

Hegemony and the Holocaust

State Power and Jewish Survival
in Occupied Europe

Ethan J. Hollander



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PREFACE

This project got its earliest start in the late 1990s, as I read newspaper reports about the ongoing trial of Maurice Papon. Papon had been the Secretary-General of a region in collaborationist France during World War II. Among other things, he was accused of organizing the deportation of over 1500 Jewish people from the city of Bordeaux. I had the opportunity to interview Papon in 2004 at his home, to which he'd been released after serving three years in prison for his role in the deportations. Intriguingly, Papon's defense was not quite that he didn't do it. Instead, he claimed that by staying in office and collaborating with the Germans, he was able to serve the lesser of two evils. Had he not collaborated at all, he argued, he would have been dismissed from his post, and replaced by someone who would have followed German orders more efficiently. Instead, by working with the occupier just enough to keep his job, he was able to limit the number of deportees and, ultimately, to save Jewish lives.

Having no way to know *if* Papon was telling the truth, I couldn't help but ponder a more interesting question: *What if* Papon was telling the truth? Could collaboration be excused if its aim was to impede Nazi evil 'from the inside'? What if someone was complicit in evil and, whether from the best or worst of human motivations, prevented a greater evil from coming to pass? What if someone collaborated for selfish reasons, but ended up protecting innocents as an unintended consequence? Divorced from the person of Papon and the particulars of his case, these questions had harrowing moral implications. And they stayed with me, even as I turned my attention to more traditional issues in contemporary political science.

Though I didn't completely realize it at the time, I was still on the winding road to *Hegemony and the Holocaust* as I continued my studies, and became interested in the nature of hierarchy and the degree to which a hegemon could (or couldn't) impose its will on its dominion. I wanted to know more about how a powerful country 'persuaded' its subject states to go along with its directives, even—and perhaps especially—when they didn't want to. I thought a little about Rome and Judea, occasionally about the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe, and even about the USA in the Caribbean. (The possibilities for exotic fieldwork were endless!) But I was enticed by a methodological logic that said that if I wanted to investigate the *limits* of hegemony, I might learn the most by investigating the least likely case—a case where even a powerful and draconian empire was stymied in its attempt to impose policy in its sphere of influence.

So it is that a political scientist came to be interested in countries where Nazi Germany failed to carry out the Final Solution with characteristic efficiency.

Of course, I feared that if I did the research of a political scientist and of a historian, I might end up with a book that was typical of neither. On the one hand, political scientists might be puzzled by my use of a 'historical' case study to illustrate a contemporary dynamic. But I know that no political scientist studies the future, and so the methodology is the same whether we study the Peloponnesian War or last week's congressional debate. Historians, for their part, might warn that countries and cultures were too complex—or the Holocaust, too 'unique'—to be subjected to comparative analysis. But I also know that we can't know anything if we don't occasionally simplify and compare. Sure, there are trade-offs between generalization and precision. Parsimony entails risk but also reward. And so if we are to learn anything from the most 'unspeakable' events in human history, it won't be by convincing ourselves that they are impervious to systematic analysis. We must endeavor to find pattern where others see spectacle, and to apply theory where others are content to describe. This is the only way that we can predict, or even prevent, their recurrence.

And so I press on, hoping that the gains to be had from unifying the two approaches outweigh the challenges that each presents. And as I do, I mark the words of Aristotle, who began his ethical inquiry by reminding his readers (and himself) that:

Our inquiry will be adequate if it achieves a degree of precision appropriate to its subject matter, for the same exactness cannot be expected in all departments of philosophy alike.... It is the mark of an educated mind to look for the sort of precision appropriate to each kind of study.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Some people have a sense for exactly how much they did to help me with this project. But many probably have no idea how important their inspiration may have been as I encountered this or that roadblock or tried to work through any particular problem. Crucial help at the right moment is more evident to the traveler than to the guide.

At the outset, I thank my parents, Howard and Inez Hollander, to whom this book is dedicated. Though they've regretted it ever since, they taught me that it's okay to question the things we learn from our elders—a guiding principle for this project. Along those lines, I also thank Christie Byun, who reminds me that even though it's okay to question things, the *way* we ask the question also matters, and Seth Hollander, who endures so many of the questions.

Along the way, I've been fortunate to encounter some of the best teachers imaginable. These include Gary Glick, who taught me how to write, and Donald Moon, who taught me that we can learn a lot by re-examining the things we thought were obvious. At the University of California, San Diego, I had the great fortune to work with Ellen Comisso, David Lake, Victor Magagna, Deborah Hertz, Arend Lijphart, Gershon Shafir, and Kaare Strøm. These people are models of their profession, and they continue to inspire me (and answer my emails) even now that they're off the clock. David has been particularly helpful (and patient) with the aforementioned emails. Victor's ideas permeate this text, and my teaching, more than anyone's. And Ellen's expertise and generosity of spirit live on in the work and the memories of the many people who miss her.

I also owe a great debt of gratitude to Wabash College for its generous research support and for providing me with countless students who remind me why I do this. Among the many individuals who help me here, I owe special thanks to Stephen Morillo, Bobby Horton, Pam Sacco, Brian Tucker, and the incredible staff at the Lilly Library. I also thank Ross McKinney, my former student, who survived more ordeals than any research assistant should.

Further afield, this project is better because of colleagues and friends at other institutions and around the world. In the summer of 2015, I was a Fellow at the Holocaust Educational Foundation's Summer Institute at Northwestern University. There, I had the chance to discuss this project with Anthony Wexler, Leo Riegert, Ben Frommer, and Christopher Browning, all of whom provided valuable feedback and encouragement. I also continue to rely on the support, expertise, and friendship of Alejandro Baer, Sang Jinh Byun, Dan Cristiani, Philip Michelbach, Matt Murphy, Chad Rector, Mark Roseman, and Helene Sinnreich. Others, who helped long enough ago that they may not appreciate the full significance of their lasting contributions, are Wolfgang Benz, Claudia Curio, Gabriel Fawcett, Lisa Goldstein, Michael Mann, Manus Midlarsky, and Scott Straus.

Important research for this project took place at the *Zentrum für Antisemitismusforschung* and the *Bundesarchiv* in Berlin, the National Archives in College Park, Maryland, and at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, where Caroline Waddell was invaluable in helping me locate many of the images contained herein.

As the book takes final form, I have come to appreciate the work of the many fine people at Palgrave, including Chris Robinson, Elaine Fan, Alison Howson, Sneha Catherine, and an anonymous reviewer who provided some of the most thorough and helpful feedback I've received. The index represents the excellent work of Lisa Kleinholz.

Ultimately, the harshest critics of this project were some of the most valuable interlocutors I had. Their critique was inspiration to think through a number of the most difficult and surprising insights, and the book is better as a result. I hope its publication provides us with a chance to continue to learn from one another.

ADDITIONAL FORMAL COPYRIGHT ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Some material in this book has been adapted with permission from the author's previously published work. Chapter 1, 'Introduction', includes excerpts from 'International Hierarchy and the Final Solution', which appeared in *Global Perspectives on the Holocaust: History, Identity, Legacy*, edited by Nancy E. Rupprecht and Wendy Koenig (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015). Chapter 2, 'Scandinavia', includes excerpts from 'Modern Day Masada', which appeared in *The Legacy of the Holocaust: National Perspectives*, edited by Zygmunt Mazur, Fritz Konig, Arnold Krammer, and Władysław Witalisz (Jagiellonian University Press, 2004); and from 'The Banality of Goodness: Collaboration and Compromise in the Rescue of Denmark's Jews', which appeared in *The Journal of Jewish Identities* (Vol. 6: No. 2, July 2013). Chapter 4, 'Eastern Europe', includes excerpts from 'The Final Solution in Bulgaria and Romania: A Comparative Perspective', which appeared in *East European Politics and Societies* (Vol. 22: No. 2, Spring 2008).

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Introduction: Swords or Shields?

“If I could not be your sword, at least I would be your shield.”
—*Marshal Pétain*¹

Why did more Jewish people survive in some German-occupied countries compared to others during World War II? Why was the victimization rate in the Netherlands higher than that of Romania, even though the Netherlands had less antisemitism and a long history of democracy and religious toleration? Why did almost three-quarters of French Jewry survive the war, even though France itself was home to a collaborationist state notorious for its service to the German occupier? Despite a vast literature on the history of the Holocaust and its obvious relevance for the study of genocide and state-sponsored violence, this intriguing question is virtually ignored in the extant literature.

In this book, I explain the basis on which the victimization rate of Jews varied from one German-occupied country to another during World War II. I show that more Jewish people survived in precisely those countries where high-ranking local officials were willing to stay in office and help the Germans with other aspects of the occupation. The logic of the situation is clear: When Germany ruled a country directly, the implementation of the Final Solution was efficient and relatively unhindered. But when Germany made use of high-ranking local officials in its administration of a country, the implementation of occupation policy—and the Final Solution itself—was subject to negotiation and compromise. By helping the German

occupier with military, economic, or administrative aspects of the occupation, local officials sometimes won a ‘milder’ form of German occupation. Because of their service to the German war effort, collaborating regimes could often *shield* their citizens, including their Jewish citizens, from the very worst of Nazi tyranny.

Collaborating officials were key actors in the tragedy of World War II. By remaining in office and helping their German masters, collaborators put a local face on German occupation, shared in the costs of governance, and helped to keep the resistance at bay. By ensuring the steady flow of supplies and arms, collaborators contributed to the German war effort, often enriching themselves and their countries in the process. Germany’s allies and satellite states shared in the booty of early Axis victories, while ultimately prolonging the war itself. And, of course, regimes in the German sphere of influence were also key players in the destruction of European Jewry, implementing important elements of the Final Solution on behalf of Nazi Germany.

But were Germany’s allies and collaborators also responsible for *subverting* the Final Solution? Many studies of the Nazi Holocaust ignore an uncomfortable fact: Countries where the most Jews survived the war were often the very countries where high-ranking local officials remained in office and allied themselves with Germany’s cause. Italy, for example, Germany’s closest ally, lost ‘only’ 18% of its Jewish population to the German genocide. Most of the Jews in Bulgaria and in the Romanian homeland also survived, despite radical levels of antisemitism in the latter. Even legends about the extraordinary rescue of Danish Jewry ignore or underplay the Danish government’s more ordinary collaboration with Nazi Germany in economic and military affairs.

At issue is an understandable unwillingness to admit the tragic logic of collaboration itself. By making themselves useful to the Nazi regime, Germany’s allies and collaborators could often *shield* their citizens, including their Jewish citizens, from the very worst of Nazi tyranny. By lending a hand to the German war effort, Germany’s allies staved off more direct impositions of German hierarchy. By negotiating with German occupiers, collaborators won concessions and secured for their citizens a ‘gentler’ occupation than would otherwise be possible. Indeed, even by agreeing to implement genocidal policies on Germany’s behalf, collaborationist officials—willingly, knowingly, intentionally, or not—introduced inefficiency into Germany’s genocidal system, if only because their own henchmen were less willing than Germany’s to round up fellow citizens or

because local agents were more willing to sabotage Nazi policy by taking bribes from would-be victims. And when Germany's local partners were otherwise doing their part, Germany was often willing to overlook the sloppy, unenthusiastic, or simply inefficient implementation of genocidal policy.

But why would German allies and the leaders of collaborating regimes use their leverage to protect local Jews? Certainly, genuine concern for the well-being of Jews or reflection upon the sheer horror of the Nazi program was sometimes a relevant factor, especially when the Jews in question were citizens of the collaborating country, war heroes, parishioners of cooperative churches, or members of the local fascist party. But protection was also and often 'accidental', since agents of a collaborating regime could simply get away with 'sloppy' or 'unenthusiastic' implementation of the Final Solution in a way that German officials could not. Nationalism was sometimes a factor, as it was politically costly for leaders of nominally sovereign countries to deport their own citizens—even Jewish ones—at Germany's behest. And in the most cynical sense, collaborators who deported local Jews also gave up potentially profitable opportunities to exploit them. Jews who otherwise faced deportation were fertile targets for political or even financial blackmail. Collaborators protected the politically connected, allowed Jews to buy their freedom, and took bribes to spare Jewish lives. Insubordination and 'corruption' were more likely when domestic collaborators, rather than German Nazis or their appointees, were in positions of political power.

The tragic logic of collaboration is even clearer when juxtaposed against the experience of those countries whose leaders chose to be swords instead of shields. On May 10, 1940, governing officials in the Netherlands and Luxembourg were given a tragic choice: Surrender and accept a living position in Germany's new world order or resist and suffer the horrible consequences. In both cases, the government and constitutional monarchy rallied the resistance, fled the country, and established a government in exile. Not surprisingly, Germany immediately filled the power vacuum with its own occupational staff. Thus, in these two democratic and religiously tolerant countries, where antisemitism was all but non-existent, Jewish victimization rates were among the highest in Europe—and local citizens, Jewish or otherwise, suffered for their governments' strict adherence to democratic principle.

The actions of the Netherlands and Luxembourg were in direct contrast to those of Denmark and France, where high-ranking, local officials

stayed at their posts. While doing so put these officials in direct service of their new German masters, it also allowed them to negotiate on behalf of their own citizens, including local Jews. This resulted in lower rates of Jewish victimization.

The Netherlands and Luxembourg, on the one hand, and Denmark and France, on the other, show that neither reaction to German aggression was morally unambiguous. While Denmark has long been credited for protecting its Jews (and for its notable lack of enthusiasm for Nazi policy more generally), the ambiguous and self-serving nature of Danish ‘accommodation’ is often overlooked and always discounted. Meanwhile, while many scholars point an accusing finger at ‘Dutch complacency’ for the tragic fate of Jews in the Netherlands, few reconcile that charge with the early intensity of Dutch resistance, nor with an ultimate cause of that resistance: the willingness of the Dutch government to sacrifice itself rather than bow to a National Socialist world order. In short, moral judgments which blame or credit countries for their ‘reaction’ to German occupation miss the tragic lesson of collaboration itself: During World War II, Western European governments could either resist German rule *or* protect their own citizens; they could not do both effectively. In the face of German pressure, resisting the Nazis and protecting one’s own citizens were mutually exclusive choices.

This dynamic was clearest in Western Europe, where the choice between collaboration and resistance was often most explicit and where democratic institutions and traditions were more stable and entrenched. But the relationship between governmental collaboration and victimization rate can be seen in Eastern Europe as well, where the ‘choice’ to collaborate was usually less explicit or even non-existent. Here, for ideological and strategic reasons, Slavic countries on the Soviet border were simply overrun and subjected to the most direct and invasive forms of German occupation. Poland and the Baltic States have high victimization rates which reflect the absence of a collaborationist buffer. But other countries ‘chose’ to collaborate pre-emptively, by allying themselves with the Axis powers. The Jews of metropolitan Bulgaria and Romania largely survived the war because their leaders—Germany’s allies—struck a deal: Both countries would help Germany eliminate Jews from their newly acquired, peripheral territories; but both would also drag their feet when it came to Jews who were closer to home. The Jews of Hungary also survived—at least while their leaders remained loyal to the Axis cause. But when Hungary threatened to switch sides, its Jews were dispatched with such ruthless efficiency that Eichmann rejoiced.

The recognition that self-preservation required unsavory compromises runs counter to a tacit but widespread assumption in the extant litera-

ture about Jewish victimization rates during World War II. Though historians are often hesitant to draw causal inferences from a wide variety of cases, there is sometimes a supposition that levels of Jewish victimization correspond to a nation's 'moral righteousness' or democratic values. In much of the literature on the Holocaust (scholarly and otherwise), there is a tendency to use a victimization rate as a moral barometer of sorts, measuring the degree of a nation's complicity in unspeakable crimes by an accounting of its victims. My thesis runs counter to this tendency, showing that, in the context of World War II, protecting locals Jews and resisting the Nazis were incompatible objectives. Advocacy required negotiation. And negotiation required compromise.

