhaps be doubted, what really happened or did not happen is not the significant point. The important thing is how it reveals gentiles’ fear of being punished for earlier misdeeds. Non-Jews were apprehensive: they were afraid that the relatives of Jewish victims might seek revenge, and such concerns spread, not only among those culpable, but also through a larger portion of society.

Another suggestive case relates to the massacre in Pepeni (Bessarabia), which took place in 1941 with the direct and voluntary participation of a large group of villagers. One of Pepeni’s inhabitants, Ion Grosu, was a teenager during the massacre, but memories of the killings his fellow villagers committed haunted him for years and influenced how he behaved towards the Jewish community long after the war.²⁴ In the post-war years, Ion often had to go to the nearby city of Bălţi, and frequently stayed overnight in people’s rooms, since no hotels were available back then. Usually the owners of these rooms were Jews. Ion remembers how a Jewish host once asked him where he came from. Ion felt compelled to lie, saying he was from another village. However, the host double-checked with other

guests and discovered that Ion was from Pepeni. When asked why he had lied, Ion confessed: ‘You know what happened in Pepeni ... and I thought you wouldn’t even let me into your house.’²⁵ This incident suggests that a sense of collective guilt and responsibility for the horrors of the past continued to be felt among at least some of the villagers of Pepeni—even by those who were too young to be at fault. It seems that, for decades, the people of Pepeni shouldered the burden of crimes committed by their fellow villagers in 1941.

Occasionally Jewish–gentile tensions could take unexpected forms, for example in malicious rumours that were spread in non-Jewish circles. One gentile woman recalls how she was filled with horror when, in the late 1940s, she was invited to visit a Jewish woman in her apartment in Chernovtsy. She explains how, at the time, ‘people were saying that the Jews were killing people and making shashlyk [fried meat] out of them’.²⁶

THE ISSUE OF JEWISH PROPERTY

Jewish ownership of property had been an irritant in Jewish–gentile relations for many years before the war. It was an issue especially prominent in Bessarabia and Bucovina, leading anti-Semitic political parties of the 1930s to make an electoral promise to strip Jews of much of their property and hand it over to Romanians; indeed this was one of the most appealing electoral slogans in inter-war Romania. During the Holocaust, when the Jews were taken away, an expropriation occurred in these territories that even the wildest anti-Semite could not have anticipated: all Jewish property in its entirety was systematically plundered by the gentile inhabitants. This happened immediately after the arrival of Romanian and German troops. Jewish goods and belongings went up for grabs. Eyewitnesses to this plunder describe the carnivalesque scene in numerous localities, with crowds of gentiles breaking into Jewish houses and carrying away pillows, carpets, furniture, cutlery, foodstuffs, clothes, toys and a lot of other things. When the Jewish survivors returned home, they had no difficulty in recognizing their belongings in their neighbours’ courtyards: barrels rolled out from cellars to be washed before the new harvest, laundry hanging to dry, pillows and carpets put out to be aired—all these had been stolen from them. As one survivor declares: ‘When we returned, all our property was in the hands of the locals.’²⁷

Sometimes, there were surprising bits of luck. A returning Bucovinan family, the Rudiches, found only wasteland where their house had stood—it

had been demolished—but, by luck, they got hold of one old possession. This was the book into which the family's father had inscribed details of all his debtors, people he had given merchandise to on credit.²⁸ Shortly afterwards the father told a neighbour about the people who owed him money, and the word spread. People from the village started to come, bringing the sums they owed.²⁹

Not all Jewish survivors had the confidence to demand the return of their property. They feared an intensification of the hostility between them and the gentile population. Besides, attempts to recuperate property were by no means always successful. For example, a Bessarabian survivor, who returned to her native village, tried to claim her property back from a peasant family, but met blatant refusal. It was only in 1947 that the matter was resolved. The man who had taken the property was arrested for other war-related activities, and his wife showed up at the Jewish woman's house bringing back her belongings. When questioned at the trial about the stolen Jewish possessions, the gentile woman cynically responded: 'We did not steal them, we took them in order to keep them safe.'³⁰ A small detail from this case brings out the particular atmosphere that prevailed in certain areas after the war. The Jewish woman did not dare go alone to demand that her property be returned, but asked a Jewish companion to go with her. (Presumably she did not have close family or relatives.) This was mentioned during the trial, and, from the account, we catch a glimpse of the sense of vulnerability this Jewish survivor felt. She was hesitant to ask the authorities for help and lacked the courage to confront the plunderers on her own. This detail also suggests that, despite the official rhetoric, the Bessarabian Jewish survivors did not always have much confidence that the Soviet state would help them regain their property.

In the cities—and this is especially well illustrated in the case of Chişinău—the most contentious issue was housing. Numerous families who returned from evacuation, as well as the families of Jewish survivors, came back to find their apartments occupied by other people (gentiles) or by state institutions. According to some estimates, between one-half and one-third of the residential buildings of Soviet cities in the occupied territories were destroyed completely or otherwise made uninhabitable.³¹ By way of illustration, a war veteran from the town of Criuleni found that he and his wife had nowhere to live on their return. When he applied to have housing provided, the Criuleni authorities acknowledged his impossible position, but explained that all the residential areas in the district had been destroyed in the war, and there was an acute shortage of housing.³²

As one document shows, even the vice-minister of the Health and Sanitary Inspectorate of the MSSR, an official called Gehtman, could not obtain decent accommodation for his family. Gehtman even asked to be dismissed from his job, on the grounds that he could not cope with the inadequate housing conditions in Chişinău: he was living in a small room with no bathroom, along with his 70-year-old mother and two children.³³ As with many other citizens, he could only be offered a more fitting apartment when one became available.

It was especially difficult to get an occupied apartment back if it was inhabited by someone with a high rank in local government. Such individuals frequently used their power positions and their extended networks to stay where they were. Several examples can be cited: one returned evacuee had to lay his claim to his own flat against one of the vice-secretaries of the Communist Party of the Chişinău council³⁴; the wife of a Red Army soldier called Rubinshtein, had trouble getting an NKVD employee out of her apartment; and so on.³⁵ The soldier Naum Shvartzman remained homeless despite having a family of six, because his apartment was occupied by the director of the Department of Municipal Industrial Commerce. In the end, however, his family was luckier than others: in September 1945 they were offered another apartment of 'similar value'.³⁶ Meanwhile, the family of another Jewish war veteran got only two rooms back from their three-room apartment,³⁷ and the wife of a Jewish war veteran found she had to host another family in her living-quarters, all her protests dismissed because her husband's father had been 'a big tobacco producer' before the war and had acquired a large apartment that could house more than one family.³⁸ In another unfortunate case, a Jewish soldier lost his family house while he was away fighting at the front: after his mother's death in 1942, it had been nationalized by the state.³⁹

It was just as difficult returning to a house now occupied by some state institution. Vilena Zelţer and her nine-year-old daughter, for example, had nowhere to live because their apartment had been taken over by the State Publishing House of the MSSR.⁴⁰ The publishing house was not prepared to move out, and instead asked Zelţer to wait until she could be offered an apartment in another part of the city. But this was a hopeless solution, since there were too many people in Chişinău already.

At the end of war there was a fierce struggle for living space among people returning to the cities and, in these circumstances, stinging insults might be hurled at Jews claiming back their property. Enraged by such treatment, a disabled war veteran filed a duplicated letter of complaint

to the highest authorities, sending one to the first secretary of the MSSR and another to Stalin himself. He protested at the occupation of his apartment by SMERSH officers and at the physical and verbal abuse they gave to his family. According to his letter, one of the officers said: 'You got the little Yids from the orphanage. I will tear all these little Yids in two and hang them up by their legs.' The officer also insulted the veteran's wife, claiming that 'she bought the Order of the Red Banner by selling her body'.⁴¹ There is no available information showing how this litigation ended.

All in all, it is difficult to assess how much these spats reflect an anti-Semitic spirit in post-war society and how much was due to conflict over scarce living space. What comes out very clearly, though, is the state's inability to handle the housing crisis. Despite legal norms stipulating that owners had a fundamental right to their property, the real-life situation proved far more complex and ad hoc solutions had to be settled on. Importantly, certain categories of people had to be provided with free housing by the state—but there was not enough housing to go around. Widows of Soviet army officers, wives and widows of soldiers with small children, all officers and all disabled war veterans (with their families) had a right to housing. These people were often placed in homes whose legal owners were temporarily absent. When the owners returned, the occupying family was supposed to move somewhere else, but often there was no place to go. Newly arrived families were in a similar situation. It was a very strained environment, with no clear-cut solutions to the problems that arose. So people frequently lost their tempers, said insulting things and even fought. We need to be careful when interpreting these flare-ups. For example, does the recurrent phrase, 'Why did you Jews come back?' refer to Jews as an ethnic group, or is it a question to individuals, asking why they had come back to such limited living space? However, startled by such incidents, many Soviet Jews came to the conclusion that anti-Semitism had been raised to a level previously unknown in the Soviet state.