In sum, this book explains why a higher proportion of Jews were victimized in some German-occupied countries than others during World War II. I show that the 'success' of the German genocide program (the 'victimization rate')² depended most importantly upon the relationship between Germany and each occupied country. I argue that where German rule was direct, its implementation of the Final Solution was unhindered and therefore more effective. Where Germany ruled through collaborators, on the other hand, the precise implementation of genocidal policies was the result of complex bargaining and negotiations: In return for their loyal cooperation in military or economic policy, collaborators could often get away with partial or simply 'unenthusiastic' implementation of the Final Solution. This was often a major factor in reducing rates of Jewish victimization.

A Few Disclaimers

By linking victimization rates to more objective factors like the mode of German occupation or degrees of governmental collaboration, I hope to undermine the tendency to see collaboration as morally indefensible. My purpose, of course, is not to err in the 'other direction' or to excuse Germany's allies and collaborators, who, after all, tied their lot to an evil regime and thus contributed to the suffering of Jews and others elsewhere on the continent. My purpose is not even to say that collaborators saved Jews for the 'right' reasons or as part of a well-articulated plan. And my purpose is certainly not to minimize the suffering of millions of individuals, who, it may appear, have been aggregated into 'mere' statistics out of scientific necessity. But without subjecting such horrifying events to objective and systematic analysis, we forfeit whatever chance there is to understand them.

The collaborator's dilemma was that moral purity and the saving of innocent lives were sometimes in conflict. To protect their own citizens

under German occupation, collaborators had to dirty their hands by becoming complicit—however indirectly—in Nazi evil. Leaders who rejected such a compromise and rallied the resistance took a valiant and courageous stand, but forfeited an opportunity to slow the machinery of Nazi destruction from the inside. In an understandable quest to lodge Manichean moral judgments against perpetrators and rescuers alike, many scholars have overlooked the fact that the perpetrators and the rescuers were sometimes one and the same. By seeing collaboration as a *tragic* choice, rather than a criminal one, we do not excuse those who participated in the Nazi genocide. To the contrary, we recognize the dynamics of a real and terrible process in which, had historical circumstances been different, any of us might have participated.

That the Holocaust raises important and intriguing moral questions is, perhaps, no great surprise. But in this project, I hope to show that it has enduring relevance as a case in contemporary political understanding. As an ‘ordinary’ (if unprecedented) event, political scientists have the capacity to subject the Holocaust to the tools of our trade. The lessons we learn by doing so may contribute to our understanding of that and similar events. And our endeavor may thereby help us understand the world in which we live and make it a better place in which to do so.

Before moving on, allow me to consider two anticipated objections: one, methodological, and the other, moral. On the one hand, political scientists may object to my use of the Holocaust as a case because they consider it too old, too idiosyncratic, or too peculiar to provide contemporary lessons of any scientific value. In my view, this critique is misplaced. History and political science differ in the methods they employ, not in their subject matter. Although there is a tendency, perhaps, for political scientists to focus on events of more recent origin, no researcher—no matter how broad his perspective or rigorous her method—studies the future. Comparative political science is largely defined by a tendency to extrapolate from the particulars of any historical event and, thus, to see similarities among events that, on the surface, appear incomparable. In this sense, I deviate from tradition, not in turning to the past for intellectual raw material, but in taking a broader view in terms of which historical events may be viewed through this lens. If historical events, for whatever methodological reason, cannot be used in this manner, then the lessons of history are not experiences from which we can learn but mere intellectual curiosities.

In a related and moral sense, I recognize the difficulty in treating the Final Solution as ‘just another case’ of international policy. But I must

stress that no part of this project involves a moral judgment regarding the occupiers or their objectives. Over the previous century, military occupations have stemmed from the very best to the very worst human motivations. The point, however, is not to judge the objectives of an occupying power but to show that powerful regimes—however ruthless, however benevolent, or however well-intentioned—face very real limitations in the implementation of policy. In many respects, of course, Nazi brutality *was* unique. But if we are to learn from the most horrible events in human history, the challenge will be to look past their specificity. In its focus on contingency and the particularities of each case, much of the historical literature has missed a valuable opportunity to learn from the Holocaust by comparison. In this project, I suggest that there is no better way to learn from Nazi brutality than to subject it to rigorously objective analysis, insofar as that is possible.

*German Hierarchy, Local Collaborators, and the Final Solution*³

Though the German destruction of European Jewry is one of the world's most striking and well-studied instances of ethnic brutality, there exists no systematic explanation for why German efforts were more 'successful' in some countries than others. The vast literature on the Holocaust has indeed brought the details of each case to our attention, and historians have identified a broad range of factors that may have helped or hindered the Nazi effort in each individual country. Despite this, there exists, as yet, no general, underlying explanation for why the victimization of Jews varied from one country to the next. The absence of a broadly comparative perspective has left this most interesting historical question essentially unanswered.

This book proposes a systematic, region-wide explanation that the historical literature has largely overlooked: *The level of Jewish victimization in an occupied country depended upon the nature of German authority in that country.* Where Germany ruled directly, and therefore had complete or near-complete say in the political policy of a given territory, German demands and interests—including the desire to rid the territory of Jews—prevailed. Where Germany, for whatever reason, shared sovereignty over a given territory with domestic officials—where it ruled, indirectly, through collaborators and quislings of various stripes—principal-agent problems had a 'negative' effect on the successful execution of Nazi policy. In short, economic theories of industrial organization and management appear to

apply—in terrifying fashion—even to issues of state-sponsored violence and genocide.⁴ As ‘middlemen’, collaborators introduced inefficiencies into the German genocidal bureaucracy. Thus, where Germany ruled a territory directly, the rate of Jewish victimization was high. Where it relied on collaborators, the rate of victimization was lower. The degree of Jewish victimization varied inversely with the relative autonomy of domestic officials. **Hegemony**, the predominant influence or control exercised by one country over another, was the principal determinant of Jewish victimization rates.

As a contribution to the vast literature on the Nazi Holocaust, the significance of this project should be clear. While many Holocaust scholars have considered the implementation of the Final Solution in this or that particular country, there are few broadly comparative studies of the Nazi genocide, and none that provides such a close analysis of the collaborators and their motivations regarding the Final Solution. This gap in the literature, alone, warrants further attention.

But standing at the interface of two enduring global phenomena—imperialism and ethnic animosity—this project also sheds light on several important debates in social and political science. First, by suggesting that antisemitism was an important factor in victimization rate variation, many scholars have exaggerated the impact of this ‘ancient hatred’ on the perpetration of Nazi violence. I will show that antisemitism was but one important factor in the implementation of the Nazi genocide. In questioning the centrality of antisemitism as a determinant of Jewish victimization rates during the Holocaust, I hope to bring attention to the import of institutional, structural, and material factors in the perpetration of ethnic violence.

Second, the implementation of Nazi policy throughout Europe also tells us a great deal about the relationship between imperial powers and the subject states they try to influence. Taking my lead from international relations theory, I conceptualize German military occupations during World War II as cases of international hierarchy—situations where a dominant power, a hegemon, attempted to implement a relatively uniform policy throughout a huge and varied sphere of influence. Indeed, in every country it occupied, Germany faced a choice as to how it was to administer the newly acquired territory: Germany could remove local officials from positions of political power and impose its own personnel in a fairly direct form of occupational hierarchy; or it could leave those locals in place, influencing (or coercing) these ‘puppets’ from behind the scenes but, at the same time, negotiating with them about everything from policy implementation to

the sovereignty of their regime itself. As we shall see, Germany's choice in this matter—which was itself contingent upon the availability and willingness of local officials to negotiate—was to have tremendous impact on the implementation of Nazi policy throughout the sphere of influence. World War II and the Final Solution thus provide us with a fascinating case study for the study of international hierarchy, policy, and negotiation.

The Place of Other Explanatory Factors

In the vast literature on the Holocaust, there are surprisingly few attempts to explain comparative rates of victimization in rigorous or generalizable terms, and fewer still that use the tools of quantitative statistical analysis. In those works that *are* explicitly comparative, cultural and ideological factors (of which antisemitism is one) often take on important explanatory roles. As we shall see, antisemitism—or, more precisely, specific *types* of antisemitism—could have dramatic effects on the *way* the Final Solution was implemented in the various countries in Germany's sphere of influence. However, the ability for this factor to affect rates of victimization was itself deeply contingent upon the autonomy of local officials—and thus, the nature of German hierarchy—in each particular country.

Though historians are sometimes hesitant to present generalizable claims about events as massive and complex as the Holocaust,⁵ a study of the immense, descriptive literature on this topic reveals a number of tacit assumptions about factors that may have helped or hindered Germany's effort to implement the Final Solution across its sphere of influence. Of course, factors such as geography, pre-existing traditions of democracy, and religious toleration, not to mention German ideology and war aims, will necessarily play an important role in any explanation of victimization rate variation. We will consider these factors in greater detail below, where intra-regional comparisons will allow us to control for and highlight their influence. For now, let us consider two common Europe-wide explanations for victimization rate variation that can be gleaned from the existing historical literature: (1) the timing of deportations and (2) levels of domestic antisemitism in each occupied country.

It has been suggested that the timing of deportations was an important determinant of their success or failure.⁶ Indeed, there is a certain logic to the argument that earlier deportations would have been more efficient because they were carried out before rumor of the Final Solution had spread, and thus before the true meaning of euphemisms like 'resettlement' was widely

known. However, the suggestion that earlier deportations were more efficient is subject to two important qualifications. First, there are a number of important exceptions to this rule. Consistent with Eichmann's formulation at Wannsee that Europe would be combed 'from West to East', France experienced some of the earliest deportations in all of Europe. Nevertheless, at 25%, the victimization rate in that country is one of the lowest in our sample. By contrast, large-scale deportations did not begin in Hungary until the very last year of the war. But neither the late onset of deportations nor the war's imminent end hindered Germany's effort to implement the Final Solution in that country with characteristic efficiency. Clearly, any model that positions timing as an important determinant of victimization rate must take account of these notable and striking exceptions.

Second, the hypothesis that timing had a uniform effect on victimization rate begs a more important question: Why were deportations attempted earlier in some places than in others? Clearly, timing itself was the result of a whole host of factors: the threat of domestic opposition, the tide of war, the state of the economy, or—as I argue below—the relative influence of German occupational authorities in a given, occupied country. Insofar as timing *was* an important factor in the success or failure of deportations, we must *still* ask why the timing of these operations differed so widely across the cases of our study. At best, the timing of deportations seems to be an important intervening variable, not a causal one.

At some level, the intensity and type of antisemitism in each German-occupied country must also have played a role in victimization rate variation. It stands to reason that Germany could pursue its Final Solution with greater efficiency and vigor where local leaders and citizens alike were willing to help—or at least, less willing to resist—German anti-Jewish measures. Here too, however, antisemitism appears to be an intervening variable. And here too, the case of France is instructive. Like a number of countries under German occupation, France was characterized by a particular *type* of antisemitism, one that made a sharp distinction between foreign Jews and Jews who were French citizens. Thus, French collaborators were often able to delay the deportation of French Jews while actively participating in the arrest and deportation of *foreign* Jews. In the Netherlands, by contrast, where collaboration was restricted to the lowest levels of the ruling bureaucracy, few such distinctions were made in the first place—and Jewish victimization was higher across the board. Citizenship could usually only protect Jews when the state, the very institution responsible for protecting citizens, remained intact.

Ironically, certain types of antisemitism could actually hinder Germany's ability to pursue the Final Solution. In Romania, where antisemitism was rampant, high-level government officials turned a blind eye to (or actively participated in) the corrupt exploitation of Jews, who in many cases paid bribes to escape victimization. As the war drew to a close, Romanian leader Ion Antonescu actually *saved* tens of thousands of Jews in an effort to placate the advancing Soviets, who, in his deranged antisemitic mind, were fighting the war on behalf of International Jewry anyway. Clearly, the peculiarities of any given country's antisemitism could only find full expression where leaders of that country were in positions of political power. Like the timing of deportations, the type and intensity of antisemitism affected the efficiency of the Final Solution in various ways. But the influence of these particular factors was itself dependent upon the nature of German hierarchy and the relationship between German and domestic officials.

What Others Have Said

In the vast literature on the Holocaust, only two scholars have given such careful consideration to the influence of German occupational hierarchy on rates of Jewish victimization. They are Helen Fein and Wolfgang Seibel. In 'The Strength of Perpetrators—The Holocaust in Western Europe, 1940–1944' (2002b), Seibel explains the comparative Jewish victimization in France, Belgium, and the Netherlands with regard to the nature of the German occupational bureaucracy (i.e., a civilian versus military administration) and territorial fragmentation of the occupied country. However, Seibel's case selection is still somewhat limited, focusing on only three countries, all in Western Europe. By broadening this analysis to include Scandinavia and Eastern Europe, I believe I can better test the applicability of his explanatory variables.⁷ Moreover, my conceptualization of international hierarchy allows me to provide (1) a more precise determination of German occupation authority and (2) an overview of the motives of collaborators, two important pieces of the puzzle missing in Seibel's analysis.

Perhaps the most explicit treatment of Jewish victimization during World War II is that of Fein's *Accounting for Genocide*.⁸ Fein argues that the 'extent of Jewish victimization' varied primarily with regard to the level of prewar antisemitism, and increased sharply 'as a function of the intensity of the SS grip over the state in 1941' (p. 82). Of all the scholarship on this specific issue, Fein's comes closest to presenting a generalizable and theoretical explanation of Jewish victimization. Still, there are some

problems with Fein's analysis: First, Fein considers antisemitism to be an important determinant of levels of Jewish victimization. She therefore cannot fully account for the relatively low victimization rate in Romania (where antisemitism was high) nor for the relatively high victimization rate in the Netherlands (where antisemitism was low). Moreover, Fein measures antisemitism by looking at the size of a country's native fascist movement; she therefore cannot account for the fact that some of Europe's home-grown fascist movements (Italy's especially) were not particularly antisemitic. Finally, there is some question as to whether SS grip over the state, rather than German authority in general, was of paramount importance. As Michael Mann suggests, the SS was only one institution through which the Germans could attempt to influence the domestic policy of an occupied regime (2005: 279).

Rather than simply observing the correlation between German hierarchy and victimization rate variation (as Fein and Seibel can be understood to do), I locate the 'motor' of that variation in the complex and sometimes conflicting incentives that faced local leaders under German occupation. Thus, I compensate for the most damaging consequence of their brevity: their virtual silence on the issue of collaboration and the role of domestic officials in the implementation and subversion of Germany's Final Solution. In focusing exclusively on the role of the SS and *German* administrative institutions, Fein and Seibel overlook a crucial 'half' of the equation. In giving explicit and thorough attention to domestic officials and the ways in which their interests differed from Germany's, on the other hand, I do more than simply observe a correlation between German hierarchy and victimization rate; I explain *why* that correlation exists. Without a detailed, country-by-country analysis of collaborators and their motives, we cannot determine why some collaborators chose to use their relative autonomy to *protect* local Jews. And without explicit consideration of the relationship between German policymakers and domestic political institutions, we cannot understand why higher levels of German occupational hierarchy correlated with higher rates of Jewish victimization. As it turns out, Jewish victimization rates were a product of the interaction between German hegemony and state power.

Bringing the State Back In

This manuscript aims to 'Bring the State Back In' to discussions of victimization rates during the Holocaust. Following from an established tradition in political science, I intend to enhance historical perspectives

on the Holocaust via the application of social scientific methodology. In the Preface to their monumental collection, *Bringing the State Back In*, Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol observe that, though state behavior is clearly determined by the society it encompasses, the state itself is also ‘an actor that ... shapes social and political processes’ (p. *vii*). Though the statement was so sensible as to seem obvious, Skocpol noted the irony that social scientists ‘rarely spoke of states ... even—or perhaps ... especially—when politics and public policy making were at issue’ (p. 4). The Holocaust is unique in the degree to which the genocide was bureaucratically planned and implemented as the ‘ordinary’ public policy of a fully rationalized and even ‘civilized’ modern state. It is thus all the more surprising that, in discussions of what limited the efficiency of that process, the state is largely absent.

This project examines an often-ignored factor in victimization rate variation: the mode of German occupation itself and the equilibrium reached between the occupying power and local government officials. Victimization rates were higher where German rule was more direct and lower where Germany ruled through high-ranking local collaborators. In pointing to the level of German hierarchy as a determinant of victimization rates, my intention is not to *replace* other explanatory variables or to suggest that they were unimportant. Neither is my intention to *add* occupational hierarchy as yet another salient variable. International hierarchy is not ‘one more’ in a list of explanatory variables for rates of Jewish victimization. Instead, I see German hierarchy as an overarching, contextual variable—a ‘ubiquitous’ factor that combined with and modified other explanatory variables to produce specific rates of Jewish victimization.

Consider the following graphic representation (Fig. 1.1) of the interaction effect between German hierarchy and a list of potential variables. Indirect German rule provided a context within which geography, political culture, timing, and other idiosyncratic factors could act to reduce rates of Jewish victimization. Where German rule was direct, victimization rates were higher—and the potential influence of other factors was largely negated.

For example, consider the interaction between geography, timing, and German hierarchy in the starkly contrasting cases of Denmark and Norway (covered in greater detail in the next chapter). Many have rightly noted that the dramatic rescue of Danish Jewry was only made possible by the proximity of neutral Sweden, to which nearly the entire Jewish population escaped. But why weren’t Norway’s Jews able to take advantage of

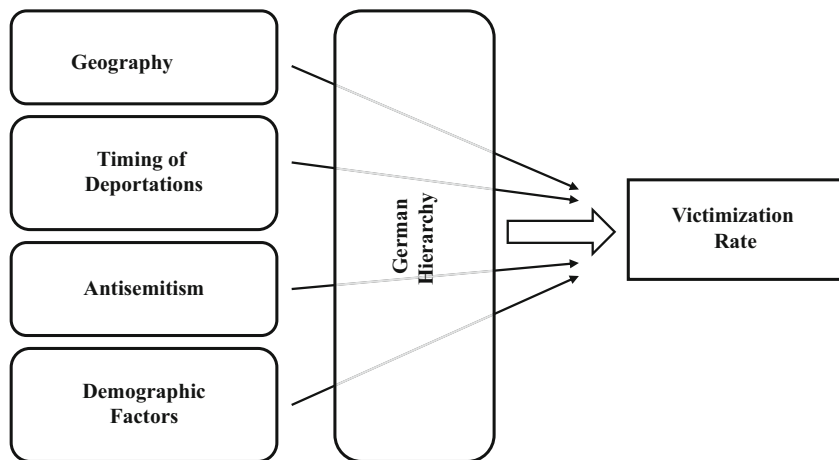


Fig. 1.1 German hierarchy as contextual variable

the same opportunity that geography provided? In fact, about half of Norway's Jews *did* survive by escaping to Sweden. Thus, the real question isn't really why Norway's Jews weren't *able* to escape, but why so relatively few of them even tried.

To answer this question, we must look to the fact that Norway's Jews were deported almost a year earlier than Denmark's, when Germany was still winning the war and when the true fate of 'resettled' Jews was far less widely known. While the causes of this Danish delay were themselves multifaceted and complex, they clearly had a lot to do with the fact that German occupational forces in Denmark could rely on the support of Denmark's constitutional government, which served Germany's needs so well that the Germans were at pains to avoid doing anything in the country that would potentially disturb the policy of 'negotiation'. In Norway, on the other hand, the departure of the country's constitutional leadership meant that Germany could rely on a puppet government of local fascists—all the while fighting some of the fiercest resistance in Europe. Thus, while Germany and its appointed Norwegian quislings were subjecting Norway's Jews to the tragically familiar preparatory steps for deportation (anti-Jewish legislation, registration, yellow stars, etc.), German occupational officials in Denmark were bragging about the calm state of their 'model protectorate', while also warning

their superiors in Berlin that any move against the country's Jews would jeopardize the peace. In other words, the late timing of the attack on Denmark's Jews and Denmark's proximity to Sweden both contributed significantly to the survival of Danish Jewry. But these 'favorable factors' would not and could not be exploited were it not for the indirect nature of German hierarchy and the corresponding autonomy of Denmark's government.

*Sovereignty, Hierarchy, and the Variety
of International Relations*

When Max Weber famously defined the state as that institution with a monopoly on the legitimate use of force within a certain territory, he was describing an imaginary (and maybe even aspirational) ideal. In the international relations of today, as in the Inter-war Period, it is common, especially among Realists, to see each state as an autonomous entity—a 'black box' interacting with other 'black boxes' in an anarchic system. In recent decades, however, an alternative viewpoint has emerged, one that sees sovereignty as a matter of degree, not of kind. For the purposes of this project, this alternative viewpoint constitutes a welcome addition to the field, because it allows us to see the various types of occupational administration imposed upon countries by Germany during World War II in the light of an already-established literature.

Rather than seeing countries as either fully independent or strictly subordinate to one another, this project investigates the 'gray area' in between, where weak but formally independent states are under such pressure and such threat by their more powerful neighbors that to call them 'sovereign' without qualification is to commit hyperbole. In other words, to speak of states as *either* sovereign or not is to ignore a vast range of international relationships where a regional hegemon *influences* the internal politics of nearby states to such a degree that their very independence is called into question. Weak states with powerful neighbors may retain all the trappings of independence (local elections, diplomatic missions, even symbols of national independence), but when the regional hegemon disapproves, intervenes, or simply flexes its muscles, the poverty of the 'either/or' view of sovereignty becomes all the more apparent.

A more precise study of German military occupations during World War II will require that we see occupation not simply as the extension of one country's authority over another, but as a relationship between

polities—where one polity, the occupier, has assumed (by force or negotiation) some (but not all) of the authority in the polity it has occupied. In this view, it makes only limited sense to speak of dominated countries as *either* occupied *or* autonomous. Rather, we may prefer to speak of the *degree* or *intensity* of an occupation—thus giving voice to the sheer variety of relationships that exist between regional hegemons and the subject states in their domain. Doing so requires that we conceptualize military occupation as a type of international hierarchy.

In ‘Anarchy, hierarchy, and the variety of international relations’, David A. Lake provides a typology for the variety of international relations.⁹ According to Lake, the relationship between any two ‘states’ can be characterized as lying somewhere on a spectrum (Fig. 1.2) between anarchy and hierarchy, alliance and empire.

When each of two states has complete or near-complete sovereignty over its own affairs, the relationship between those states is said to be anarchic. The two states may (and, in fact, often do) cooperate on a variety of concerns; yet, at the end of the day, each state is justifiably called the master of its own domain. In hierarchical relationships, on the other hand, one state (the dominant one) actually possesses some ability to make policy for the other (subordinate or subject) state. Of course, the amount of policymaking ability held by the dominant state may vary: Subject states may enjoy significant latitude in all but foreign affairs (‘Protectorate’)¹⁰; or, moving to the right along the spectrum, a subject state may retain only nominal independence from its dominant partner (‘Informal empire’); in the extreme, a subject ‘state’ is not even the formal master of its own domain—the hierarchical nature of the imperial relationship is thorough and explicit (‘Empire’). Just where a relationship lies on this spectrum is,

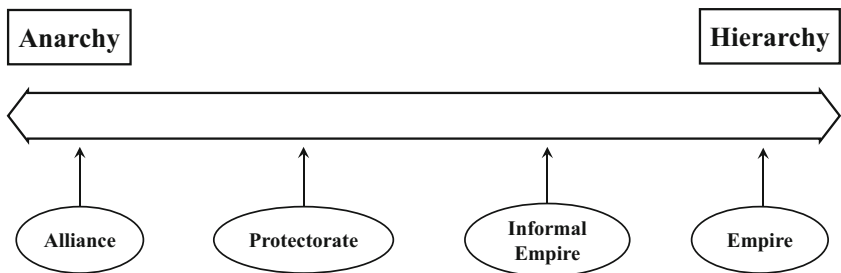


Fig. 1.2 The hierarchy spectrum

of course, a matter of judgment and debate (both among scholars, trying to characterize the relationships they observe, not to mention among members of the participant polities). But Lake's model gives us a language with which to discuss a variety of international relationships that have long been intuitive, if not discussed in such explicit terms.

The significance of the hierarchy spectrum for the study of German occupation regimes is clear. As German hegemony over the continent of Europe increased, Germany had to choose how it would administer new countries within its sphere of influence. This, in turn, required a choice as to how much authority Germany would give (or leave) to local officials and how much it would retain for itself. On the one hand, Germany could choose a relatively hierarchic form of occupation, removing domestic officials from their positions in office and subjecting the local population to direct occupational rule. But where local leaders were otherwise cooperative or sympathetic to German hegemony, Germany often found it preferable to leave significant domestic institutions unchanged and in place. In such cases, Germany left local officials responsible for paying the costs of governance but, in turn, limited its direct involvement in the country's domestic affairs. Germany 'got away' with a cheaper military occupation but, in turn, came to be reliant upon local officials over whom it had less direct control. Of course, the equilibrium that was eventually established in each case had a lot to do with the willingness of local officials to stay in office and cooperate with the Germans—a sentiment that was itself dependent upon the assessment of local officials regarding how much they would suffer at German hands and how sympathetic they were to German hegemony in the first place.¹¹ In the end, however, each German occupation regime during World War II—even those that were never formally labeled 'occupations'—can be characterized as an equilibrium that resulted from an (explicit or implied) bargain between Germany and domestic policymakers who stayed in office.

The terms of the final 'deal' (i.e., the particular occupational regime that is ultimately established) clearly has a lot to do with the reaction of the local population and its leadership to German ascendancy. Where locals are willing to cooperate, the occupying power may find it easier to stay in the background and rule through its newfound collaborators. Where the occupying power faces resistance, however, it will be left with little choice but to staff the bureaucracy itself or with locals of its own choosing. In fact, in many cases, Germany presented local rulers with this choice explicitly. At the moment of the German invasion, leaders in Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg were all given the option to

lay down their arms and stay in power under German occupation. If they did so, Germany promised, their citizens would be spared the burden of direct occupational rule and the officials themselves would be allowed to keep their jobs. Refusal to cooperate, however, would result in a more invasive (i.e., more hierarchic) mode of occupation, the brutal results of which would be faced by the population at large and especially local Jews. As we shall see, the reaction of local officials would have a great effect on their country's experience under German occupation—and on the number of Jews who ultimately survived.

Before moving on, it is important to note three things about the application of Lake's hierarchy spectrum to the particular cases in this study. First, the *formal titles* given to the different forms of hierarchy throughout the German sphere of influence bear little relationship to the actual level of German hegemony in those territories.¹² (This is because the relative absence of comparative political approaches to the subject leaves us without a systematic language with which to compare these levels of hierarchy, and also because the Germans themselves were seldom 'honest' (with their subject states or themselves) about the true nature of these hierarchic relationships.¹³) Though formally sovereign, 'satellite states' such as Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary (even after March 1944) were subject to such intense pressure that, in an institutional sense, their relationships with the German hegemon became functionally indistinguishable from those of formally occupied countries like Denmark and France. The 'negotiated' terms of their submission notwithstanding, all of these countries played host to German supervisory institutions and military formations, even if these forces remained 'in the background' and 'promised' to respect national sovereignty. We will establish a more systematic and precise typology for German occupational regime types in Chapter 5, after we have seen examples—and established a language—for the variety of forms these hierarchic relationships could take in practice.

Second, it is important to note that collaboration, as we use it here, is an institutional designation, not attitudinal one. A **collaborator** is any domestic official in a German subject state who stayed in office and *worked with* the occupier after the imposition (or 'negotiation') of German hierarchy.¹⁴ In some cases, these were the heads of state and governments (the kings, presidents, prime ministers, and parliaments) of subject states that retained the trappings (and often, but not always, the reality) of autonomy over domestic affairs.¹⁵ In others, the highest-ranking domestic officials were relatively low-level bureaucrats and functionaries, the

‘headless administrators’ of the Netherlands and Belgium. Indeed, hierarchic equilibria were sometimes established in a ‘middle position’, where the German hegemon would impose on an occupied country a domestic official *of Germany’s own choosing*; the obedience of puppet governments (like Quisling’s in Norway) could thus be assured with German hegemony ‘hidden’ (however poorly) just beneath the surface. As we shall see in Chapter 5, the presence of high-ranking local officials in an occupied country also plays a role in establishing that country’s position on the hierarchy spectrum.

Finally, it is important to remember that Germany did not ‘decide’ how to rule a particular country—and local officials did not decide whether or how much to collaborate—based on the anticipated treatment of local Jews. For the most part, the particular occupation regimes in question were established long before the Final Solution was implemented or even envisioned. Although some mass killings of Jews began on Germany’s Eastern Front and in Romania as early as mid-1941, the Final Solution as a uniform, systematic, and Europe-wide policy was not implemented until after the Wannsee Conference of February 1942. By that time, most hierarchic equilibria in German-occupied Europe had been established and relatively stable for over a year. Indeed, even in cases where the equilibria were ‘renegotiated’, the bargaining seldom concerned the treatment of local Jews explicitly. Ultimately, levels of German hierarchy were determined by military strategy, economics, governance costs, and the willingness of local officials to play a role in Germany’s new world order.¹⁶ Generally speaking, the establishment of German hierarchy was exogenous to the Jewish Question throughout the German sphere of influence.