CONCLUSIONS

In the aftermath of the Holocaust, Jewish survivors came back to the Soviet borderland areas to face a sensitive and often dangerous situation. At their return they frequently learned about their neighbours' participation in murder, betrayal and plunder that had occurred within their settlements—or of their indifference to such things happening. Destitute,

devastated by the loss of their families, and disheartened by the transformations they saw in their communities, numerous Jews in the post-war era struggled to redefine what 'home' meant. Partly as a result, some Jews chose to abandon their former communities, hoping to build new lives elsewhere and find new faith in humanity. Others carried on in their wretched homes, still seeking to address the crimes of the past. These Jews demanded the return of their property and pressed for severe punishments to be imposed on the perpetrators of the Holocaust and their accomplices. They actively assisted the Soviet judicial organs to try to secure these ends.

In their turn, often unwilling to part with their newly acquired property and fearful of punishment from the Soviet government or vengeance from wronged Jews themselves, many gentiles recalibrated their relationship with the Jewish survivors who had managed to return home. Some of them made out that they were becoming 'innocent victims' of the returning Jews, and this was insinuated in malicious rumours spread among gentiles in the post-war era. However, open hostility and clashes between Jews and gentiles revolved almost exclusively around housing.

NOTES

1. International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania (ICHR), Tuvia Friling et al. (eds) Final Report (Iași: Polirom, 2004), p. 381.
2. Central Europe Center for Research and Documentation (Centropa). Collection of interviews, <http://www.centropa.org/search-our-database-jewish-memory>, Dina Orlova, Ukraine, Chernovtsy, 2003.
3. Centropa, Anna Ivankovitser, Ukraine, Chernovtsy, 2002.
4. Centropa, Melitta Seiler, Romania, Brasov, 2003.
5. Centropa, Rosa Gershenovich, Ukraine, Lvov, 2002.
6. Centropa, Leonid Averbuch, Ukraine, Odessa, 2003.
7. The Averbuch family discovered that their apartment had been occupied during the war by the editor of the daily Russian newspaper Molva, published by the Romanian authorities, which frequently featured virulent anti-Semitic articles.
8. Centropa, Naum Balan, Ukraine, Odessa, 2003.
9. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), RG-50.572, interview with Efim Sochircă, 2009.
10. Yad Vashem Archive (YVA), File, 03/11639, testimony of Tsylya Podstavkin, p. 5.
11. Testimony of Tsylya Podstavkin (op. cit.), p. 10.
12. Centropa, Elka Roizman, Ukraine, Chernovtsy, 2002.

13. This was a temporary ghetto in Bessarabia, where Jews were kept for several months before they were deported to Transnistria.
14. USHMM, RG-54.003*13, record of the case of Fratsescu Gheorgy.
15. USHMM, RG-54.003*14, record of the case of Gheorghilas Timofei.
16. USHMM, RG-50.575*0103, interview with Constantin Padure, 2011.
17. The Archive of Social Political Organizations from the Republic of Moldova (AOSPRM), Fond 51, in. 3, d. 39, f. 4.
18. AOSPRM, Fond 51, in. 3, d. 39, f. 40–44.
19. AOSPRM, Fond 51, in. 3, d. 121, f. 12.
20. AOSPRM, Fond 51, in. 3, d. 121, f. 13.
21. AOSPRM, Fond 51, in. 5, d. 70, f. 26.
22. AOSPRM, Fond 51, in. 5, d. 70, f. 28.
23. USHMM, RG-50.572, interview with Nicanor Dănilă, 2010.
24. On the day after the massacre, Ion saw people from the village carrying the dead away from the site of their murder, the local town hall, and washing the blood from its floor and walls.
25. USHMM, RG-50.572, interview with Ion Grosu, 2008.
26. USHMM, RG-50.575*0116, interview with Floarea Zahara, 2011.
27. YVA, File 03/11639, p. 63.
28. It was the principal of the local school who had rescued the book from their house and who brought it to their father.
29. Centropa, interview with Manin Rudich, Romania, Braşov, 2003.
30. The Archives of the Security and Intelligence Service of the Republic of Moldova (SIS), Nr. 0758, file of Bîrsan Anton, Bocancea Mihail and others, p. 318.
31. M. Altshuler (1993) 'Antisemitism in Ukraine towards the End of the Second World War', *Jews in Eastern Europe* 3, No. 22 (Winter 1993), 47.
32. AOSPRM, Fond 51, in. 8, d. 111, f. 22–27.
33. AOSPRM, Fond 51, in. 5, d. 373, f. 47–49.
34. AOSPRM, Fond 51, in. 3, d. 146, f. 108–19.
35. AOSPRM, Fond 51, in. 3, d. 448, f. 254–61.
36. AOSPRM, Fond 51, in. 3, d. 448, f. 167.
37. AOSPRM, Fond 51, in. 7, d. 500, f. 192–96.
38. AOSPRM, Fond 51, in. 7, d. 502, f. 171–78.
39. AOSPRM, Fond 51, in. 8, d. 115, f. 1–21.
40. AOSPRM, Fond 51, in. 3, d. 74, f. 122–23.
41. AOSPRM, Fond 51, in. 3, d. 448, f. 180–84.

The ‘Aryanization’ of Jewish Property in Amsterdam and Its Consequences After World War II

Hinke Piersma and Jeroen Kemperman

In the spring of 2013 the Dutch newspaper *Het Parool* published an article that had a significant impact.¹ It reported that immediately after World War II, when Jewish citizens returned to Amsterdam from concentration camps or from hiding, the municipal authorities of the time had levied fines on them for ground lease fees that had remained unpaid during the war. The revelation that the civil administration had acted in this way sparked a debate on whether the treatment of returning Jewish citizens in Amsterdam had been just and morally acceptable. At the very start of the debate, the mayor of Amsterdam, Eberhard van der Laan, stated that he would pay back every penny that could be considered unjustly levied. With this decision, a new chapter has been added to the policies of restitution in the Netherlands: it is the first time that a local government has accepted financial responsibility for the spoliation of the Dutch Jews.

This chapter covers the period 1940–1948. During the German occupation of the Netherlands, Jewish homeowners were robbed of their property and

H. Piersma (✉) • J. Kemperman
NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Amsterdam,
The Netherlands
e-mail: h.piersma@niod.knaw.nl; j.kemperman@niod.knaw.nl

possessions, and almost 102,000 Jews perished as a result of the Holocaust. Some survived and returned, however, once the occupation was over. What were the consequences when these survivors wanted to reclaim their lives? Our focus is on the situation in Amsterdam, where approximately 20,000 of the 77,000 Jewish residents managed to survive the war and were able to come back.

THE NETHERLANDS UNDER GERMAN RULE

On 10 May 1940, German troops invaded the Netherlands. The five days of battle that ensued ended in Dutch capitulation. After a brief period of military rule, a German civilian administration was installed on 29 May 1940. The Austrian Nazi, Arthur Seyss-Inquart, was appointed *Reichskommissar für die besetzten niederländischen Gebiete* (Reich Commissioner for the occupied Netherlands territories).

In Amsterdam, the occupation started on 15 May 1940, when the German 207th Infantry Division marched into the city under the command of Lieutenant General K. G. R. von Tiedemann. The spectacle ‘was observed by thousands along the roads, [waiting] calmly, quietly and with great dignity,’ as the Dutch newspaper *Het Volk* reported.² The acting mayor, G. C. J. D. Kropman, had the dubious honour of ‘welcoming’ the German commander and his troops on behalf of the local authorities. One of the first subjects he broached during his meeting with von Tiedemann was how the Jews in Amsterdam were to be treated. The German commander’s comment was: ‘If the Jews do not wish to notice us, we are not going to notice the Jews.’³ Although this appeared to be a reassuring statement, many Dutch Jews did not wait to see what would actually happen; thousands of them tried to flee to England via the port of IJmuiden. Among them, from Amsterdam, was the Social Democrat alderman Emanuel Boekman. When his attempt to escape failed, he and his wife committed suicide. He was one of many Jews who resorted to taking their own lives in May 1940.⁴

Anti-Jewish measures were introduced only gradually in the Netherlands, and they generated no appreciable protest in the first year of occupation. However, when, on 22–23 February 1941, the German police in Amsterdam arrested more than 400 Jewish men in broad daylight, people did protest. The immediate reason for the arrests was the fatal wounding of a member of the Dutch National Socialist Movement (NSB) that had occurred in a street fight with Jewish self-defence groups.

The brutal reaction by the German authorities led to such outrage that, starting with the tram drivers and conductors, the city's municipal service workers went on strike.