The Dependent Variable: Victimization Rates in German-Occupied Europe

Let us now begin the comparison by looking at the dependent variable, the degree of victimization faced by Jews in countries under German hierarchy. The following table (Table 1.1) indicates the Jewish victimization rate for all countries in the German sphere of influence during World War II. Note that, since this is a study of policy implementation and efficiency, **victimization rate** has been defined as the percentage of Jews deported *and/or* killed from a given territory. (Thus, Jews who survived the ordeals of deportation and imprisonment (‘victimized survivors’) are still considered victims, as are those (‘undeported victims’) who were killed in their

Table 1.1 Jewish victimization statistics for the German sphere of influence

| <i>Country</i> | <i>Pre-final solution Jewish population</i> | <i>Jews deported and/or killed</i> | <i>Victimization rate (%)</i> |
|------------------------------|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| Lithuania | 220,000 | 212,000 | 96.4 |
| Latvia | 70,000 | 67,000 | 95.7 |
| Estonia | 1000 | 936 | 93.6 |
| Poland | 3,300,000 | 3,000,000 | 90.9 |
| Czechoslovakia | 179,851 | 159,422 | 88.6 |
| Protectorate | 90,847 | 88,122 | 97.0 |
| Slovakia | 88,951 | 71,300 | 80.0 |
| Germany (including Austria) | 240,000 | 210,000 | 87.5 |
| Luxembourg | 796 | 674 | 84.7 |
| Greece | 68,000 | 56,685 | 83.4 |
| (always German-occupied) | | | 87.5 |
| (initially Italian-occupied) | | | 72.6 |
| Hungary | 825,007 | 681,007 | 82.5 |
| Until March 19, 1944 | 825,007 | 63,000 | 7.6 |
| After March 19, 1944 | 762,007 | 618,007 | 81.1 |
| Yugoslavia | 56,000 | 45,000 | 80.4 ^a |
| Croatia | 40,000 | 30,000 | 75.0 ^a |
| Serbia | 16,000 | 14,750 | 92.2 ^a |
| Netherlands | 159,806 | 107,000 | 67.0 |
| Belarus (SSR) | 375,000 | 245,000 | 65.3 |
| Ukraine (SSR) ^b | 1,500,000 | 900,000 | 60.0 |
| Belgium | 65,696 | 34,801 | 53.0 |
| Romania | 557,313 | 285,505 | 51.2 |
| Norway | 1700 | 786 | 46.2 |
| France | 310,000 | 79,721 | 25.7 |
| Italy | 43,118 | 7800 | 18.1 |
| Bulgaria | 63,403 | 11,393 | 18.0 |
| Russia (RSFSR) ^b | 975,000 | 107,000 | 11.0 |
| Denmark | 7851 | 477 | 6.1 |
| Until August 29, 1943 | | | 0.0 |
| After August 29, 1943 | | | 6.1 |
| Finland | 2000 | 8 | 0.4 |

^aDeath rates^bThese territories were never completely occupied by Axis forces

countries of origin.) Insofar as statistics are available, pre-Final Solution Jewish population figures are given according to national borders and the number of Jews remaining at the time the policy was first implemented. I have also used the most inclusive definition of Jews for the pre-Final Solution population statistics, since legal maneuvers to reduce the number

of would-be victims by defining ‘Jew’ more narrowly were common among countries determined to protect their most assimilated Jewish populations. Given these considerations, the statistics presented here may appear to differ somewhat from other figures in the existing literature.¹⁷

On the face of it, the most striking aspect of the chart is simply the *degree* of variation demonstrated among countries under German domination. This fact alone brings us to question a tacit assumption sometimes made in the discussion of totalitarian regimes. Throughout the literature, and throughout the century, totalitarianism has been defined as that special and extreme case of authoritarian rule where a regime has total control over its citizenry. Even Hannah Arendt, in her landmark study of *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, describes that form of government as something more than ‘mere’ dictatorship, a form of government characterized by ‘total domination’ (1973: p. xxxvii). As evidenced in Table 1.1, significant variation in victimization rates in countries dominated by Nazi Germany demonstrates the fallacy of this assumption. Contrary to common belief, the Nazi regime—in some respects, the very *definition* of a totalitarian state—was subject to considerable limitations in the implementation of its anti-Jewish policy. Not only did two countries succeed in protecting nearly *all* of their Jewish citizens; a full third of them finished the war having lost ‘only’ a quarter of their Jewish populations. Indeed, it was only in a small fraction of the administrative units that the destruction was what we could call ‘complete’ in general terms. Contrary to the common image of a Europe ‘under the thumb’ of imperial domination, the Nazi regime itself was clearly subject to some very real constraints. The purpose of this project is to investigate further the nature and causes of these constraints.

A glance at the chart also serves to challenge a number of tacitly held assumptions about the causes of victimization rate variation. For example, though precise levels of antisemitism are difficult to establish, the figures on the chart do not even coincide with our general impressions of this potential factor: The Netherlands, with its high victimization rate, was arguably the least antisemitic country in all of Europe. Romania and France, on the contrary, demonstrate markedly lower rates of Jewish victimization despite being more antisemitic by most reasonable standards. Thus, even if we were to establish that antisemitism had *some* effect on rates of Jewish victimization, the finding would be incomplete, and we would be forced to search for other independent factors or for a more general, contextual variable that explains why antisemitism would have salience in certain cases and not in others.

That said, there are certain trends which emerge when we view the countries in broadly geographic terms. With a few conspicuous exceptions (the Netherlands, Belgium, Bulgaria), countries in Eastern Europe generally demonstrate markedly higher rates of victimization than countries in Western Europe. Of course, *part* of this variation might be explained by broad cultural differences between East and West. However, it is important to note that each ‘half’ of Europe also presented the occupying power with very different military pressures and economic opportunities.¹⁸ Thus, though there is clearly a trend toward higher victimization rates in Eastern Europe, it would be premature to attribute this fact to differences in political culture or antisemitism alone. Instead, differing ideological conceptions existed alongside and in conjunction with important economic and military considerations. Finally, we cannot help but focus quite squarely on those countries that seem to defy geographical categorization. When ‘Western’ countries like the Netherlands and Belgium and ‘Eastern’ countries like Bulgaria and Romania demonstrate such uncharacteristic levels of victimization, we are justified in our search for factors that do not fit so neatly into our pre-existing notions of East and West.

The Independent Variable: Forms of German Occupational Administration

While this project’s dependent variable, victimization rate, is relatively easy to measure, the independent variable presents much more formidable difficulties. As Lake admits, the placement of particular relationships along the hierarchy continuum is ‘only approximate’ (1996: 8). In our effort to subject German occupation regimes to rigorous scientific comparison, we must be willing to accept these limitations. It is, nonetheless, remarkable indeed how well-established perceptions of hierarchy in the German sphere of influence fit the degree of Jewish victimization in each country. While this book differs from much of the historical literature in its consideration of such a wide variety of cases, it does not deviate significantly from generally accepted historical assessments regarding German hierarchy or the autonomy of local officials in any given country.¹⁹ By considering a wide variety of cases and putting them in comparative context, I show that a correlation existed between two sets of widely accepted historical facts: levels of German hierarchy and Jewish victimization rates.

To avoid the problems presented by the imprecise nature of measuring German hierarchy, as well as to control for additional factors that may

have influenced victimization rates from one country to the next, the case-study portion of this project proceeds by examining each of eight different countries as part of a regional group: Scandinavia (Norway and Denmark); Western Europe (the Netherlands, Belgium, and France); and Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary). By examining countries as part of these regional groups, we are better able to isolate the effects of different forms of German hierarchy while also controlling for the influence of confounding factors such as geography, political culture, antisemitism, or a country's status in terms of Nazi ideology or military planning. Only after examining these case studies will we take a step back, and see the entire German sphere of influence in comparative perspective.

The Holocaust as Political Science

Nazi Germany was certainly exceptional, if not actually unique, for the sheer brutality and totalitarian nature of its rule. The Holocaust was unique among genocides for its bureaucratic organization and the 'rationality' of its process, if not its inspiration. But rather than seeing these features of the case as things that make comparison impossible, I have accepted them as invitations.

As the study of the process by which individual interests are reconciled with government action, the institutional planning and bureaucratic implementation of the Nazi genocide make that case uniquely suited for the methods of political science. Those very features that make the Holocaust unique make it particularly interesting for those schooled in the process by which political policies are formulated. The fact that few regimes have replicated the totality of Nazi Germany's authoritarian rule does not mean that we are without tools to study that regime; rather, it makes the fact that even Nazi policy was sometimes sabotaged more interesting. The Final Solution was a horrible event—and to some, a uniquely horrible event—perpetrated by a regime that was capable—perhaps uniquely capable—of implementing its political designs. It is therefore all the more surprising that the policy was so 'unsuccessful' in so many places it was applied. If *Nazi* policy was subject to inefficiency, compromise, and structural limitations, how much *more so* must this be the case for more ordinary policies implemented by less dictatorial regimes?

Likewise, the study of international hierarchy has long been plagued by a question of its significance. Even those who accept Lake's argument that hierarchy exists in the international realm have wondered about

what effects international hierarchy might have on the implementation of hegemonic policy. For alternative studies of the consequences of international hierarchy, see Liberman; Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson; Edelstein; and Iyer. This project contributes to a school of thought that suggests that international hierarchy and political institutions *really do* matter. Even when formally autonomous, states could be asked to kill their own citizens on behalf of a foreign power; even when under military occupation, puppet regimes and collaborators could amass the political capital necessary to resist the occupier's demands. The fact that this happens anywhere in political memory is intellectually interesting; the fact that it happened in our 'civilized' world makes our attempt to understand it a moral imperative.

The sheer magnitude of the Holocaust is such that our failure, as political scientists, to address it is hardly surprising. But, in so doing, our science has failed to realize its greatest potential and shied away from some of the world's greatest contemporary challenges. In a world where ethnic conflict, state-sponsored violence, and ideological fanaticism have again come to dominate our political lives, and where 'advances' in the machinery of destruction have long outpaced our ability to coexist, continued silence on such issues is not only puzzling, but morally disturbing. The following chapters aim to correct for this deficiency in the historical literature by subjecting regional groups of cases to rigorous comparative analysis.

NOTES

1. Robert O. Paxton's *Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order* [1972: p. 358].
2. Victimization rate, the proportion of the Jewish population deported and/or killed from a given territory, is defined more precisely below.
3. Portions of this chapter are excerpted from 'International Hierarchy and the Final Solution', a chapter in *Global Perspectives on the Holocaust: History, Identity, Legacy*, edited by Nancy E. Rupprecht and Wendy Koenig (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015). It is published here with the permission of Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
4. More traditional applications of delegation theory that inform the current project are: McCubbins, Noll, and Weingast 1987, 1989; Kiewiet and McCubbins; Miller; and Epstein and O'Halloran.
5. In their broadly comparative analysis of the implementation of the Final Solution in Western Europe, for example, Marrus and Paxton

- conclude that ‘Generalizations break apart on the stubborn particularity’ of each case (1989: 196. See also 1981: 356). Bela Vago echoes that sentiment in his complementary assessment of Eastern Europe, arguing that ‘generalization ... entail[s] the risk of simplification and misrepresentation’ (1989: 233). My hypothesis is that such caution is unwarranted, and that we *can* make certain, limited generalizations regarding victimization rate—even across such a wide variety of cases.
6. In their oft-cited overview of the Holocaust in Western Europe, for example, Marrus and Paxton posit that ‘Proper timing was obviously crucial to the success of opposition to Nazi Jewish policy’ (1989: 195).
 7. For example, Seibel attributes France’s low victimization rate (in part) to that country’s territorial fragmentation; but Greece and Yugoslavia were also subject to territorial fragmentation, and victimization in these countries remained rather high. See also Midlarsky 2005.
 8. The book’s sub-title (‘National Responses and Jewish Victimization during the Holocaust’) notwithstanding, Fein’s work gives direct attention to this question in only half of one chapter (‘The Bonds that Hold, The Bonds that Break’). The rest, though intriguing, is only tangentially related to the question of victimization rate variation. (Irving Louis Horowitz makes a similar (but more critical) observation in his review of Fein’s work.)
 9. Lake 1996. Lake elaborates on this model in *Hierarchy in International Relations* (2009).
 10. Note that, in the strict sense, the ‘Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia’ was not really a protectorate at all. In that relationship, Germany had complete or near-complete say in the affairs of the subject territory—making the relationship significantly hierarchic, perhaps even formally imperial.
 11. As we shall see, it is sometimes hard to tell if a subject state does what the hegemon wants because the hegemon forces it to do so or because, fearful of punishment, the subject state *anticipates* the hegemon’s wishes and proceeds ‘voluntarily’. Hegemony may be invisible in the latter case, but it is nonetheless real (see Lake 2009: 64–9).
 12. Thus, we adhere to what Lake calls ‘a relational conception of authority rather than [a] formal-legal’ one (2009: 3).
 13. Thus, even Werner Best’s aspirational typology for German administration in the imperial realm provides only a rough guide for the actual forms such occupational regimes would take in practice (see Herbert 1996: 281–2; Baranowski: 61).

14. The German word, after all, is simply *zusammenarbeiten*, ‘to work together’. Indeed, it is helpful to remember that, when the word was first applied in the context of World War II, it was mostly as a description of an administrative fact. For the most part, its negative connotations only developed later, as the war dragged on and as local populations became disaffected with German hegemony and their leaders’ association with it (Tzur: 127).
15. These include the leaders of France and Denmark, as well as those of the ‘satellite states’ discussed above. It matters little, in this sense, that some of these collaborators displayed a ‘recalcitrant attitude’ toward their German overlords. ‘Collaboration’ refers to their position in the governing administration; it is not a judgment about their attitude toward it. For more on this institutional or administrative definition of collaboration, see Eli Tzur’s discussion of ‘administrative collaboration’ (127–9).
16. For more on the strategy of empire building and alternative typologies of hegemonic rule, see Luttwak; Wendt and Friedheim; Findlay; Grossman and Mendoza; Kroener, Müller, and Umbreit; Koremenos, Lipson, and Snidal; Hart and Moore; Cooley; Mazower; Mnookin; and Mukhopadhyay.
17. For more on the methodology I used for determining the number and victimization rates of Jews in various countries, see Hollander 2015. Victimization rate tables (as well as discussions on the various methods of calculation) can be found in Hilberg 1985: Appendix B; Gutman: 1797-1802; Landau: 316; Levin: 715-718; Fein: 54-56; Seibel 2002b: 213; Dawidowicz: 403; and Niewyk 1997. Wolfgang Benz’s *Dimension des Völkermords* is also an invaluable resource for precise victimization statistics. Most of the rates listed in Table 1.1 are in agreement with those found in the aforementioned sources or in the existing literature on the individual countries. More detailed Jewish population and victimization statistics can be found in these sources and in the case study chapters of that follow. For the reasons discussed above, I have relied on sources that are most precise in their language about borders, time periods, and definitions of ‘victim’ and ‘Jew’.
18. Until the Allied landings in Normandy, Germany faced a more salient security threat along its eastern front. Germany might have also seen enhanced opportunities for economic exploitation in the industrialized West.
19. See Lemkin 1944; Fein 1979; Mann 2005; Seibel 2002b, c.

Scandinavia: The Banality of Goodness

“Never stand so high upon a principle that you cannot lower it to suit the circumstances.”

—Winston Churchill¹

The rescue of the Jews of Denmark is the stuff of legend. Books and movies, authors and even scholars have long reflected on what some have called ‘the most remarkable chapter in human history’—when tiny Denmark stood up to the most powerfully evil regime in human history, refused to bow to its pressure, and, in the nick of time, ferried over 7000 Jews (nearly the entire Jewish population) to safety in neighboring Sweden.

No doubt, the story is remarkable—especially when seen in the light of more ordinarily tragic events in Norway. But with time, the legend of ‘little Dunkirk’ has grown even larger than the events which inspired it. One story even has the Danish king wearing a yellow star on his sleeve in mockery and defiance of the Nazi decree that Jews wear this identifying badge. But the story is pure legend.² In fact, precisely because of Danes like King Christian X, the Germans never dared introduce the Jewish star decree in Denmark in the first place! Nevertheless, the legend lives on and, historically speaking, legends like this one have a tendency to grow. One historian even surmises that the events of October 1943 would have been included in the Bible had they happened in the time of Esther.³

But the ‘miraculous’ events of that fateful season did not fall upon the Jews of Denmark like *manna* from heaven. Rather, they were the

culmination of a policy of ‘negotiation’ which had dominated Danish–German relations since the occupation began in April 1940. Storywriters and mythmakers may wish to make the rescue of the Jews of Denmark a story of heroism and glory. But it was not this. On the contrary, this chapter endeavors to show that the ‘spontaneous’ rescue of Danish Jewry has its roots in something other than the national character of the Danish people. The Danish people may indeed have been less antisemitic and more democratic than many of their neighbors in Europe, and Danish Jews may have benefited from the massive and spontaneous show of support of their non-Jewish fellow citizens. But in Denmark, national character and political culture were merely the background for a unique institutional arrangement between the occupier and occupied. Ultimately, the ‘miracle in Denmark’ was made possible, not by the Danish people’s brave resistance to Nazi tyranny, but by their government’s close association with it. Here is indeed a ‘rare instance’, as Leni Yahil writes, ‘where the researcher must be careful not to overdo his enthusiasm for the rescuer, any more than he should overindulge his hatred for the persecutor’ (1969: p. xx).

By comparing the Danish myth with the prevailing situation in the rest of Scandinavia, I will show that the policy of ‘negotiation’ was itself responsible for the ultimate failure of Nazi operations in that country. Though the Danish government seldom showed much enthusiasm for its alliance with Nazi Germany, the fact of the matter is that ‘negotiation’ (which is institutionally indistinguishable from ‘collaboration’⁴) normally worked to the benefit of Denmark *and Germany* alike. ‘Negotiation’ no doubt saved the lives of countless Danes, Jew and gentile alike. But the policy only worked because it brought Denmark into the service of the German war effort. The policy of negotiation—which Denmark only gave up when prospects of a German victory grew slim, and then, for reasons having nothing to do with welfare of the country’s Jews—thus contributed (indirectly, but not insignificantly) to the suffering of Europeans elsewhere on the continent.

Denmark and Norway in Context

The ‘miracle of Denmark’ is given further life in comparisons with Norway, its Scandinavian neighbor. In few places is the comparison so stark. Both countries have a similar political culture and long histories of democracy and religious toleration. Both were constitutional monarchies—indeed, their kings, Christian X in Denmark and Haakon VII in Norway, were brothers.

Both countries figured similarly in Nazi racial ideology and German military objectives. Yet, while Denmark has (rightly) earned the distinction of the 'righteous among nations', the head of Norway's collaborationist government has lent his name to traitors and quislings for generations to come. While Denmark succeeded in saving nearly its entire Jewish population, Norway—which shared a land border with Sweden and which lay only further from Nazi killing centers in Poland—lost nearly half of its Jewish population to the Nazi genocide. This chapter elucidates why, despite such similarities, the Jews in Norway and Denmark fared so differently. Thus, it constitutes an integral part of this book's broader, comparative mission, which identifies the significant determinants of variation in Jewish victimization across the German sphere of influence during World War II.

The purpose of this chapter is to test my theory regarding victimization rate variation by applying it to one region, Scandinavia, and thereby controlling for the influence of other factors, including and especially domestic political culture and national attitudes about Jews. By comparing Denmark and Norway, two countries with a similar cultural heritage, similar political institutions, and similar traditions of democracy and religious tolerance, I qualify the role these attitudes played in determining the fate of the region's Jews. Instead, I will outline differences in the way Germany occupied and administered these two countries as key to their different victimization rates.

Thus, contrary to most reflections on the rescue of the Jews of Denmark, this chapter attributes the survival of Denmark's Jews, not to the national character of the Danish people or to the inherent religious tolerance of its political culture, but to the fact that the leaders of Denmark were willing to 'deal' with Nazi Germany, whereas the leaders of Norway were not. Because of Denmark's quick capitulation and continued cooperation with overwhelming German forces, the leaders of Denmark were permitted to stay in office and bargain with Nazi Germany under a policy of 'negotiation'. While this policy ultimately resulted in a softer occupation for the Danish people, it also required Denmark's close participation in the German war effort. Historical hindsight and the moral judgments that go along with it have helped us forget that the Danish policy of negotiation required a tragic (and morally questionable) choice: win for (some of) our citizens protection from Nazi persecution, but only at the cost of supplying and supporting German aggression elsewhere on the continent. This chapter demonstrates that Denmark's contribution to this aggression was more significant and more direct than most historical reflections suggest.

The Norwegian leadership made a very different, but equally difficult, decision in its response to Nazi terror. Despite enormous odds of defeat and a dramatically similar offer of peace for negotiation, Norway's leadership refused to make any such deal with Nazi Germany. Instead, Norwegian leaders continued the fight, striking a dramatic blow to the German military machine and leaving German forces (particularly, the navy) with a Pyrrhic victory that very well might have saved Britain for the Allied cause. But the resistance, so important for the Allied military effort, 'won' for the Norwegian people a brutal occupation, complete with all the horrible trappings of Nazi occupational policy so common in the rest of Europe: a fascist dictator, harsh military reprisals, and the familiar pattern of anti-Jewish persecution, deportation, and murder. As this chapter will endeavor to show, however, the terrible fate of Norway's Jews does not constitute a 'failure' in the attitude of the Norwegian people, who resisted German rule throughout and organized a rescue effort only more impressive in light of the lack of information and draconian conditions under which it was carried out. Reflections on the role of Quisling and the German-imposed government in Norway in this persecution forget that such a government was only imposed upon Norway because Norway's constitutional leaders—in contrast to their counterparts in Denmark—refused to act like the quislings in the first place.

Studies which emphasize the role of Danish national character in the rescue of that country's Jews often overlook the very ordinary and morally problematic decisions, compromises, and 'dirty deals' that made such an operation possible in the first place. Such accounts forget or (more often) underplay the fact that the rescue of the Jews of Denmark only came at a tremendous moral cost, a cost which put Denmark and other countries like it in direct service to the German war effort.

Explaining Victimization Rate Variation in Scandinavia

Why were Nazi efforts to deport and kill the Jews of Europe so much more successful in Norway than they were in Denmark? (See Table 2.1.) And how does Finland, which had an even lower victimization rate than Denmark, fit into this picture?⁵ As discussed in the previous chapter, the vast literature on the Holocaust provides relatively few generalizable explanations for victimization rate variation. Of course, included in many Europe-wide studies of the Holocaust, one can usually find

Table 2.1 Victimization statistics for Scandinavia

| | <i>Jewish population</i> | <i>Number (%) deported</i> | <i>Number (%) killed</i> |
|---------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Denmark | 7800 | 464 (5.9) | 60 (0.8) |
| Norway | 1800 | 763 (42.4) | 762 (42.3) |
| Finland | 2000 | 8 (0.4) | 7 (0.4) |

certain passages that refer to the victimization of Jews in Denmark and Norway. However, because Norway's victimization rate was *also* relatively low (compared to other occupied countries on the European continent), many historians point to *similarities* between Denmark and Norway or simply allude to the differences in passing.⁶ In the handful of studies devoted entirely to events in Scandinavia, attention is almost exclusively focused on the implementation of the Final Solution in one Scandinavian country or another, with very little in the way of comparative analysis.⁷

From the sparse comparative literature on the subject, I have been able to distill a number of distinct answers that are worthy of consideration. While each answer points to notable differences among the countries in question, each also falls short in one respect or another.

1. **Geography:** Escape from Nazi persecution was easier in Denmark due to the proximity of neutral Sweden.
2. **Timing:** The Norwegian arrests took place at an earlier stage in the war (October and November 1942) than did the arrests in Denmark (almost a year later). By the time deportation was finally attempted in Denmark, Germany was losing the war, rumor of Nazi brutality had spread, and Swedish 'neutrality' had shifted in favor of the Allies.
3. **Antisemitism:** The virtual absence of antisemitism in Denmark made the implementation of anti-Jewish measures virtually impossible in that country. Although miniscule relative to the rest of Europe, antisemitism was slightly more widespread in Norway—allowing for anti-Jewish legislation and eventually deportation.
4. **Political culture:** Traditions of democracy and religious toleration led to Denmark's complete rejection of Nazi antisemitism. In essence, most Danes did not distinguish between their Jewish and non-Jewish compatriots, leading to massive resistance (official and unofficial) to Nazi anti-Jewish policy.

Let us consider each of these possible explanations in turn.

1. **Geography.** Much has been made about the geography of Denmark, and how the lights of neutral Sweden were visible from Copenhagen, just across the Øresund waterway. Moreover, it is said, Norway's mountains, forests, and marshes made for a difficult escape (Hoidal: 170, 174). It is conceivable, then, that geography accounted for the difference between Denmark and Norway.

But the relative ease of passage from Denmark to Sweden seems, at best, to be a matter of dispute. The passage from Norway is, after all, a passage by land, while the sometimes freezing and always hazardous Øresund presents formidable challenges—even for those desperate to escape persecution. Indeed, a few scholars even suggest that escape was *more* difficult from Denmark than from Norway (Fein: 70; Hæstrup: 41). In any case, let us not forget that, when the unthinkable eventually became necessary, a few people drowned attempting the treacherous passage from Copenhagen.

Besides, the simple record of events shows that it is easy to make too much of potential differences in geography. All told, about 900 Norwegian Jews (i.e., about half the Jewish population) *did* escape deportation by fleeing to Sweden in late 1942. The fact that so many were able to do so suggests that Sweden was a viable escape option for Norwegian Jews as well. Clearly, the vastly different victimization rates of Denmark and Norway cannot be attributed to geography alone. Rather, escape to Sweden presented a dangerous but viable option to the Jews of Denmark and Norway alike, leading us to ask why those options were exploited so much more effectively in one case than another.

2. **Timing.** There can be no doubt that a striking correlation exists between the relatively early onset of deportations in Norway and the relative efficiency with which these operations were carried out. Indeed, in the case study of Denmark below, we will see exactly how the late onset of anti-Jewish actions in that country contributed not only to the near-complete failure of the deportations, but to Germany's difficulties regarding occupational administration in general. As we have seen, however, the relationship between timing and victimization rate does not hold up in Europe-wide comparisons. Moreover, explanations that rely on timing alone cannot account for the fact that deportations were not even attempted from Denmark until almost a year later than in the Norwegian case. While the delay in deportations certainly *contributed* to the rescue and ultimate survival of Danish Jews, a rigorous comparison

must also explain why deportations were carried out so much earlier in Norway than in Denmark.

3. **Antisemitism.** In explaining the survival of its Jews, most studies focus key attention on Denmark's long history of religious toleration and the virtual absence of antisemitism in that country. To be sure, Danish Jews had enjoyed full legal equality since 1814; and even to Nazi theorists, Denmark was a country that lacked 'proper understanding' of the Jewish Question. Is it possible that Norway's higher victimization rate can be attributed to higher levels of antisemitism in that country?

Probably not. It is easy to exaggerate the differences between Danish and Norwegian antisemitism. Despite discrimination in the distant past, Norwegian Jews had enjoyed legal equality since 1851. Throughout the 1930s, with antisemitism on the rise in much of Europe, Norway, along with Denmark, remained a place of relative comfort for citizens of any religious persuasion or ethnic background.⁸ Indeed, at the Wannsee Conference, the Foreign Office's representative, Martin Luther, warned of difficulties in Denmark and Norway alike. In both countries, the indigenous pro-Nazi parties were exceedingly small (hovering at around 2–3% of the vote); but, more to the point, these fascist parties, though pro-Nazi, were not particularly antisemitic.⁹ In fact, when Quisling finally implemented anti-Jewish legislation in Norway, a number of his own party allies resigned in protest. Clearly, antisemitism was not a salient political force in *either* of the countries in question; whatever minor differences the countries may exhibit in this regard cannot possibly account for the significant difference in outcomes. As we shall see, the difference between Denmark and Norway is not that one had antisemitism and the other did not, but rather that Denmark had powerful domestic institutions *through which* popular resistance to Nazi antisemitism could be directed. Opponents of antisemitism in Norway were relatively powerless in this regard.

4. **Political culture.** The most 'uplifting' explanation for the rescue of Danish Jewry is also the most common. Indeed, many accounts of wartime events in Denmark make some mention of the 'unique' democratic character of the Danish people, contributing to the notion of Danish exceptionalism and furthering the legend that Denmark constitutes a solitary 'ray of light' in the dark history of the Holocaust. The argument holds that Denmark's undeniable traditions of democracy and religious tolerance were put to the test under the strain of German occupation, but that eventually, the Danish love of freedom,

independence, and democracy won out—casting off the iron chains of German oppression and rejecting the persecution of all Danish citizens, especially and most symbolically, Danish Jews.¹⁰

In the last decade or so, a number of studies have begun to demythologize this vision of events in wartime Denmark.¹¹ Detailed accounts of Danish collaboration, of citizens and officials who gave succor to the Germans, and even new memoirs of the period are replete with stories of those who actively supported the occupation and those who simply made it possible. These accounts have helped balance the picture left by what some have called a ‘romantic view’ of events in wartime Denmark. This chapter continues in the demythologizing tradition, adding to it a more rigorous accounting of the costs and benefits of Danish negotiation and an explicit comparison with the situation in occupied Norway. Taking my lead from Hannah Arendt’s account of Eichmann’s evil, I see this explanation of events in occupied Denmark as a report on the banality of goodness.

Comparative reflections on the Nazi genocide that stress Denmark’s national character and religious toleration as causal factors in the survival of that country’s Jews suggest, by implicit comparison, that those principles were somehow lacking in Norway—the very country which suffered so thoroughly because of its uncompromising adherence to them. This project suggests that the Norwegian strategy of resistance, like ‘negotiation’ or ‘collaboration’ in Denmark, was just that, a strategy. And like any strategy, it required difficult choices: In Denmark, the leadership’s strategy was to defend its constituents, regardless of the compromising relationship with Nazi Germany such a strategy required. In Norway, the leadership’s strategy was to fight Nazi Germany even at great cost in Norwegian lives, Jewish or otherwise. This chapter (and this book) shows just what compromises each of these strategies required and suggests that the fate of a country’s Jews during World War II should therefore play a much reduced role in judgments of a country’s wartime behavior.

NORWAY

The Invasion of Norway and the Government’s Reaction

The occupation of Denmark and Norway was never Hitler’s primary concern. On April 9, 1940, however, he undertook the simultaneous invasion of Germany’s two northern neighbors, justifying his actions as a

pre-emptive and defensive move against an anticipated British invasion. In this sense, Hitler's objectives in the region were primarily military, and it may be safe to assume that, in Scandinavia at least, he prioritized security and stability over more 'ambitious' objectives like the Final Solution. But there also seem to have been ideological considerations for Germany's attitude in the region—namely, a Nazi belief that, as Nordic peoples, the Danes and Norwegians deserved treatment as allies. According to Norman Rich, the Nazis regarded the situation in both Nordic countries as comparable to that of Bavaria before 1871 and Austria before 1938. The hope was that both of these countries could eventually be brought into the greater Germanic community. To that end, the invasion and occupation were to be undertaken, not with an iron fist, but with a velvet glove.¹²

In Norway, however, the Nazi hopes were not to be realized. Instead of quickly capitulating in the face of German demands, King Haakon and his government fled the capital city, re-establishing themselves in the town of Elverum some 70 km north of Oslo. What followed was a diplomatic offensive led by the German Foreign Ministry through its diplomat in Oslo, Curt Bräuer. On the day after the invasion (April 10, 1940), Bräuer assured the Norwegian king that the Germans had come in peace. It was therefore up to His Majesty to retain his crown, return to Oslo, and accept a new government headed by the Norwegian fascist Vidkun Quisling or put his country and its citizens on the receiving end of a massive military onslaught.

The king was defiant, saying he would rather abdicate than accept the German demands. His government followed suit. Later that day, Norwegians heard their leaders' call for continued resistance against the German invader. A day later (April 11, 1940), after rejecting what German Foreign Minister Ribbentrop called 'one last chance [to come to] a reasonable agreement', German warplanes bombed the small village in which the king and government had taken refuge; the king himself narrowly escaped into a nearby forest. From there, he and his government were to head up the countryside, rallying the resistance along the way and eventually (in June) crossing the sea to set up a government-in-exile in London. Norway's constitutional leaders would continue to direct resistance activities from there.