The strike, which started on 25 February, lasted two days and has gone down in history as the first and only collective protest people in the Netherlands made against the persecution of the Jews. In response to the February strike the German occupiers made drastic changes to the municipal administration structure. Municipal councils were rendered inoperative and aldermen were demoted to the status of civil servants wholly subordinated to the mayor. This meant that local administration was henceforth organized on the basis of the National Socialist '*Führer* principle'.⁵

THE 'ARYANIZATION' OF JEWISH PROPERTY

Deportations of the Jewish population started in the summer of 1942, after the segregation of the Jews had been largely completed. This progressive isolation had been an inexorable process. Jews had been dismissed from all civil servants' posts in November 1940; they were banned from entering public spaces in May/September 1941; from January 1942 they had to have the letter 'J' stamped on their identity cards; and from May of that year every Jew above the age of six was required to wear the Yellow Star. By then, the economic noose had already been tightened. In August 1941 Jews were obliged to transfer their bank accounts to the 'looting bank', Lippmann, Rosenthal & Co. (Liro); and, from that same month, according to Regulation 154/1941, all Jewish-owned properties had to be registered and the owners had to declare any proceeds they gained from these properties in the form of rent or mortgages. Between 20,000 and 25,000 properties were registered as a result of this regulation, along with 5,600 mortgages.⁶

Regulation 154/1941 also stipulated that registered properties be put under administration, and this happened to approximately 2,000 houses owned by Jews in Amsterdam. The organization responsible for the administration was the *Niederländische Grundstücksverwaltung* (NGV, the Dutch Real Estate Administration), which was led by the Vienna architect, W. Münster. The goal of the NGV was the sale of Jewish-owned houses to 'Aryan' Dutchmen, and administrators (*Verwalter*) were appointed to do this. In Amsterdam, the J. P. Everout estate agency was the largest player in the field. How this agency went about its business can be seen in the

case of a Jew called A. de Vries, who owned a house on the Stadionweg 28 Amsterdam. On 2 March 1942, de Vries received a letter from Everout stating that from henceforth he was to pay rent. This situation was short-lived, however, as on 26 June, a second letter arrived informing him that his house had been sold.⁷ In the space of four months Jewish homeowners like de Vries were demoted first to being tenants, then to becoming homeless.

The Germans had already gained extensive organizational experience of the 'Aryanization' of Jewish property before they occupied the Netherlands. Official state regulation of the process was markedly stepped up after the *Anschluss* of 1938 when Germany seized power in Austria. Up to that point, spoliation of immovable properties had been an improvised and regional or local affair, varying from place to place. But the 'wild' confiscation of Jewish property in Vienna, which involved looting and stealing on a massive scale, gave rise to a new administration office, the *Vermögensverkehrsstelle* (Property Transfer Office). This was established in Vienna in May 1938 and was led by Hans Fischböck, who became Minister of Economic Affairs and Labour in the Seyss-Inquart government formed there in 1938. Fischböck was put in charge of all matters related to the expropriation of property and was thus at the root of the so-called 'Vienna Model' that came to be copied across the German Reich. In 1940 Fischböck arrived in the Netherlands with Seyss-Inquart and became *Generalkommissar für Finanzen und Wirtschaft* (Commissioner-General for Finance and the Economy). He was able to put his previous experiences in the expropriation of Jewish property to further use.⁸

The process of Aryanization in the Netherlands thus proceeded in a relatively quick, comprehensive and centralized way, probably even more so than in the Reich itself or in other parts of occupied Western Europe. The most important feature of this orderly and bureaucratic confiscation of Jewish property was its legalistic varnish, so that some historians have quite accurately called it 'robbery by decree'. This appearance of legality may have made the whole operation easier to swallow for the traditionally law-abiding Dutch authorities and the non-Jewish population. After the general strike of February 1941, there was no collective resistance against the German anti-Jewish policies. This does not mean that the people supported such measures. As a whole, the Dutch were certainly not enthusiastic about them. There were few indigenous initiatives to promote the process of Aryanization and the general public seems to have been quite reluctant to buy former Jewish property, especially after the Battle of Stalingrad. The German Reich was the main beneficiary of the

confiscation policy. However, as it turned out, certain Dutch individuals, and also some local authorities, were unable to resist the temptation to buy financially attractive real estate that had belonged to Jews.⁹

The trade in Jewish property attracted all sorts of characters—sometimes very shady ones—as can be seen in the files that were prepared for their trials after the war. One of these characters was a lawyer named E. Th. A. (Emiel) Hermans. Before the war Hermans had struggled financially, but during the occupation he saw an opportunity in the new market for stolen Jewish real estate and presented himself as a broker. He had joined the NSB as early as 1933 and did a lot of business with Everout. He was involved in the purchase and resale of some 200 houses formerly owned by the Jewish citizens of Amsterdam.¹⁰ Hermans worked closely with his wife and an estate agent named A. Groenewegen. The latter two operated as a duo, and Groenewegen acted as the seller for Mrs. Hermans-Helsloot (the wife), who was the so-called 'owner' of the buildings offered up for sale, homes that had allegedly been in her possession for years.¹¹ In this way these tricksters succeeded in convincing many Dutch buyers that they were not dealing with Jewish property.¹²

The houses owned by Jews were not only bought by private individuals. The municipal administration of Amsterdam (not the only local authority to behave in this way) kept its eye on Jewish real estate that came on the market, because it was a perfect opportunity to realize urban growth and urban renovation plans dating back from before the war. In the time of the occupation, the acquisition of Jewish properties did not require expensive expropriation procedures, involving damage compensation in addition to the purchase price. Buying was, therefore, attractive because, as the correspondence of the local administration frankly stated, it required 'relatively little capital'.¹³ The fact that the houses were put up for sale because the Jewish owners had been deprived of their legal rights was hardly discussed.

At the initiative of the municipal Department of Public Works and its director W. A. de Graaf, the city of Amsterdam purchased more than a dozen buildings owned by Jews. The decisions to buy were characterized by opportunism—the opportunities presented themselves—and by a pragmatic desire for financial gain. But there were consequences. One of the consequences of the purchases was that the municipality was liable for the restitution of property rights after the German defeat in 1945. It was the municipal treasury that came to play a decisive role in restitution negotiations with returned Jewish homeowners—or with the heirs or appointed representatives of those who had not survived the war.

RESTORATION OF LEGAL RIGHTS

The Dutch restoration legislation intended to end the dispossession of Dutch Jews was developed by the Dutch government-in-exile in London. After World War II, Jewish victims were able to bring their cases to the *Raad voor het Rechtsherstel* (the Council for the Restoration of Rights), a hybrid institution with various departments. One of the departments was the *afdeling Onroerend Goed* (Immovable Properties Division), which was tasked with settling disputes between the parties under the direction of a professional legally trained mediator. The results of the negotiations were recorded in so-called *minnelijke schikkingen* ('amicable settlements') between the original owners and the wartime buyers.¹⁴ If the parties involved were unable to reach a settlement, they could institute proceedings before the *afdeling Rechtspraak*, the Judicial Division of the Council for the Restoration of Rights.¹⁵

It was emphatically not the Dutch government's intention to compensate war victims (or their relatives or trustees) for any financial damage they may have suffered as a result of the expropriation of their possessions. The government did not consider itself legally liable at all. One of the favourite themes of the post-war minister of finance, P. Lieftinck, a politician who clearly had a great influence on the policy adopted, was that Germany, not the Dutch state, was responsible for the shameful acts perpetrated during the occupation of the Netherlands. Unlike the French, to whom restoration of rights was considered a 'necessary step in the process of returning to the legality and the rule of law of the French Republic', the Dutch government viewed restoration of rights 'as one of the exceptional measures that were needed in the context of the (financial and economic) reconstruction of the Dutch nation'.¹⁶

The fact that the Dutch government opted for the pragmatic and instrumental view that the restoration of (property) rights—based on the criteria of 'fairness' and 'reasonableness'—should be at the service of the reconstruction of the nation, had considerable consequences for Jewish victims. The emphasis on reaching 'amicable settlements' for instance, was not to the advantage of the dispossessed, as it implied an expectation of willingness to compromise on their part even though they had been deprived of their houses or land by force.¹⁷ Furthermore, if Jewish war victims objected to a proposed settlement, this form of restoration exposed them to the accusation of being unreasonable and wanting to maximize their gain. It opened the door to the stereotyping of Jews as

'money-grubbers', a characterization in line with pre-war socio-economic stereotypes, which all that had happened during five years of Nazi policy had not erased. In the immediate post-war period, competition between the non-Jewish Dutch population and returning Jews for the scarce housing available, and the few jobs and other resources available, may even have contributed to a temporary upsurge in anti-Jewish sentiment among certain segments of the Dutch population. However, it is unclear how widespread such feelings were and how long they lasted.¹⁸

In Amsterdam, the restoration of rights to Jewish properties the municipal authorities had bought during the occupation sometimes led to long-drawn-out proceedings. One case dragged on for an impressive fourteen years. Ownership was not the problem; it was settlement of the financial loss that caused the difficulties. The Jewish homeowner was prepared to leave his property in the hands of the municipality, but he wanted fair compensation. Eventually, on 7 July 1959, the Judicial Division of the Council for the Restoration of Rights reached a clear decision: it ruled against the city of Amsterdam, and ordered it to pay 26,000 guilders in damages to the claimant.¹⁹

UNPAID DEBTS

At the end of the war, when Jewish homeowners returned from the camps or from hiding, they faced a great many problems. If their houses had not been plundered—which was not uncommon, because scarcity of electricity and fuel had created harsh conditions in the 'Hunger Winter' of 1944–45—they often found other people living in their rooms. This is what happened to Mozes Vaz Dias, whose house on the Reinier Vinkeleskade 75 in Amsterdam had been sold to a Mr. and Mrs. A. in 1942. Vaz Diaz obtained legal representation to get his property back. The application for this stated that Vaz Dias and his wife had been in hiding during the occupation, and their wartime 'hosts' could not be expected to 'continue to take care of them now'. The application reached the city of Amsterdam, which decided that the house should be returned to the rightful owner. The decision was based on the fact that Mr. A. had by then been arrested for collaboration and that Mrs. A. was not known as someone who 'had been particularly patriotic during the occupation'. Accordingly, Mrs. A., the wife, was ordered to vacate the house by a specific time.²⁰ This was only one of countless decisions of the kind made immediately after the liberation, either by the municipal authorities or, in summary proceedings, by

the Amsterdam Court. In general, these decisions went in favour of the Jewish owner if it could be shown that the wartime buyer had been unpatriotic during the war or that the rightful owner had no alternative accommodation in which to live while waiting for the outcome of the restoration proceedings.

The restitution of a house by no means solved all problems. The restoration legislation stipulated that the anti-Jewish Regulations implemented by the German occupiers were to be nullified with retroactive effect. This implied that the original owner could be held liable for financial obligations attached to a house and was therefore also liable for any arrears in payments remaining after the war. In Amsterdam one of these obligations was often that of paying a 'ground rent'. This levy was part of the 'ground lease' system introduced into the city at the end of the nineteenth century, by which the ground on which buildings stood remained city property. In this way the municipal authorities retained some control on the utilization of land—and, of course, the scheme also generated income. Ground rent was the periodic payment owed by the homeowner to the landowner. On his return after the war, Vaz Diaz received a ground rent bill that Mr. and Mrs. A. had failed to pay for the period from 16 April 1944 right through to 16 October 1945. He was also fined for late payment. This fine, in particular, was to create bad blood.

Problems regarding the payment of ground rent in Amsterdam had already arisen during the war. In October 1941 the Jewish lawyer, F. H. van Nierop, wrote to the municipal administration on behalf of his father, who had left the Netherlands in January 1940. Van Nierop stated that he was unable to pay the ground rent because the property concerned was 'considered enemy assets' and had been put under administration. Van Nierop asked the authorities for 'a deferment of payment'. The council agreed to the deferment—but waiving the fine was not an option.²¹ Van Nierop was able to write to the authorities himself; this was not something Bertha Elsa van Leer-De Jongh (born 1893) could do. She was interned in the Westerbork transit camp, where, in July 1943, she received a reminder from the Department of Public Works regarding the ground rent of her building on the Apollolaan. The Jewish Council (founded in February 1941) wrote on her behalf: 'The person involved, who is presently held at Westerbork, has requested us to inform you that she has forwarded this document to the Everout real estate agency, Singel 450, which is the administrator of her property.' Van Leer-De Jongh died on 13 March 1945 in Bergen-Belsen.²²

Problems over ground rents continued after the war, due to the fact that wartime buyers and administrators had all too often become defaulters. This happened especially after September 1944 when the anticipated liberation of the Netherlands caused large numbers of the profiteers to flee. As mentioned above, the post-war restoration legislation did not include any provisions to cover cases of non-payment of ground rent (and other unpaid bills such as property taxes). The legislator may have assumed that the wartime buyer and the original owner would reach some kind of agreement regarding the sold properties in the 'amicable settlement', or that the Judicial Division of the Council for the Restoration of Rights would come up with a decision in this matter, but, in reality the unpaid rents or taxes seem seldom to have been incorporated in these agreements or verdicts. Properties that had not been sold but had remained under the administration of the NGV during the war presented a special problem. Although these properties were 'returned' to their original owners (or if the owners had not survived, to their heirs or their administrator), a financial settlement of unpaid bills was simply impossible: the Jewish homeowners had to deal with a more or less insolvent wartime administrator, because the NGV had not kept its finances in order.

Like Vaz Dias, the Jewish physician and graphologist J. Schrijver was confronted with a sizeable bill for unpaid ground rent when he returned to the Netherlands after the war. It was accompanied by a fine for late payment. Schrijver had been through hard times. In February 1943 he had been arrested by the German police and imprisoned in camp Vught before being deported to the Westerbork transit camp in October. From January 1944 he had been at Theresienstadt.²³ What did he do when faced with his bill and fine? On 30 May 1946, he wrote a letter to the Department of Public Works in which he explained his situation: 'I must build up a new life and, stripped of property and income, have overdue taxes and mortgage interest to pay, while the current housing rents are much too low compared to the costs.' As a result of these circumstances, he wrote, he could not pay the ground rent outright and he therefore requested 'that you agree to payment in instalments' and 'will not fine me'.²⁴

In June 1946, Schrijver received word from the Department of Public Works. He was informed that the department agreed to the payment arrangement, but that it could see no 'reason to render inoperative the provisions regarding late payment fines'.²⁵ Schrijver was dismayed. As he explained in a second letter, he found it beyond belief 'that you do not consider imprisonment in concentration camps, and loss of possessions

and income, forcing one to turn to one's children for shelter and food' reason to waive the fine. He, therefore, felt obliged to appeal to a higher authority to see if it agreed with the judgement.²⁶ This higher authority was the municipal administration. But it, too, was unrelenting and took the position that it had not itself caused the financial damage and could, therefore, not be held responsible. The principal argument was that, in the regulations of the ground lease system, the ground rent and the fine were linked to the leased property (rights *in rem*), not to the person, and personal circumstances, therefore, had no effect on homeowners' obligation to pay.²⁷

As indicated above, it was the imposed fines that generated particular outrage. One protester, the administrator of a building that had belonged to a Jew, deported to Germany in 1942 to perish with his family, wrote back sarcastically: 'In case it has not yet penetrated the brains of the civil servants of Amsterdam, we would draw your attention once again to the fact that we were at war with Germany for 5 years and that Jewish property was expropriated during this time.'²⁸ And 'because of these abnormal circumstances—which created for me a situation of *force majeure*,' another Jewish homeowner, I. Benninga, requested the municipal authorities 'to be more lenient in the application of this penalty, which was intended to compel unwilling and lazy leaseholders to pay in normal times.'²⁹

Despite strong protests, the municipality of Amsterdam did not budge. It was the only municipality known to maintain such a strict position regarding the fine. Both the Department of Public Works and the municipal council appeared unwilling to deviate from their position. In fact, there *was* some debate behind the scenes. In an internal communication on November 1945, De Graaf alerted the responsible alderman to the seriousness of the problem:

In many cases the Jewish owner, whose rights are restored, will find the ground rent payments are in arrears, because it was not in the interest of an administrator or temporary owner of the leasehold to pay the ground rent when it became increasingly clear to him that his ownership would be of short duration. That the leaseholder whose right has been restored considers the obligation to pay off the arrears to be unfair, is [therefore] understandable.³⁰

Despite having this pointed out, the only concession the local government was willing to make was its decision of September 1947 to waive half of

the fine. The Amsterdam city advocate, D. K. G. de Jong, who had advised the municipal council on the matter, was of the opinion that there were arguments to waive payment of the entire fine, but the council did not share his view.³¹

Seeing their protests fall on deaf ears, some Jewish homeowners took their cases to court, disputing the council's decision. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss these lawsuits in detail, but both the Judicial Division of the Council for the Restoration of Rights, which dealt with a case of overdue ground rent, and the Supreme Court, which handled a case related to unpaid municipal tax, felt compelled to decide against the plaintiffs. Both argued that the restoration legislation had laid down that anti-Jewish measures were to be nullified retroactively, and that the original owner had, therefore, not actually lost his property rights during the war.

RESTITUTION

Although the municipal policy regarding unpaid bills came under attack and was taken to the highest court, there was no public discussion on the issue, even though it was abundantly clear that the Jewish homeowners had not been personally responsible for debts accrued during the war. Thus outrage over the strict application of the rules of the ground lease system failed to spread beyond the walls of the municipal halls, lawyers' offices and courts. How different things were when the levying of these fines became public knowledge in 2013! The revelation generated considerable indignation and there was a public outcry against the municipal administration of Amsterdam for having fined Jewish war victims. The change in attitude to the whole affair shows in a nutshell how the mental climate and people's social engagement with the history and aftermath of the Holocaust have altered since 1945.