As the king urged resistance, Norwegian military forces followed his lead. The army continued its fight in the mountains until the king's escape was secure, the Merchant Marine—the world's fourth largest—escaped to England and reassembled in service of the Allied cause, and the navy,

after working with British forces to inflict heavy losses on the German fleet, eventually made its way to Britain as well. Though victorious in the short term, the fighting in Norway left Germany severely handicapped. When the smoke cleared, the German navy had only three cruisers fit for action. Still more devastating, the escape of Norway's naval power meant that Germany could not commandeer these forces for an eventual invasion of Britain—an eventuality that, in Churchill's assessment, may even have affected the outcome of the war. As it turns out, official Norwegian resistance, though out-gunned and probably doomed from the start, was not futile. In refusing the proposed policy of negotiation, Norway lent a devastating blow to German war plans and may very well have tipped the balance of war in favor of the Allies.¹³

Setting Up a Government

Meanwhile, in Oslo, Vidkun Quisling, the leader of Norway's long-discredited fascist party, *Nasjonal Samling* (NS), saw the German invasion as a chance to take over. On the day German troops entered Norway, he appeared on Norwegian radio. Calling the king a traitor and accusing the elected leadership of the same, Quisling declared himself prime minister and presented a list of NS members as the country's new governing authority. As Quisling saw it, it was the duty of NS to 'defend the vital interests of the Norwegian people' (Rich 1974: 122). Quisling won the immediate backing of Alfred Rosenberg and even Hitler himself, leading to Hitler's request that Bräuer secure the king's blessing for the new Quisling government.

Unfortunately for Quisling, however, the approval he found in Berlin did not carry over to Norway, its people, or their leaders. As we have seen, the king and government refused to have anything to do with him—rejecting Bräuer's two proposals. German diplomats in Norway recognized Quisling's incompetence as well. And even a number of Quisling's own newly appointed ministers refused to rally behind him! Soon, word of Quisling's inability to find support made its way back to Berlin, and officials there began working on a new strategy.

Disillusioned by Quisling's incompetence and his complete inability to inspire obedience, Germany retreated from its original backing of Quisling within a week of the invasion and hastily arranged for something the Norwegians—king and citizen alike—might find more palatable. (Quisling's self-declared government had thus lasted all of six days.)

Working through the Supreme Court (on April 15, 1941), which had constitutional authority in the absence of king and parliament, Germany set up an Administrative Council composed of prominent members of Norwegian society, including the well-respected Governor of Oslo. The hope was that this proposal, and the conspicuous absence of anyone from Quisling's NS party, might entice the king to return.

But when the new and gentler proposal was presented to the king (on April 19, 1940), Haakon again refused.

With the second, more Norway-friendly offer rejected, Germany set about imposing a more direct form of occupational administration. Bräuer, the Foreign Office's man in Norway, was removed—and, with him, so too was Norway's formal independence. (Norway's *de facto* independence was already a thing of the past.) In his place, Hitler appointed the more radical and less accommodating Josef Terboven, a long-standing Nazi, as *Reichskommissar*¹⁴ of Norway. It was not long before Terboven made good on his reputation, imposing strict censorship and inspiring a press campaign aimed to discredit King Haakon and his government.

But even Terboven knew the potential costs of ruling Norway without at least the guise of home rule. Early on in the occupation, a top-secret memo from Himmler's office warned that 'Norwegians could only be won over by fellow-Norwegians' and thus recommended that the Quisling movement be 'supported and promoted by all available means [*mit allem Mitteln gefördert und gestützt werden*]'. Most importantly, the recommendation concludes:

With all the help we are prepared to provide Quisling and his people, we Germans must remain absolutely in the background. (NS19/1640: 2)

Well aware of this, Terboven continued Berlin's efforts to secure domestic cooperation. He called upon the Norwegian parliament (the Storting) to request the king's abdication and withdraw recognition from the government-in-exile, an action which would thus pave the way to appoint a new government. The Presidential Board of the Storting—many of its members, no doubt, eager to make arrangements that would prevent Quisling's ascension—sent the request.

Yet again, on July 8, 1940, the king refused.

Undeterred and persistent, Terboven continued his negotiations with the Storting until September 1940, when negotiations finally broke down.¹⁵ Furious with the uncompromising attitude of the Norwegians

(and it is worth remembering that he was dealing only with those Norwegians who had not left the country or joined the resistance!), Terboven finally put his foot down. In an address to the Norwegian people on September 24, he deposed the king and government-in-exile, appointed a new government, and outlawed all political parties except NS.¹⁶ Until February 1942, Norway would be governed by a 'headless' cabinet of Terboven (i.e., 'German') appointees. In the meantime, Quisling himself, not part of the new government but still the 'Fører' of his party, was waiting in the wings.

The fact that Germany made second and third offers is significant, and suggests that the hegemon is not the only decision-maker in matters of occupational administration. If Germany had infinite resources, the king's acquiescence would be immaterial, and Germany would simply impose the type of administration it desired. In the real world, however, occupiers are concerned, not just with the occupation itself, but with its cost. Germany knew that, especially in a country with a long tradition of democratic self-rule, public opinion might likely follow the lead of an elected parliament or a popular monarch. (And in this, Germany turned out to be correct.) Hence, Germany tried to secure their approval. It was only after Germany came face-to-face with the principled obstinacy of Norway's constitutional leadership that it imposed its will by force—a move that was to be costly for occupier and occupied alike.

Resignation and Resistance

With the battle lines drawn, the time had come for ordinary Norwegians to choose sides. For the most part, they followed the example set by their king and elected officials. When Terboven's Department of Justice appointee, Sverre Riisnæs, threatened to pack the court with judges positively disposed toward NS, the justices of the Supreme Court stepped down (December 1940). Predictably, Riisnæs proceeded to fill those vacancies as well. With the stroke of a pen, what happened to the government happened to the courts: The standing officials who refused to collaborate were simply replaced by those who would, with the result that both branches of government were now solidly staffed by 'Nazi' sympathizers.

The Supreme Court's resignation established a pattern that was to be reproduced throughout Norwegian society. In January 1941, the bishops of the Norwegian Lutheran Church openly defied Terboven's molestations. The association of Norwegian shipowners, trade unions, professional

associations, and even the Norwegian sports association all registered their disapproval with the regime. By May 1941, no fewer than 43 such organizations—representing some 750,000 members (i.e., about a quarter of the entire Norwegian population!)—openly declared their opposition to Terboven's encroachments. With each resignation, an NS appointee (at this point, often simply an opportunist) found his way to a position of leadership—but the organizations themselves, with fewer members and discredited leadership, were now only a fraction as representative or influential as they had once been.¹⁷

On the other hand, those who resigned from publically recognized positions often found their way in to the ranks of the growing resistance. By late 1941, strikes, riots, and sabotage in Norway had become the law of the land. Supported and encouraged by British forces and the Norwegian government-in-exile, the underground resistance in Norway also became an important part of the Allied war effort. Aside from boosting Norwegian morale, countering Nazi propaganda, and obstructing Quisling's attempts to consolidate power, the underground press even served as an important military function, communicating important directives from London after German authorities confiscated all radios (except those of NS members) in the autumn of 1941. By 1943, the underground press reached its peak, printing about 500,000 copies per month. The Norwegian resistance also scored a number of direct military victories, including the destruction of the Norsk Hydro heavy-water plant, a key facility in the German effort to create an atomic bomb. Additionally, throughout the war, the resistance smuggled goods to and from Britain and provided the allies with intelligence information and surveillance.¹⁸

But perhaps the most important function of the underground was its very existence. By lying in wait in a tenuously occupied Norway, German forces had to constantly be on guard. In fact, though the precise size of the force varied over the course of the war, Germany maintained up to 430,000 troops in occupied Norway—forces that were thereby unavailable for deployment on other, more active fronts (Meyer: 52n17). German fears of an Allied invasion along the Norwegian coast were heightened by the fact that Allied forces would include not only elements of the Norwegian military (continually trained in Britain after their escape and familiar with the Norwegian terrain) but also a home-grown, well-supplied force within Norway itself. As we shall see, the Norwegian resistance was also to play a crucial role in allowing more than half of Norway's Jews to escape to neighboring Sweden.

It is important to note, however, that Norwegian resistance did not arise out of a vacuum. According to Tore Gjelsvik (an important member of that resistance), the incipient resistance movement received ‘incalculable encouragement’ from the resignation of Norway’s constitutional leadership, especially the Supreme Court. With the Supreme Court’s personal consideration of the issue of collaboration and its firm and exemplary judgment against it, ‘illicit’ opposition in Norway was given an air of legality (Gjelsvik: 27). From then on, continued unrest in Norway—including military resistance, sabotage, and the threat that a reconstituted Norwegian army would participate in any British invasion—occupied and preoccupied German forces in the country, preventing their deployment to other theaters of operation. Thus, even after losing the battle and fleeing the country, Norway’s constitutional leadership made a significant indirect contribution to winning the war.

Setting the Stage for Quisling

Faced with growing unrest in Norway and growing threats from abroad,¹⁹ Terboven tried an alternative way of bringing his renegade province under control. On February 1, 1942, he appointed Quisling as Minister President of the theretofore ‘headless’ cabinet.²⁰ Terboven clearly sensed that by taking a step further into the background and appointing a Norwegian (however unpopular) as head of state, he might strengthen NS’s hand (and hence his own control over the deteriorating situation). By setting Quisling as the head of a puppet government, puppet and puppeteer alike would be able to nourish the idea that the road to national independence started with collaboration.

But the appointment of Quisling, a person so reviled at the beginning, did not come out of the blue. Since the arrival of German troops in Norway, Quisling’s party had been making steady progress—in part because of direct Nazi support and in larger part because, with the abolition of the Administrative Council, the Quisling movement was the only game in town. Numbering no more than 4000 at the time of the invasion, NS gained 7000 new recruits in the month of October 1940 alone (the month after all other political parties were outlawed). By the end of 1940, NS had 26,000 members. Just over a year later, it had 37,000.²¹ Clearly, even during the rule of Terboven and the cabinet he appointed (September 1940–February 1942), the stage was being set for Quisling’s ascension to power. And as Quisling was able to cumulate success after

success in recruitment, the potential benefits of appointing him began to outweigh the risks.

Quisling took little time in getting to work. Within a week of his inauguration, he set about establishing a national Teachers' Front as well as a Youth Company of the NS movement (the latter being modeled on Germany's Hitler Youth). Both efforts met with dismal failure: In a coordinated effort, 12,000 out of 14,000 teachers rejected compulsory membership in the Front. As an example to the others, close to 700 of the teachers were sent to an Arctic concentration camp for forced labor; but, even there and even with the constant reminder that joining the Front would secure immediate release, only a handful broke ranks. Efforts to introduce compulsory service in the NS Youth Company also had to be abandoned after massive opposition from teachers, parents, and the Church. Quisling also laid the foundation for Norwegians to provide direct economic and military service to the German Reich, but these efforts, too, failed to win popular support.²² The massive refusals certainly have their roots in Norwegian political culture, which, as we shall see, resembled Denmark's in its commitment to democracy and independence. But there can be no doubt that the very public refusal of Norwegian governmental institutions to cooperate with Germany also had its effect on the population at large.

Quisling's incompetence and his failure to put words into action (NS, after all, means 'National Unity') no doubt contributed to German hesitation when it came to giving him any more authority than it actually did. True, the inaugural activities of early 1942 included raising a Norwegian flag over Akershus Castle and the parliament building—a symbolic recognition that, once again, at least on paper, Norway had a government of its own. And later that year, Quisling assumed direct control over *Germanische SS Norge*, another voluntary military organization. But these developments were of little practical value and did not drastically change the relationship between subject state and empire.

Indeed, when it came to the project Quisling held most dear, a peace treaty with Germany and German recognition of Norway as an allied but nevertheless autonomous entity, Germany did not budge. Quisling's hope, of course, was that such a position would help establish his own personal authority and popularity among his people—since it would, in all actuality, add substance²³ to the claim that the road to independence led through his leadership. But German authorities, and especially Terboven, were not ready to hand over significant responsibilities to a person whose incompetence was demonstrated and loyalty, unknown. In January, June,

and September 1942, Quisling received ever more persistent ‘reminders’ that discussions aimed at ‘adjust[ing] ... relations between the Greater German Reich and Norway ... could only be of great disadvantage to the German-Norwegian relations’ (NMT XI: VDB 2B: Exhibit No. 76).²⁴ To my knowledge, he never brought up the issue again. For the rest of the war, Quisling was to remain a figurehead with little authority among his own people and little influence in the occupational bureaucracy.

The Final Solution in Norway

The attack on the Jews of Norway might best be understood in the context of Quisling’s aforementioned struggle for influence within the occupational bureaucracy. The Germans were clearly a little annoyed that Quisling had failed in the very aspect of his job they considered most important: bringing order to a recalcitrant populace. At the same time, Quisling himself had just been frustrated in his efforts regarding the issue he considered most important: establishing real autonomy for Norway. Thus, Quisling’s intensification of anti-Jewish activity in the fall of 1942 might be seen as his attempt to prove himself in the eyes of his supervisors, signaling to them his capability and trustworthiness in matters important to the Reich.

Of course, though anti-Jewish activity in Norway reached its fevered pitch in the later stages of 1942, it was nothing new. Almost immediately after the invasion, German authorities ordered the confiscation of all radios belonging to Jews and Jewish travel was severely restricted. Soon after Quisling took power, Jewish passports were stamped with a ‘J’ and, a month later, Jewish citizenship revoked. Throughout the period, Jews faced sporadic arrests and, in individual cases, deportation or execution. But it was in October and November of 1942 that events reached a climax: all Jews were required to register their whereabouts with Norwegian authorities and an order was issued for all Jewish males over 16 to be arrested. Forewarned by rumors, a few hundred escaped to Sweden. But in December 1942 and February 1943, two transports carried 532 and 238 Jews to Germany. Soon after the first round-ups, Norwegian church leaders issued a letter of protest to Quisling and denounced the illegal acts from pulpits around the country. Indeed, the anti-Jewish actions even led some members of Quisling’s own NS party to resign in protest!

As far as the perpetrators were concerned, anti-Jewish operations in Norway were a failure. Many Jews, over half, succeeded in escaping to

Sweden, helped by the resistance movement, a Swedish diplomat, and Norwegian police who let out word of the impending operation. Indeed, it is only in comparison with Denmark, Finland, and a handful of other countries that the anti-Jewish operations in Norway appear a tragic success.

As in Denmark, the failure was due to a number of factors: Sweden's proximity and willingness to accept refugees certainly helped; the local population, hostile to the persecution and already engaged in all forms of passive and active resistance, also lent a hand. Many Norwegian officials—including members of Quisling's own political party and the Norwegian state police—found the persecution distasteful, and therefore refused to participate or, just as effective, participated with a notable lack of enthusiasm. Indeed, even Quisling's ambition and nationalism may have gotten in the way, at least insofar as his earlier flirtations with unrelated issues (such as control over the nation's youth or political autonomy for Norway) directed his and Germany's attention away from the Jewish Question, at least temporarily. But these issues are all things that existed in Denmark as well, albeit to differing degrees.²⁵ If we are to discover why the Jews of Norway and Denmark fared so differently, we must look to the important differences between these countries, not the similarities.

Reflecting on the Norwegian Experience

The purpose of this section has been to point out five important features of the German occupation of Norway and the subsequent actions against Jews in that country. The first is to examine the position of Norway in the German occupational scheme, so as to compare its relative autonomy within the German command structure with that of other countries in the German sphere of influence. The observations indicate that Norway is somewhere near the center of the hierarchy spectrum: With Quisling and his NS party essentially imposed from above, the domestic Norwegian leadership owed its very political existence to Nazi Germany. Local officials in Norway therefore had considerably less room for maneuver than even their counterparts in France or post-1943 Italy. At same time, however, Norway's German-appointed administration was at least composed of local Norwegians and even had a (German-appointed) Norwegian head of state. This gives Norway at least the institutional framework of local autonomy, in contrast with the purely 'headless' administrations of Belgium and the Netherlands. Norway's relative autonomy from Germany, like the relative extent to which its Jews were victimized, demonstrates 'moderate'

tendencies in comparison with the experience of other countries across the continent.