The true awakening started in the 1960s. It was then that general awareness of the magnitude of the crime against the Jews started to grow. The Eichmann trial in Jerusalem in 1961 had a big impact internationally. Within the Netherlands, the publication of Jacques Presser's *Ashes in the Wind. The Destruction of Dutch Jewry* was very influential too. In this two-volume work—its Dutch title is *Ondergang. De vervolging en verdelging van het Nederlandse Jodendom 1940–1945*—Presser gave a very detailed account of the persecution of the Jews in the Netherlands and their deportation. After this seminal book had come out, it was very hard to cling on

to the image of wartime Holland as a small but brave country holding out against the Germans, or to believe in the high moral standing of the Dutch people at the time of occupation—both of these cherished national self-images. Presser not only acted as spokesman for the murdered Jews, he also issued an indictment of the passive attitude the Dutch authorities had shown—a passiveness shared by the majority of the Dutch population.³²

The paradigm change from seeing the Netherlands as a ‘country of resistance’ to seeing it as a ‘country of deportation’ also implied that Dutch society was guilty of complicity in the murder of the Jews. This put an end to the Dutch government’s argument that it was not responsible for the damages done as a result of the spoliation of Dutch Jewry. Critical reflection on the past was not limited to the occupation years but, in the late 1980s, was extended to include investigation into the return and reception of Jewish war victims after the liberation.³³ Due to international developments, a review of the restoration legislation was placed prominently on the national political agenda in the late 1990s. This resulted in the establishment of a number of commissions set up to investigate how the restoration of rights had been put into practice.³⁴ The commissions came to the conclusion that, although the legislation had been implemented correctly and conscientiously, it nevertheless had some distinct shortcomings, with unfair and unjust consequences for Jewish war victims.³⁵

Based on the recommendations of the commissions, the Ministry of Finance eventually agreed to hand over a sum of 400 million Dutch guilders as restitution to the Jewish community. As the government was of the opinion that official decisions made during the 1940s and 1950s had generally been lawful, this sum was not to be interpreted as a ‘redoing’ of the restoration of rights process, but rather as ‘the recognition of moral claims’ towards the Jewish community. Through the 400 million guilders, the government wanted to ‘respond to the criticism [levelled at it] about the treatment of the persecution victims as regards the restoration of their rights and the consequences this had for their lives’. This ‘final justice’, it declared, covered the totality of past government actions, including the policies of the local authorities.³⁶

Despite this, as mayor of Amsterdam, Eberhard van der Laan felt that restitution of the fines the city of Amsterdam had imposed was justified. As he wrote in a letter to the city council, the policy followed at the time could only be considered ‘formalistic and inappropriate’. In the same letter he asserted that Amsterdam would pay back the fines that had been levied to the Jewish war victims or to their heirs.³⁷ With this decision, the

local government of Amsterdam has added a new chapter to the policies of restitution in the Netherlands, a chapter that may not yet be closed.³⁸

CONCLUSION

After the war, neither the national government in the Netherlands nor the local authorities felt responsible for the damages Dutch Jews had suffered in the preceding years. They did not think they had any role to play in mitigating the consequences of the spoliation of Jewish property. In their view, the goal of the restoration of rights was simply the rebuilding of the Dutch nation as a whole, which had been seriously affected by the German occupation. In the first post-war decades, the dominant national narrative presented the war as a time of collective suffering and resistance, and it left little room for the specific experiences of Jewish survivors. The general perception was that the non-Jewish Dutch population had not been spared the misery of war and occupation any more than the Jews had. Ima Spanjaard, who survived the concentration camps, concluded that 'everybody feels his own experiences are the worst'. When she was on her way home and rang a doorbell to ask for a drink of water, the person who answered said, 'Don't tell me about the camps. We lived through the war too. Through the entire Hunger Winter all we had was one kilogramme of potatoes a week.'³⁹ Only from the 1960s onward did the specific fate of the Jews during and after the war start to get attention. A new awareness of the treatment Jews had received led to a widely shared condemnation of the passive attitude of the Dutch population in general, and the role the Dutch authorities had played, in particular. This paradigm shift resulted in official recognition by the national government of the suffering Jewish war victims had been through, and a willingness (retrospectively) to accommodate the financial claims of the survivors. Thirteen years later the city of Amsterdam followed suit.

NOTES

1. *Het Parool*, 30 March 2013.
2. *Het Volk: dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*, 16 May 1940. See also: F. F. Roest and J. H. M. Scheren (1998) *Oorlog in de stad: Amsterdam 1939–1941* (Amsterdam: Van Gennep), p. 85.
3. H. Kaal (2008) *Het hoofd van de stad. Amsterdam en zijn burgemeester tijdens het interbellum* (Amsterdam: Aksant), p. 223.

4. On the flight to IJmuiden, see J. Presser (1965) *Ondergang. De vervolging en verdelging van het Nederlandse Jodendom*, 5th impression ('s Gravenhage: Staatsuitgeverij), part I, p. 11. On Jewish suicides, K. Dangermond (2011) 'Het heft in eigen hand: een kwalitatief onderzoek naar Joodse zelfmoorden in Nederland tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog' (unpublished thesis, University of Amsterdam).
5. P. Romijn (2006) *Burgemeester in oorlogstijd: besturen tijdens de Duitse bezetting* (Amsterdam: Balans), pp. 251–2.
6. G. Aalders (1998) *Bij verordening. De roof van het joodse vermogen in Nederland en het naoorlogse rechtsberstel* (Amsterdam: Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie), p. 145. On 21 May 1942, a second Liro Regulation (58/1942) followed, on the basis of which other types of possessions and capital had to be registered, including life insurances, jewellery and horses. This regulation also meant a further limitation of the monthly amount Jews could withdraw and use freely. It was lowered from 1,000 to 250 guilders.
7. Letters from J. P. Everout to A. de Vries, 2 March 1942 and 26 June 1942, Nationaal Archief (NA), collectie 2.09.09, Centraal Archief Bijzondere Rechtspleging, (CABR), dossier J. P. Everout, inv. nr. 14448.
8. H. Safrian (2000) 'Expediting Expropriation and Expulsion: The Impact of the 'Vienna Model' on Anti-Jewish Policies in Nazi Germany, 1938', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, V14, N3, Winter 2000, 390–414. See also A. Schrabauer (2014) "'Die österreichische Invasion". Zur Beteiligung des "Donauklubs" an der Beraubung, Verfolgung und Ermordung der Jüdinnen und Juden im Reichskommissariat Niederlande' in C. Schindler (ed.) *Täter. Österreichische Akteure im Nationalsozialismus* (Wien: Dokumentationsarchiv des Österreichischen Widerstandes).
9. M. Dean, *Robbing the Jews: the Confiscation of Jewish Property in the Holocaust, 1933–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 264–87.
10. Testimony of G. H. Wiegman, 11 July 1945, Nationaal Archief (NA), collectie 2.09.09, CABR, dossier-Everout, inv. nr. 14448.
11. Statement by G. Thijnbeen, NA, collectie 2.09.09, CABR, dossier-E. Th. A. Hermans, inv. nr. 64047.
12. On Hermans, see also E. Slot (2008) 'Crimineel vastgoedcircuit verdiende grof geld aan Jodenvervolging?', *Historisch Nieuwsblad*, nr. 9/2008, <http://www.historischnieuwsblad.nl/nl/artikel/24891/crimineel-vastgoedcircuit-verdiende-grof-geld-aan-jodenvervolging.html>, last accessed 26 October 2015.
13. Letter from the director of the Department of Public Works, W. A. de Graaf, to the alderman of the Department of Public Works, 7 January

- 1943, Stadsarchief Amsterdam (SAA), collectie 5180 (Archief van de secretarie afdeling Publieke Werken), inv. nr. 10581.
14. An 'amicable settlement' is, in other words, an out-of-court settlement based on reasonableness.
 15. W. Veraart (2005) *Ontrechting en rechtsherstel in Nederland en Frankrijk in de jaren van bezetting en wederopbouw* (Rotterdam/Alphen aan de Rijn: Sanders Instituut/Kluwer), pp. 58–68 and 522.
 16. Veraart (2005) *Ontrechting en rechtsherstel*, pp. 70 ff.
 17. Veraart (2005) *Ontrechting en rechtsherstel*, pp. 86–7.
 18. See E. Gans (1994) *Gojse nijd & joods narcisme: over de verhouding tussen joden en niet-joden in Nederland* (Amsterdam: Arena), p. 29 and E. Gans (2002) "Vandaag hebben ze niets" in C. Kristel (ed.) *Polderschouw. Terugkeer en opvang na de Tweede Wereldoorlog. Regionale verschillen* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker), pp. 313–53, here 340.
 19. Decision of the Council for the Restoration of Rights, 7 July 1959, NA, collectie 2.19.199, Stichting Centraal Meldpunt Joodse Oorlogsclaims.
 20. Various correspondence, SAA, collectie 5187 (Archief van de secretarie Volkshuisvesting), inv. nr. 3808.
 21. Correspondence between Van Nierop and the city of Amsterdam, SAA, files of the municipal Amsterdam Development Company (OGA) nr. 143-1.
 22. See letter from the Jewish Council for Amsterdam to the Department of Public Works, 28 July 1943, SAA, OGA, dossiernr. E 153-1.
 23. Schrijver for Afwikkelingsbureau Concentratiekampen, 1 August 1945, Red Cross War Archive, Den Haag.
 24. J. Schrijver to W. A. de Graaf, 30 May 1946, SAA, OGA, dossiernr. E 1295-2.
 25. Head of the municipal Real Estate Department to J. Schrijver, 22 June 1946, SAA, OGA, dossiernr. E 1295-2.
 26. J. Schrijver to head of the municipal Real Estate Department, 25 June 1946, SAA, OGA, dossiernr. E 1295-2.
 27. In Dutch civil law there is a difference between *contractuele rechten* (rights under a contract) and *zakelijke rechten* (real rights or rights *in rem*).
 28. Letter from Z. Deenik & Zoon to the Public Works Department, 4 February 1948, SAA, OGA, dossiernr. E 615-2.
 29. I. Benninga to the Public Works Department, 7 February 1947, SAA, OGA, dossiernr. E 1380-5.
 30. Letter from director of the Department of Public Works, W. A. de Graaf to J. Bommer, 14 November 1945, SAA, collectie 5180, inv. nr. 10711.
 31. Advice from the city advocate to the mayor, 6 February 1947, SAA, collectie 5370, inv. nr. 158. See also *Gemeenteblad*: Decision 24 September 1947.
 32. The 'Final Solution' hit Jews in the Netherlands particularly hard: 102,000 of the 140,000 Jews living in the Netherlands were murdered. Expressed

- as a percentage, over 70 per cent became victims of the German extermination machine. The percentage was markedly lower in other Western European countries. In Norway and Belgium it was about 40 per cent and in France, about 25 per cent.
33. See, for example, C. Kristel (1989) “De Moeizame terugkeer”. De repatriëring van de Nederlandse overlevenden uit Duitse concentratiekampen’ in N. J. Barnouw et al. (eds) *Oorlogsdocumentatie ’40–’45. Jaarboek van het Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers).
 34. Eventually five commissions were installed: the commissions Van Kemenade, Scholten (banks and insurance companies), Kordes (tangible assets/objects), Ekkart (art) and Van Galen (Dutch East Indies).
 35. ‘Letter from the Minister of General Affairs, the Minister of Health, Welfare and Sport and the Minister of Finances to the Speaker of the Lower House of the Dutch Parliament, 21 March 2000’, <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/kst-25839-13.html>, last accessed 4 November 2015. For a critical comment on the findings of the committees, see I. de Haan (1999) ‘Het morele krediet van het Joodse leed’, *De Groene Amsterdammer*, 13 January 1999, <https://www.groene.nl/artikel/het-morele-krediet-van-het-joodse-leed>, last accessed 26 October 2015.
 36. Letter of 21 March 2000.
 37. ‘Letter from Mayor of Amsterdam E. E. van der Laan to the members of the municipal council, 21 May 2014’, http://www.amsterdam.nl/publish/pages/609388/brief_aan_de_raad_22_mei_2014.pdf, last accessed 4 November 2015.
 38. Research regarding other Dutch cities has now revealed that formalism and a strict enforcement of the rules occurred not only in Amsterdam but in some of these too. See H. Piersma and J. Kemperman (2015) *Openstaande rekeningen. De gemeente Amsterdam en de gevolgen van roof en rechtsherstel, 1940–1950* (Amsterdam: Boom).
 39. B. de Munnick (2001) ‘Na de zogenaamde bevrijding’ in H. Piersma (ed.) *Mensenheugenis. Terugkeer en opvang na de Tweede Wereldoorlog, Getuigenissen* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker), pp. 45–69, here 57–8.

PLACE INDEX

A

Aegean Macedonia, 105
Ahaus, 33, 34, 36, 39, 43n3, 45n15
Albania, 10, 106, 111, 112, 115
Amsterdam, 11, 13, 14, 208, 210,
212, 213, 219, 321–36
Ansbach, 52, 66n66
Auschwitz, 43n2, 139, 170, 171, 177,
200, 271, 299
Austria, 90, 210, 216, 324
Austro-Hungarian Empire, 131, 244,
245

B

Baldovce, 172
Bălți, 314
Bavaria, 49
Belarus, 9, 89–103
Belgrade, 111, 115, 116
Bełżec, 171, 192–200, 246, 247, 273
Bergen-Belsen, 218, 328
Berlin, 23, 24, 69, 70, 72–7, 96, 109,
220n4

Bessarabia, 13, 307, 310, 311, 314–16
Bitola (Bitolj, Bitolja), 107, 110–19,
121, 123n21
Bizerte, 226
Black Sea, 140
Bobrowa, 57
Bohemia and Moravia, 90
Borghorst, 40, 41, 45n15
Boryslaw, 12, 243–66
Bosnia, 127, 132, 135, 138, 141
Bratislava, 167, 173, 176
Brauweiler Prison, 25
Brzeżany, 242
Brzeźnica, 157
Bucovina, 13, 307, 310, 312, 315
Bulgaria, 9, 105–10, 117, 120, 121,
126n61
Burgsteinfurt, 36

C

Călărași, 314
Carpatho-Ruthenia, 290
Cernăuți, 309

Chełmno, 196

Chernovtsy, 309, 315
 Chişinău, 314, 316, 317
 Chile, 210
 Chrzastów, 158
 Ciemiorek, 154
 Ciudei, 312, 313
 Colmberg, 54
 Constantinople, 114
 Corpaci, 311
 Cracow, 11, 189–205, 268, 271, 273
 Criuleni, 316
 Croatia, 10, 116, 127–45
 Czechoslovakia, 90, 126n61, 168
 Czermin, 155, 156

D

Dąbie, 152
 Dąbrowa Tarnowska, 148
 Dąbrówka Wisłocka, 152
 Dębica, 163n8
 Donetsk, 309
 Drina, 140
 Dukza Wielka, 153
 Dumbrăveni, 312

E

Eastern Galicia, 12, 13, 243–66, 274
 Ellingen, 53, 54, 57, 58
 Emsland, 34
 England, 112, 212, 322
 Estonia, 106
 Ettenstatt, 55, 56, 58

F

Făleşti, 312
 Franconia, 22, 49, 58, 59
 Fürstenau, 38
 Fürth, 58

G

General Government, 90, 148, 149,
 161, 166, 192, 267–87
Generalkommissariat Weißruthenien, 97
 German Countryside, 7, 47, 48
 Germany, 4, 6–9, 12, 17–31, 34, 35,
 39, 43, 49, 50, 57–9, 70–2, 90,
 98, 109, 122, 126n61, 128, 130,
 135, 138, 149, 160, 168–71,
 174, 176, 179, 180, 184,
 209–11, 214–16, 220, 224n41,
 227, 290, 324, 326, 330
 Gildehaus, 38
 Golezów, 151
 Grafschaft Bentheim, 34, 43n5
 Grażyna, 252
 Great Britain, 211
 Greece, 105, 107, 109
 Grochowe, 158
 Grodno, 93
 Gumniska, 157, 158
 Gunzenhausen, 48, 57, 61n4, 66n65

H

Hamburg, 22
 Harvard, 18–20
 Heidelberg, 25
 Hilpoltstein, 56, 65n51
 Hohenbach, 155
 Holland, 210, 217, 332
 Horstmar, 38, 42
 Hundsdorf, 57
 Hungary, 13, 171, 178, 289–303

I

Ijmuiden, 322, 334n4
 Israel, 128
 Italy, 8, 109, 111, 124n22, 130, 132,
 226, 227
 Ivje, 93

J

Jaworze Dolne, 157, 158
 Jaworze Górne, 158
 Jedwabne, 101n1, 148, 268

K

Kaltenbuch, 56
 Karlsruhe, 57
 Kawęczyn, 154–6
 Keżmarok, 176
 Kraków. *See* Cracow
 Kulmhof. *See* *Chełmno*

L

Latoszyn, 157, 158
 Letenye, 295
 Lingen, 36, 53–5, 57, 58
 Lithuania, 91, 96, 106
 Litzmannstadt. *See* Lodz
 Lodz, 190, 196–8, 200, 203
 London, 57, 326
 Lublin, 171, 178, 273
 Lwów (Lviv, Lvov), 243, 273, 310