Second, our look at the Norwegian case gives us some indication of how local leaders, even those with limited autonomy, could use their positions to hinder or delay the implementation of the Final Solution. In many ways, Quisling was a toothless puppet, but even toothless puppets have preferences and priorities. Thus, when it came to implementing Nazi policy, Quisling could, within certain limits, pick and choose the specific policies he would implement as well as the order and enthusiasm with which he would do so. In coming to power, Quisling's top priorities seem to have revolved around consolidating his own power as leader of a quasi-independent Norway. Thus, his first moves and the ones to which he gave the most attention concerned the establishment of a peace treaty with Germany and NS control over the educational system. For a new and precarious leader with questionable legitimacy and limited public support, the Jewish Question was a useless distraction. A peace treaty and a hand in molding a new generation of political leadership were obviously of more pressing value to the NS, if not to Berlin. Though a pretty reliable agent, Quisling still had his own priorities (control over the educational system and national autonomy), and he seemed prepared to insist upon these, even, to a certain extent, at the expense of his German overseers.

Third, we have looked at the establishment of the occupational relationship between Germany and Norway, not as an exogenous or idiosyncratic factor, but as the product of careful planning and strategy on the part of the powers involved. By doing so, we underscore the extent to which Quisling's government and Norway's subservient status were not simply matters of the availability of Nazi sympathizers (in Norway) or a hegemonic quest for absolute power (by Germany), but the result of a strategic decision on the part of Norway's democratic leadership—officials who decided that the wise and perhaps noble course of action was defiance in the face of an illegal occupation and continued resistance against the occupying power.

Fourth, we have seen that Norway's initial decision to resist the German invasion had important consequences on the further development of the occupation, if not on the war as a whole. Norwegian resistance—inspired in the early stages of the war by the defiance of those in positions of leadership—provided a constant headache for the occupying power and may very well have inspired the governments of Belgium and the Netherlands to follow a similar course. Thus, in addition to the damage caused to

German forces during the invasion itself and the contribution made by Norwegian shipping to the Allied cause, continual and intense underground activity did very real damage to German military operations and, just as important, tied down huge numbers of German troops—resources that may well have otherwise been used on other fronts. The resistance also made Germany's job in Norway more difficult, hindering the exploitation of Norwegian economic, strategic, and military resources.

Finally, I have provided a cursory assessment of Norwegian political culture and the role it played in the course of the occupation. Like Danish political culture, Norwegian political culture is remarkably democratic and has strong traditions of religious toleration and independence. In fact, it seems fair to say that Quisling came to power in Norway, not despite that country's powerful democratic tradition, but *because* of it—since it was ultimately the constitutional leadership's decision *not* to compromise those traditions that led to NS's establishment in the first place. Even after being imposed from above and in spite of the terrible penalties for disobedience, Norway's populace rejected NS rule and prevented its consolidation of power (at great cost to Germany) throughout the occupation. The Jews of Norway did not suffer because their country displayed a relative lack of democratic principles but because, unlike Denmark, Norway displayed a tenacious dedication to those principles and a willingness to make great sacrifices on their behalf.

It has long been known that Germany failed to meet its objectives to a considerable degree in *both* Norway and Denmark—one from the point of view of the occupation and the other from the point of view of the Final Solution.²⁶ But what often goes unnoticed is the tragic link between the two: For Germany, the occupation of Norway was disastrous from a military or economic point of view because the cost of the occupation may very well have outweighed the benefits that Germany could hope to derive from it. But Norwegian resistance only came at great cost to the people of Norway themselves, who, Jewish or otherwise,²⁷ experienced Nazi terror more directly precisely because there was no buffer administration to soften the blow of Nazi rule or negotiate on their behalf. In Denmark, on the other hand, local leaders negotiated for a particularly gentle occupation, the benefits of which were spread, in democratic fashion, among all Danish subjects regardless of religious affiliation. But 'negotiation' only came at a price, and Denmark essentially had to 'buy' its preferential treatment with promises and deliveries of everything from passive obedience to mass arrests of communists and very direct military and economic aid to the occupying power.

DENMARK

The Invasion of Denmark and the Government's Reaction

As we have seen, Norway was a pebble in the German boot from the early hours of the occupation. Denmark, occupied on the same day and given an identical offer of negotiation for capitulation, was quite the opposite. Indeed, at least in the beginning, Denmark proved to be a reliable partner in the German quest for influence in the region, a fact that was soon noted in Berlin and London alike. But Denmark's status as the 'model protectorate' (or as 'Hitler's little canary', as it was known by Churchill) won for its people a uniquely gentle occupation. By the time the policy of negotiation finally broke down (August 1943), the foundation for the escape of Danish Jewry was already in place.

In the early morning hours of April 9, 1940, Denmark's king, Christian X, met with senior cabinet officials and military chiefs of staff to discuss the urgent situation of the German invasion. Almost all agreed that resistance was futile and would only prolong and worsen the inevitable German occupation. Within two hours of the first border-crossings by German troops, the decision was made to call off all resistance. With merely a few dozen casualties on either side, Denmark sued for peace.²⁸ The king and prime minister issued statements, protesting the occupation, but also warning the population and those in authority that resistance could be met with German reprisals.

The German offer of velvet gloves for a quick surrender was not at all unique; almost identical conditions were presented to Norway on the very same day and, a month later, they were offered to Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg as well. But Denmark stood alone among the countries of Western Europe, not in its shock and indignation at the German violation of its neutrality, but in its quick acceptance of the German offer. Germany had given each of these countries an offer it could not refuse, but each except Denmark, even tiny Luxembourg, refused the offer anyway.

The turn of events quickly worked to the benefit of occupier and occupied alike. The Danish monarch, government, and parliament kept their positions of power—even three Jewish MPs continued to serve in their posts. The Danish military remained armed and in the country as well, while the German *Wehrmacht* quickly took up positions alongside—guarding the coast against a feared British invasion and using Denmark

as a stepping-stone for the battle against Norway, which continued to rage to the north.

As in Norway, the constitutional leadership's behavior found tacit approval among the population at large: So, while King Haakon's refusal to negotiate led to massive resignations in all walks of Norwegian society, King Christian's ostensible collaboration led to a great deal of lip-biting and a general attitude of wait and see (Fig. 2.1). Sure, there were individual Danes who went underground, escaped, or stored weapons away just in case. But, for the most part, governmental collaboration met with parliamentary and then popular approval, in the very least, because it saved Denmark from almost certain devastation.

Since it was formally dealing with a neutral country, Germany placed (or, rather, kept) Danish affairs under the purview of Ribbentrop's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (Norway's Reichskommissar, by contrast, reported directly



Fig. 2.1 King Christian rides his horse through the streets of Copenhagen. Contrary to legend, the king never wore a Jewish star. Still, he remains famous for his defiant attitude regarding the occupation. This photograph was taken on April 11, 1940, two days after the German invasion. (Photo Credit: AP Photo, Associated Press)

to Hitler.) The chief representative of German interests in Denmark was Cécil von Renthe-Fink, a career diplomat who had represented Germany in Denmark before the invasion. Renthe-Fink was a German nationalist, to be sure, and he remained ever faithful to his country's interests, but he was not, in fact, a Nazi. Thus, the German 'occupational administration' in Denmark (if one can even call it that) was not, as such, 'created from scratch, but developed out of the existing' German legation in Copenhagen (Dethlefsen: 33). Until 1944, Denmark was the only German-occupied country where the Foreign Ministry maintained control. The hands-off approach found approval along *Wilhelmstraße*, but especially in the Foreign Ministry, where officials knew that a breakdown in negotiation would inevitably lead to the encroachment of other ministries, most notably the Wehrmacht or the RSHA (the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt* or Reich Main Security Office).

Meanwhile, Renthe-Fink's counterpart in the Danish Foreign Ministry, the pro-German Erik Scavenius, publicly looked forward to a new era of Danish-German understanding and cooperation. Just a few months after the invasion, Scavenius delighted German ears when he declared:

The Great [*sic*] German victories which have struck the world with astonishment and admiration have begun a new era in Europe, which will bring with it a New Order in political and economic spheres under Germany's leadership. It will be Denmark's task herein to find its place in *mutual active cooperation* with Greater Germany. (As quoted in Petrow: 161; my emphasis)²⁹

To be sure, Scavenius' view was only one of many in the Danish administration. There were others, of course, who protested the occupation in no uncertain terms, and the king himself is famous for having shown the Germans a conspicuously cold shoulder. But as the Minister of Foreign Affairs (and a soon-to-be Prime Minister), Scavenius certainly had the bureaucratic capacity and a moral authority to set the tone for Denmark's place in and Danish attitudes toward the expanding German Reich. Either way, the statement certainly went some way to assure Germany that it would have the active support of at least some in the Danish administration.

What Denmark Gave

But Danes could not work in such close contact with Germans without at least getting dirty hands. And soon, Denmark was expected to pay a lot more than lip service to Germany's new world order.

Denmark's first contribution to the German world order was simply its continued provision of the costs of governance. While Germany required an administrative force of 3000 persons to keep Norway's 2.8 million inhabitants in line (and even that proved insufficient!), the 'occupational administration' in Denmark (that is to say, the German diplomatic mission there) required a mere 100–200 persons—and that, for a total population of four million. Indeed, the very fact that locals were at the helm in Denmark no doubt led to the comparatively passive response of that country's population: Serious unrest in Denmark (in the form of strikes or riots) was virtually unheard of until the summer of 1942; violence (in the form of sabotage) remained rare until 1943. In a letter to his superiors, Werner Best, Renthe-Fink's replacement, recognized London's hopes that Danish saboteurs might one day bring about 'Norwegian conditions' in their country. (NS19/2111: p. 16: '*die Aufträge aus London dahin lauteten, dass in Dänemark eine ... "norwegische Zustände" herbeigeführt werden sollten.*') But for the moment, London's hopes found only scant realization: Denmark remained calm until the spring of 1943, when the fortunes of war turned to favor the Allies. With the Danish government still in power, this occupied country was essentially paying the costs of its own administration; these were costs that Germany would otherwise have to assume. And because *Danes* (rather than Germans) took part in the actual business of administration, resistance was discouraged and the actual costs of that governance remained lower to begin with. With Denmark as a model, it is little wonder that Germany tried so hard to retain and then resurrect the rule of locals in Norway as well.³⁰

Danish officials could not stay in office, however, without occasionally bowing to German pressure. The initial concessions seemed minor enough. Moderate press censorship was introduced, although it was handled by Danish authorities under (weak) German supervision. A few politicians, including Christmas Møller,³¹ were forced to resign due to their anti-German attitudes. And the Wehrmacht secured the appointment of a police minister it found more acceptable. In fact, Denmark was even forced to bow to German pressure by implementing (minor) anti-Jewish legislation: In the first month of the occupation, a Jewish publication was suspended along with all lectures on Jewish topics to the general public. Jews even lost the right to hold communal meetings, although religious services were exempted from the ban.³²

But the concessions soon reached relatively important matters of foreign policy. In July 1940, Germany pressured the king to replace the pacifist

Peter Munch with Erik Scavenius as Danish Foreign Minister. (Indeed, it was upon assuming this position that Scavenius made the astonishingly pro-German address, quoted above.) With Scavenius' assignment to this portfolio, the chief Danish minister in charge of relations with the Reich was essentially a German appointee.

After the invasion of the Soviet Union (June 1941), Germany used these ties in the Danish administration to secure help in the struggle against 'International Bolshevism'. Denmark broke off diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union; Danish police arrested hundreds of communists; and even the Danish parliament authorized a purge of its communist members, outlawing the small communist party and throwing three communist MPs into a prison camp. On November 25, 1941, Denmark became a signatory of the Anti-Comintern Pact—a treaty that bound members in an international struggle against communism. At first, the treaty faced stiff opposition in the Danish cabinet; but after Germany flexed its muscles and threatened to cancel the policy of negotiation, Denmark gave in. (Foreign Minister Scavenius supported the issue from the start.)

Surely, for Denmark, these were relatively minor concessions: They were mostly symbolic, and, much to Germany's chagrin, Denmark generally found ways to water down their destructive effect before or during implementation.³³ Moreover, we might easily imagine that at least some Danish officials were only too happy to get rid of their communist colleagues anyway, and happier still that German influence provided them with an excuse to do so. Still, the fact that Denmark made *any* concessions whatsoever is proof that 'neutrality' for Denmark was only an approximation. Political influence knows no borders and throws the very concept of sovereignty into question.

Denmark also provided economic benefits to the German Reich. As a relative oasis in a Europe torn by war, Denmark was able to maintain solid agricultural production and a relatively stable economy. Indeed, almost the entirety of Denmark's agricultural surplus found its way to Germany, especially meat and butter. Of course, the supply of these goods was not so much an expression of Danish-German 'partnership' as it was disguised theft: Germany 'paid' for these goods with *Reichskreditkassenscheine*, that is, promissory notes (notes drawn from the 'credit-fund' of the Reich); and, by the end of the war, even the fiction of trade was dropped in favor of outright confiscation. Nevertheless, Denmark was more fortunate than most occupied countries in this respect: Outright confiscation began much later than in other places and compulsory labor was never introduced.

Even so, 124,000 Danes *did* make their way to Germany as foreign workers. In addition to relieving Denmark's own unemployment woes, the exodus of workers provided much-needed assistance to the German war economy.

Denmark's supply of military equipment and even personnel to Nazi Germany was significant and sometimes quite direct. Soon after taking over from Renthe-Fink as the highest-ranking German in the land, Werner Best was anxious to show that even tiny Denmark was doing its part to help the German cause. He was therefore pleased to announce that the Danish army had supplied the Wehrmacht with 60,000 rifles and bayonets, almost 1000 machine guns, mortars, munitions, and a host of other goods necessary for the war. The Danish navy also provided Germany with a number of ships, particularly torpedo boats. But Denmark contributed more than hardware to the German war effort. The Danish army led the charge against saboteurs, partisans, and 'traitors'; in other countries, Germany had to perform this task itself.³⁴ Moreover, at the time of Best's report, 2000 Danes were working for the *Luftwaffe* directly and 3300 had joined the *Waffen-SS*. Meanwhile, the Free Corps Denmark and various successor organizations (not unlike Norway's *Germaniske Norge*) saw action on the Eastern Front. As in Norway, these German-inspired and German-supported paramilitary organizations never attracted broad support; but again, their very existence—and the fact that they were largely created, sanctioned, and sometimes encouraged by local authorities—demonstrates that occupied countries were willing to offer military assistance in various forms so as to preserve a certain degree of autonomy or to forestall further German military incursions.

By the time of his semi-annual report, then, Best could point to the success of the policy of negotiation. 'In matters of foreign policy,' he proudly reported to his superiors in Berlin, the '[Danish] government is unequivocally oriented [*eindeutig ... ausgerichtet*] towards constructive cooperation and close ties with the Reich' (NS19/2111: p. 18). Surely, Best and his cohort faced certain limitations. But, for the time, those limitations were a price Germany was willing to pay for the quiet cooperation of strategic and relatively prosperous Denmark. The policy of negotiation imposed limits on both parties; but, like any trade, it also provided both with undeniable benefits. Germany won Denmark's quiet acquiescence, but only by agreeing not to push its more unpalatable demands; and Denmark purchased a uniquely gentle occupation by seeing the bargain for what it was, and (usually, reluctantly, quietly, but also willingly)

accepting it. The compromise benefited ordinary Danish citizens as well, or at least those who were not communist MPs. The policy of ‘velvet gloves’ certainly came at a price, but it was a price that both countries were willing to pay, at least for the moment.