M

Macedonia, 10, 105–26
 Madagascar, 8
 Majdanek, 171
 Mała, 159
 Malinie, 158
 Markt Berolzheim, 58
 Mielec, 151, 152, 154, 156–9
 Milbertshofen, 77
 Minsk, 95, 98–100
 Modra, 174
 Mokre, 157
 Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic
 (MSSR), 313, 317, 318

Monastir, 115

Munich, 14, 17, 59, 72, 75–7,
 168

Münster, 38, 45n15

N

Nagykanizsa, 297, 301n12
 Netherlands, 11, 207–24, 321–4, 326,
 328, 329, 331–3, 337n32
 Neuenhaus, 38, 41
 Neuilly, 109
 Nordhorn, 37
 Novogradok, 93
 Nuremberg, 25, 41, 58, 109, 170

O

Oberhochstatt, 54
 Offenbach, 22, 26
 Oniściani, 314
 Oranienburg, 74
 Orhei, 313
 Ottoman Empire, 106, 109, 116
 Ozarintsy, 308

P

Pápa, 297
 Partynia, 152
 Pepeni, 314, 315
 Piątkowiec, 156
 Pirot region, 105, 109
 Płaszów, 194, 200, 247, 253
 Podborze, 10, 150–8, 161, 162
 Poland, 8, 58, 73, 90, 91, 96,
 101n1, 148, 149, 151, 168,
 192, 193, 196, 198, 271,
 275, 278
 Portugal, 208
 Pustków, 159

R

Radomyśl Wielki, 148, 150, 152–45
 Riga, 73
 Romania, 8, 308, 309, 315
 Rothenburg ob der Tauber, 52, 59
 Rotterdam, 211
 Róża, 157, 165n41
 Rubezhevichi, 95
 Ruda, 152, 153, 158
 Russia, 95, 166n48
 Rydzów, 156, 157

S

Sachsenhausen, 74
 Salonika, 107, 114, 115
 San Stefano, 108
 Sárvár, 297, 298
 Save, 140
 Schabowiec, 152, 153
 Schodnica, 250
 Serbia, 109, 111, 112, 116, 117,
 133, 135
 Shargorod, 308, 309
 Shitomir, 175
 Sietesz, 148
 Skopje, 110, 112, 113, 118
 Slovakia, 10, 168–71, 174, 175, 178,
 180
 Sobibór, 167
 Sofia, 108, 112, 116, 120, 121
 Sopron, 289, 291–3, 297, 303n12
 Soviet Union, 89, 91, 92, 97, 101n1,
 102n17, 134, 168, 170, 176,
 212, 309
 Spis, 172
 Stalingrad, 220n3, 324
 Sweden, 247
 Switzerland, 61n3, 74
 Szombathely, 289, 290, 294,
 296–8

T

Tarnów, 13, 194, 267–74, 276, 278,
 279, 282
 Ternovka, 311
 Theresienstadt, 59, 76, 218, 219n1,
 329
 Tiraspol, 310
 Toplou, 175
 Topolčany, 173, 174, 179
 Transnistria, 13, 307–11
 Transylvania, 106, 290
 Trebinje, 138
 Treblinka, 59, 199, 202
 Trenčín, 174
 Treuchtlingen, 57, 65n56
 Trianon, 290, 300n2
 Trzciany, 156
 Tunis, 12, 225–41
 Tunisia, 225–7, 234
 Tuszów Narodowy, 158

U

Ukraine, 8, 91, 92, 96, 310
 Ulm, 248
 United States of America, 6, 49

V

Vardar Banovina, 113
 Vardar Macedonia, 105–9, 111, 116,
 123n21
 Vas, 289–2, 296, 297
 Velika Gorica, 138
 Velika Kladuša, 127
 Veszprém, 291, 293, 300, 300n12
 Vienna, 124n35, 169, 217, 290, 323,
 324, 334n8
 Višegrad, 138
 Vranov nad Toplou, 175
 Vught, 329

W

Wadowice Dolne, 154
Wadowice Górne, 154–7, 164n27
Wampierzów, 154, 156
Warsaw, 151, 163n9, 198, 202
Warthegau, 90
Weissenburg, 55–7
Westerbork, 210, 214, 220, 224n41,
328, 329
Wielopole, 159
Wiewiórka, 157
Wolanka, 245, 249, 250, 260n11

Y

Yugoslavia, 105, 109, 113, 122, 129,
130, 133, 135, 141, 290

Z

Zagreb, 115, 116, 127, 132, 135,
138–40
Zala, 289, 291–5, 298, 299
Zalaegerszeg, 297, 298, 301n12
Zalaszentgrót, 294, 301n12
Zbylitowska Góra, 274

NAME INDEX

A

Abel, Theodore, 19
Adler, Helena, 155
Adler, Jankiel, 155
Adler, Rafael, 155
Aleksandar, King of Yugoslavia, 111,
120, 123n21
Allport, Gordon W., 19–20
Aly, Götz, 172
Andrić, Ivo, 138
Andrić, Mato, 140
Arendt, Hannah, 11, 190, 200
Asscher, Abraham, 209, 213, 218, 219
Auber, Stefa, 250
Auernhammer, Andreas, 54

B

Bäckerová, Evá, 177, 178
Bajohr, Frank, 168
Bakenrot, Izaak, 249, 263n36
Balan, Naum, 310
Balercă, Ion, 314
Bamberger, Lotte, 73, 82n29

Barac, Marija, 137
Baran, Iwan, 250
Bartkowicz, Jan, 152
Bartov, Omer, 244–6, 256, 259n3,
274
Bechhöfer, Senta, 58
Belev, Aleksandär, 120
Bellaïche, Haïm, 228
Berg, Clemens, 24
Bermann, Bernhard, 54–8
Bey, Moncef, 226, 227, 230
Biberstein, Aleksander, 192, 194, 196
Bieberstein, Marek, 192–4
Blase, Luise, 69
Blatman, Daniel, 160
Boekman, Emanuel, 322
Böhmcker, Hans, 213
Borgel, Moïse, 228, 239n43
Brahm, Max, 216
Brodt, Eisig, 153
Brummer, Ludwig, 73, 82n23
Bukała, Stanisław, 154
Burić, Matija, 140
Bystroń, 159

C

Chelebon, 112
 Chiari, Bernhard, 90
 Cohen, David, 209, 213, 215, 219
 Cohen, Isaac, 37
 Cohen, Marga, 34, 43n4
 Cohen, Mark, 114
 Crampton, Richard, 105
 Cremer, Wally, 76, 77
 Csemesz, Dénes, 292, 295
 Czerniakow, Adam, 198, 199

D

Daniel, Mişin, 313
 Dean, Martin, 168
 de Gaulle, Charles, 118
 Degen, Michael, 71
 de Graaf, W.A., 325, 330
 de Jong, Adolf, 33
 de Jong, Henny, 43n2
 de Jong, Herbert, 33
 de Jong, Marga, 33
 de Vos, Marcel, 118
 de Vries, A., 324, 334n7
 Dieckmann, Christoph, 147, 162n1
 Dinu, Radu, 131
 Domp, Helge, 38
 Doner, Maks, 250, 256
 Dreyfuss, Albert, 22, 27
 Dudek, Agnieszka, 150, 163n13
 Dudek, Jan, 151
 Dudek, Karolina, 150, 151
 Dudek, Staszek, 150

E

Ebert, Georg, 54
 Eiffert, Johann, 54
 Eisenstein, Bernard, 253
 Eisenstein, Clara, 253
 Eisenstein, Irena, 255

Eisenstein, Leon, 255
 Ekstein, Mendel, 158
 Elkan, Wolf, 25
 Elper, Georgij, 98–100
 Emelianova, Eugenia, 100
 Emelianov, Vladimir, 100
 Erlich, Yehuda, 148, 161, 163n7
 Eschwege, Helmut, 70
 Esteva, Jeanne-Pierre, 230

F

Fay, Sidney B., 19, 20
 Feuer, Chana, 155
 Feuer, Leib Süssel, 156
 Fischböck, Hans, 324
 Fleischmann, Michl, 52
 Fordymacki, Józef, 152
 Fraenkel, Ernst, 57
 Frank, Hans, 192
 Franko, Yuso, 112
 Frăţescu, Gheorghe, 312
 Freudenheim, Martin, 23
 Fried, Ladislav, 172

G

Gabrovski, Petăr, 119
 Gartenberg, Karola, 249
 Garz, Detlef, 21
 Gehtman, 317
 Gerlach, Christian, 129
 Gerstner, Michael, 55, 57, 65n50
 Ghez, Paul, 225, 226, 229
 Godzin, Wiktoria, 255
 Goeth, Amon, 274
 Goldberg, Fritz, 23
 Goldkland, Jakub, 155–6
 Goldwasser, Ignacy, 250, 251, 255,
 264n62
 Goldwasser, Wilhelm, 252
 Górecki, Stanisław, 152, 153, 164n16

Goudsmit, Sam, 216
 Grabowski, Jan, 129, 148, 163n6, 281
 Grigore, Guzun, 313
 Groenewegen, A., 325
 Gross, Jan Tomasz, 101n1, 129, 247,
 268
 Grosu, Ion, 314
 Grünbaum, Leo, 25
 Grünberg, Margot, 50–1
 Gruner, Wolf, 77, 81n17
 Gutmann, Max, 55, 56, 58
 Gutter, Dawid, 199–200, 203

H

Haberman, Benio, 254
 Haberman, Sabina, 245
 Hacker, Iván, 296, 297
 Halberstam, Wilhelm, 210
 Hamburger, Charlotte, 26
 Hamerman, Blima, 248, 253, 257, 258
 Harmelin, Elkan (Elias), 245
 Harmelin, Raoul, 243, 245, 250, 252,
 256, 259n1
 Hartshorne, Edward Y., 19–20
 Hasner, Motel, 312, 313
 Hauer, Aleksander, 249
 Heilig, Zvi, 248, 250–4, 254
 Heimann, Wilhelm, 40, 41, 46n26
 Helig, Matys, 247
 Herbst, Ludolf, 169, 181n10
 Hermans, E.Th.A., 325, 334n12
 Herz, Michael, 246
 Heskell, Lotte, 75, 82n25
 Heydrich, Reinhard, 92
 Hilberg, Raul, 3, 4, 70, 91, 167, 189,
 200
 Himmler, Heinrich, 96, 151, 174, 177
 Hitler, Adolf, 7, 17–19, 22, 23, 25, 26,
 34, 39, 42, 45n15, 54, 151, 169
 Hlinka, Andrej, 168, 169, 173, 174,
 176

Hoffmann, János, 294
 Holländer, Susanne, 73
 Hopp, Ludwig, 36
 Horthy, Miklós, 290
 Hübner, Leonhard, 57
 Hüttinger, Ludwig, 58, 66n65

I

Ion, Mikhailo, 313
 Ivankovitser, Anna, 308, 309

J

Jalowicz Simon, Marie, 69, 71, 78
 Josiek, Mendel, 153
 Jukić, Srećko, 140

K

Kalderon, Moise Avram, 118
 Kállay, Miklós, 290
 Kałuža, Józef, 158
 Kamhi, Mentesh, 115
 Kamhi, Rafael, 115
 Kania, Apolonia, 155
 Kaplan, Marion, 17, 18, 25, 35
 Karády, Victor, 291
 Karvaš, Imrich, 178
 Kaufman, Harry, 22
 Kittel, Manfred, 49
 Kobler, Eva, 76, 77
 Kolonomos, Bella, 118
 Kolonomos, Isak Kaley, 118
 Kolonomos, Zhamila, 117
 Komarov, 95
 Korec, Rozalia, 250
 Kronenberg, Max, 24, 25
 Kropman, G.C.J.D., 322
 Kube, Wilhelm, 96
 Kuśnierz, Jan, 153
 Kwiet, Konrad, 70

L

Landau, Juliusz, 250, 255
 Lasotowa, Julia, 250
 Laufer, Moryc, 249
 Łaz, Józef, 155
 Lieftinck, P., 326
 Loose, Ingo, 169
 Lustiger, Arno, 69

M

Mach, Alexander, 168–70, 172
 Mann, Josef, 53
 Mann, Klara, 53
 Mann, Theodor, 58, 59
 Marnik, Michał, 155
 Melzer, Emanuel, 278
 Mészáros, Hugó, 296, 298
 Mibberlin, Rafael, 23
 Michman, Dan, 189, 207, 228, 229
 Morávek, Augustín, 169, 172
 Moździerz, Jan, 156
 Münster, Walter, 323

N

Nadler, Salomon, 249
 Necheles-Magnus, Henriette, 22
 Neumark, Lilly, 71, 73, 82n30
 Nižňanský, Eduard, 170

O

Orbach, Larry, 73

P

Pająk, Michał, 150
 Pankiewicz, Tadeusz, 195, 199, 201
 Pavelić, Ante, 130, 132, 140
 Peritz, Irena, 250, 264n49
 Pęgiel, Józef, 153

Pęgiel, Puła, 153
 Petrović-Njegos, Petar II., 138
 Pielach, Jan, 152–4, 158, 159,
 164n16
 Piłsudski, Józef, 278
 Pius XII, 177
 Podstavkin, Tsyliya, 311
 Presser, Jacques, 214, 331, 332
 Puła, Wojciech, 153, 164n23

R

Rauff, Walther, 228
 Redlich, Shimon, 245
 Reichert, Eugen, 194
 Rein, Leonid, 90, 91, 243
 Ressler, Alica, 177
 Rewald, Ilse, 73
 Richarz, Monika, 21, 61n3
 Romanovsky, Daniel, 97
 Rosenberg, Alfred, 8, 92
 Rosenberg, Salomon, 248, 254
 Rosenzweig, Artur, 194–9, 201
 Rumkowski, Mordechai Chaim, 190,
 196–8, 200, 203

S

Sadik, Rufo Bahor, 118
 Schnell, Leon, 157
 Schnell, Perla, 157
 Schnell, Schnaj, 157
 Schrijver, J., 329
 Seiller, Melitta, 309
 Sémelin, Jacques, 231, 232
 Seyss-Inquart, Arthur, 211, 216, 322,
 324
 Sfez, Henry, 229
 Shepherd, Ben, 131
 Shvartzman, Naum, 315
 Siebert, Paul, 192, 193
 Siefkriet, Lejzor, 150

Siekfriet, Leon, 150, 157
 Siekfriet, Maria, 150, 151
 Siekfriet, Roman, 150
 Siekfriet, Szymon, 150, 151
 Šimkovič, 178
 Simon, Marie Jalowicz, 69, 71, 78
 Sivák, Jozef, 178
 Skrzypek, Józef, 152
 Smolar, Hersh, 95
 Speer, Albert, 73
 Stachurski, Tomasz, 155
 Stahlecker, Walther, 92
 Stalin, Josef, 92, 310, 313, 318
 Staniszewski, 245, 265–6n84
 Stec, Jan, 157
 Stegmann, Wilhelm, 52
 Steinberger, Jakob, 54
 Steinweg, Walter, 38, 42
 Stempler, Samuel, 249
 Sterk, Yehuda, 140
 Streicher, Julius, 48, 49, 58
 Streimer, Samuel, 199, 200
 Stromf, Wojtech, 177
 Strycharz, Stanislaw, 155
 Strzypka, Michał, 154, 164n16
 Sümmermann, Bärbel, 34
 Suskind, Bernard, 38, 41
 Sypek, Anna, 155
 Sypek, Józef, 155, 156
 Szabó, Miloslav, 175
 Szepeicher, Edzia, 248
 Sztójay, Döme, 295

T

Terlecki, Mikołaj, 250, 262n29
 Timofei, Maznic, 313
 Tiso, Jozef, 168, 169, 171, 172,
 175, 177
 Tönsmeier, Tatjana, 168
 Trenner, Maximilien, 229
 Trunk, Isaiah, 190, 191

Tuka, Wojtech, 168, 169, 178
 Turonek, Jerzy, 96

U

Ulma, Wiktoria, 148, 161
 Urban, Robert, 158

V

Vakar, Nicholas, 95
 Vályi, Manó, 296
 van der Laan, Eberhard, 321, 322
 van der Reis, 38
 van Leer-De Jongh, Bertha Elsa, 328
 van Nierop, F.H., 328
 Varga, Emmerich, 178
 Vasek, Anton, 172
 Vaz Dias, Mozes, 327, 329
 Veit, Susanne, 75
 Visser, Lodewijk, 215, 216, 218
 Voet, Ies, 216
 Voet, Joop, 216
 Vojtassák, Ján, 172
 von Tiedemann, K.G.R., 320

W

Wächter, Otto, 194
 Waldman, Samuel, 249
Walz, Hugo, 57, 58, 66n66
 Weichherz, Bela, 167
 Weiss, Aharon, 200, 245, 262n29
 Weiss, Genia, 250
 Weiss, Meir, 250
 Wesel, Imre, 296
 Wieser, Gina, 250, 253–7
 Wildt, Michael, 53
 Wind, Samuel, 158
 Wolanski, Sabina, 245, 252, 254,
 261n20, 265n84
 Wolf, Anna, 76

Wolf, Eduard, 76, 77
Wróbel, Piotr, 245, 260n7
Würzburg, Arie, 256
Wyszatycki, Michał, 247

Z

Zaprudnik, Jan, 95
Zaremba, Marcin, 148

Zařko, Peter, 178
Zelęter, Vilena, 317
Zieliński, Ferdynand, 152
Zieliński, Michał, 158, 165n39
Zieliński, Rozalia, 158
Zilversmit, Hermann, 38,
45n18
Zimmermann, Zwi, 192
Zucker, Lynne, 51, 63n26