What Denmark Got

In the previous section, we outlined the contributions and compromises that Denmark made in order to establish and secure its unique place in the German world order. But we have only briefly considered the benefits that such a policy entailed for Denmark. Sure, the policy of negotiation secured a gentle occupation for the Danish government and its constituents—no small reward, given undeniably harsh occupational conditions elsewhere in the empire. But other than the velvet gloves with which it was handled, how did Denmark really benefit from its deal with Nazi Germany?

In the most superficial sense, collaboration created very real opportunities for Denmark’s political entrepreneurs, people who, after all, could not continue to rule *in absentia*. Whereas Norway’s state employees essentially quit their jobs rather than work under new supervision, Denmark’s politicians continued working through the change in regime—and began walking the fine balance between the demands of the political market and those of the new management. In other words, collaboration brought with it continued—and sometimes even enhanced—opportunities for leadership. But these opportunities could only be exploited by leaders who found the new conditions tolerable.

Of course, collaboration meant more than the ability to exploit opportunities that were already available; in certain cases, it meant the creation of new ones. As we have already seen, the establishment of negotiation with Germany was followed, in relatively short order, by the arrest of political ‘undesirables’, including three communist members of parliament. (Indeed, their arrest was approved by a majority of their parliamentary colleagues.) But we should bear in mind that the dismissal of communist MPs left empty seats that were soon filled by members of other political parties. In the previous section, I characterized the removal of communists from political influence as a costly concession that Denmark (reluctantly) made. To others, the removal of communists from public life may not have been a cost of negotiation, but a reward.

Denmark also won important concessions regarding the ethnic German minority who lived within the country. Quickly after the cessation of

hostilities and the establishment of ‘negotiation’, ethnic Germans living in North Schleswig were instructed to cease all anti-Danish activities, including their agitation for frontier rectification in favor of Germany. This was quite a significant development given that, in the years leading up to the war, the German minority had been one of Berlin’s major bargaining chips for influence in Danish politics (Weiß: 168). The German action also shows quite clearly the extent to which the occupier was willing to make very real concessions to crucial and cooperative members of its new world order. Like Germany’s fellow Axis powers (Finland, Hungary, Italy, Romania, and Bulgaria), Denmark received what amounted to a territorial reward for its part in the German effort—a guarantee that it would not have to relinquish territory inhabited by ethnic Germans.

One of the more subtle, but nonetheless important, accomplishments of the policy of negotiation was the fact that pre-emptive cooperation allowed Denmark to set the political agenda in a way its non-cooperative neighbors could not. Soon after signing the Anti-Comintern Pact in November 1941, Scavenius returned to meetings with other members of Denmark’s governing council. At these discussions, it was resolved that Denmark would not give way to German demands regarding three important issues:

1. Joining the Axis powers.
2. Introducing anti-Jewish legislation.
3. Dispatching the regular Danish army to the Eastern Front.

Thus, within the policy of negotiation, Denmark was able to establish three issue areas that were, quite literally, non-negotiable (Yahil 1969: 49). Communists, anti-Germans, and the free press were essentially sold out in favor of Jews, the standing army, and Denmark’s official neutrality. After this, it was generally established that the Jewish Question was a non-starter (Hæstrup: 32). By taking such a firm stand on the Jewish Question, by explicitly stating that, even in a policy of compromise, some things are beyond bounds, Denmark sent a clear signal to the occupying power that among the costs Germany paid for reliable cooperation was the postponement of the Jewish Question in Denmark. Thus, insofar as timing is indeed a determining factor in victimization rate, we see the importance of treating it as an *intervening* variable rather than a causal one. Germany’s decision to postpone the implementation of the Final Solution in Denmark as well as Denmark’s ability to force such a postponement

were ultimately products of the policy of negotiation itself. It is thus to the credit of Denmark's leaders that, of all the issues about which they could draw a line in the sand, they chose, among other things, to protect their Jewish constituents.

Denmark was clearly able to set the agenda of negotiation to the benefit of its Jewish citizens, but cooperation with Germany allowed Denmark another more subtle and perhaps more important concession from the occupying power. Throughout the period of collaboration, Denmark exercised a remarkable ability to implement Nazi policy reluctantly and to enforce it with little enthusiasm. This was perhaps the single most important accomplishment of Danish negotiation—and the one that had the most beneficial effect for the country's Jews. Like many collaborationist countries, Denmark negotiated a number of concessions from Nazi Germany. But the implementation of each concession was, itself, negotiable. Denmark could impose press censorship, but not enforce it. It could arrest communists, but treat them well or release them upon arrival. It could even (as we have seen) outlaw Jewish communal meetings but allow religious services to continue. In other words, occupied Denmark often assumed the distasteful responsibilities of being a Nazi collaborator; but, just as often, Denmark displayed a tendency to shirk on those responsibilities. One of the most impressive accomplishments of Danish policy during the war, then, was not Denmark's outright refusal to implement horrible policies at the behest of Nazi Germany, but its tendency to enforce those policies with so little enthusiasm. The right to implement policies unenthusiastically was, itself, part of the deal.

Of course, the very nature of a policy that relies upon a fiction—in this case, the fiction of unqualified Danish sovereignty—is that particular exchanges, bargains, and deals between the two powers cannot be spelled out explicitly. To do so would be to expose the subterfuge for what it is. Hence, it could probably never be conclusively established that Danish leaders signed the Anti-Comintern Pact *so as* to help local Jews. However, it seems entirely possible—in fact, probable—that many leaders concluded: If we do things *like* signing the Anti-Comintern Pact, the Germans will allow us more leeway in other policy matters. Unspecific 'deals' of this sort were acknowledged by both sides throughout the years of negotiation. Indeed, soon after the occupation, Thorvald Stauning (the Danish prime minister at the time) lamented: 'We will be forced to do many things for which people will afterward spit at us, if we are to bring Denmark unscathed through this period.'

The Breakdown of Negotiation

As we have seen, the policy of negotiation was beneficial to Germany and Denmark alike. While it required cost and sacrifice on the part of both partners, it also won for both significant benefits. But under pressure of war, the relative costs and benefits of that policy began to shift. As Germany found itself with new enemies (the Soviet Union and the USA) and new theaters of operation (the Eastern, African, and Italian fronts), and as battlefield losses (in contrast with early and striking victories) began to mount, the chances of ultimate German victory diminished. Thus, at the very same time Germany became more desperate for the economic and military help, countries like Denmark became ever more worried about having backed the wrong horse. As Germany slowly removed its velvet gloves, Denmark worried about its status in the Anglo-American (rather than the German) world order.

On May 3, 1942, Thorvald Stauning, the Danish prime minister during the formulation of the policy of negotiation, died. He was replaced by Vilhelm Buhl, a prominent Social Democrat. And while Buhl cautiously continued to enforce the policy he inherited, his lack of enthusiasm for the occupying power was never far from the surface. Ordinary Danes saw through the fiction and grew ever more defiant.

In the summer of 1942, militiamen from the Free Corps Denmark were greeted with riots as they returned from the Eastern Front. Hoping the Germans would turn to him much as they had turned to Quisling in Norway, Frits Clausen, head of DNSAP (the Danish National Socialist Workers Party), threw his thugs into the mix to exacerbate the unrest. But the riots were quickly suppressed, and Clausen continued to be ignored. Soon after the riots, however, Germany grew anxious to set things straight in what had, for so long, been its model protectorate. German authorities decided it was time for some changes: First, the even-tempered commander of German forces in Denmark, General Erich Lüdke, was replaced by the more hard-nosed General Hermann von Hanneken. Then, after concocting a diplomatic crisis, Ribbentrop recalled the long-standing diplomat to Denmark, Renthe-Fink, and replaced him with SS *Gruppenführer* Werner Best. All of a sudden, a non-Nazi with a personal affinity for the Danish people was replaced by a career Nazi with police chief and Gestapo experience. Just before his departure for Copenhagen in October 1942, Best received Hitler's instruction to 'Rule with an iron hand'. The policy of negotiation was to continue and Denmark would still be considered a neutral, but the velvet gloves were clearly starting to come off.

Within a month, Best made his presence known. He pressured the king to dismiss Buhl, the Social Democrat, and replace him with Scavenius, the Foreign Minister who had long impressed Berlin with his pro-German stance. (Scavenius accepted the premiership, but retained his post as Foreign Minister as well.) Scavenius went on to appoint a cabinet that Germany would find acceptable. The Allied press reacted with fury, calling the new prime minister a 'Pro-Nazi' and a 'Quisling Dane'.

The role of Denmark's constitutional leadership (particularly the king and parliament) in the government shake-up is an interesting and relevant factor, although not one that is well understood or widely reported. Best began by securing the king's approval for the change in regime, and the new government required the continued confidence of the parliament it represented. Although the changes were arguably made under duress, the decision to placate the Germans was, formally speaking, a decision of Danish authorities. By seeing Scavenius' promotion as the product of negotiation and, thus, the legal responsibility of Denmark's elected leadership, however, we reveal yet another situation where Denmark's leaders were willing to compromise in a way that Norway's were not.³⁵ Concessions like these allowed the Danish government to hang on to power for almost another year. In the meantime, that very government would constitute a continuing bulwark for the protection of Denmark's Jews.

Over the course of 1943, however, 'principled' opposition to the policy of negotiation began to grow. In January 1943, Germany surrendered in the battle of Stalingrad. With time, Danes grew sour to the policy of negotiation; outright threats encouraged the process. In early 1943, the BBC broadcast the following warning to the Danish people:

The entire attitude taken by official Denmark may prove fatal for the future position of Denmark in postwar Europe, if the Danish nation does not in time, in an unequivocal manner, make it clear to the free world that it is wholeheartedly on the side of the united nations.

It would not be long before ordinary Danes finally heeded the call. By the spring of 1943, acts of sabotage, theretofore almost unknown in Denmark, were finally on the rise (Petrow: 186–8). Allied victories and threats were finally doing what moral pressure could not: turning Denmark against the German cause.

But the situation in Denmark was far from desperate, and Danish resistance was still only a fraction of what it was in most of occupied Europe,

especially Norway. Indeed, Best even discusses the ‘Sabotage Wave’ in his report to Berlin of May 1943, quickly adding that *Danish* police were fighting the problem ‘energetically and successfully’ and had already arrested a large number of saboteurs (NS19/2111: 16). Though there were early signs that some Danes were tired of giving in to German pressure, most continued to back their government and its policy.

This sentiment found confirmation in the parliamentary elections of 1943, which turned out to be a stunning endorsement for the status quo. With a grand coalition already in place, no party gained or lost more than a couple seats. Even the biggest winner, the Conservatives, gained little more than 3% of the vote—corresponding to just five MPs. Another electoral surprise was the poor showing of the Danish ‘Nazi’ party, Clausen’s DNSAP. Despite years of German backing, DNSAP’s share of the vote remained a paltry 2%, entitling it to just three seats in parliament.³⁶

DNSAP’s failure to gain influence under German occupation might also be considered a consequence of the policy of negotiation. Soon after the invasion, Renthe-Fink began pumping money into DNSAP to the tune of 600,000 kroner per month, much as his counterpart had done for Quisling’s party in Norway. But DNSAP failed to make any significant inroads and, in fact, attracted fierce opposition among the populace at large. With other political parties alive and well (in contrast with Norway, where they had been abolished), DNSAP was not very useful—even to the politically ambitious—and its opponents in government could counter it from a position of strength. Eventually, even the Germans gave up on what they clearly considered a losing cause. For the moment, DNSAP could only hurt their position in occupied Denmark. Besides, Germany did not really need the help of a single, small party of largely disenfranchised extremists; the major parties were answering Germany’s most important demands anyway; and, as the elections show, they did so with the broad support of their constituencies.

As it turns out, however, the support was for a winning policy, not a pro-German one. And so when Germany continued to lose on the battlefield, the fickle Danes contributed to its troubles. In the summer of 1943, a dockworkers’ strike in Odense ignited a flurry of riots and anti-German sabotage reached a new peak. General von Hanneken called for vigorous repressive measures; but Best, hoping to preserve the relative dominance of the foreign ministry over the Wehrmacht, was anxious to let cooler heads prevail. In the eyes of officials in Berlin, however, Best’s advice was too little, too late. Best was recalled to Germany for a stern reprimand

from his boss, Ribbentrop, who was furious that his model protectorate was now in a state of chaos. Best returned to Copenhagen with a strict ultimatum for the Danish government.

The ultimatum consisted of two parts. One, directed against the city of Odense specifically, imposed heavy fines and curfews and ordered the arrest of those responsible for the riots. The second provision was of a more general nature, and included, among other things, press censorship under *German* control, the imposition of a state of emergency, and the establishment of the death penalty for acts of sabotage.

On August 28, 1943, the Danish government unanimously rejected the proposals and stepped down—even Scavenius eventually being won over to the side of outright resistance. Within hours, Hanneken imposed the state of emergency that the Danish government would not: cutting telephone lines, arresting hostages, disarming the Danish military, and deporting the long-interned Danish communists to Germany. The policy of negotiation was dead.

Just before being placed under house arrest, the king—who had approved of the government's rejection of the ultimatum—called in the administrative secretaries of the various ministries. Afraid of a complete power vacuum, he enjoined them to continue in their posts, and thus contributed an air of constitutional legitimacy to Denmark's 'headless' administration. The move was important, because it gave Denmark, even in this desperate hour, a 'government' of sorts, albeit one with only a modicum of power. The difference is crucial, because it reminds us that, even after the abandonment of the policy of negotiation and the resignation of its elected officials, Denmark retained its own administrative bureaucracy. The situation in Denmark after August 1943 was thus comparable to that in Belgium or the Netherlands throughout the war. Post-August 1943, Denmark had somewhat more autonomy than a completely occupied country that lacked even a domestic administration, but it had somewhat less than even pre-1942 Norway, where a cabinet of Norwegians headed the administrative bureaucracy (albeit a cabinet of German choosing). As in Norway, however, outright unrest reached massive proportions as soon as the reality of German hegemony became clear.

The Final Solution in Denmark

The next few months in Denmark were difficult ones for occupier and occupied alike. As in Norway (though to a lesser degree), the government's

resignation was followed by an increase in resistance among the populace at large. Sabotage operations more than doubled in the month of August alone. Thus, the breakdown of negotiation meant that Germany's task in this occupied country became increasingly difficult. Soon, Gestapo police battalions flooded a country that had theretofore been administered by only a small detachment of ordinary diplomats. Soon, Danish citizens, who had theretofore been under the caring eye of their own elected officials, increasingly found themselves under the watchful gaze of hard-liners from the RSHA. The situation was no different for Denmark's Jews, who, until the government step down, had continued to live in Denmark in a sort of anxious tranquility.

Ironically, the first move against Denmark's Jews came at the behest of Werner Best himself—a man who had, until that point, joined in resisting Berlin's Jewish-related demands on the grounds that they would provoke unrest. On September 8, 1943, as disquiet in Denmark reached a fevered pitch, Best suggested to his superiors in Berlin that the current state of emergency in Denmark provided an opportunity for the deportation of Denmark's Jews.³⁷

The lead-up to the deportations—which, in the meantime, had been scheduled for the night of October 1 (the first night of the Jewish New Year, when most Jews could be expected to be at home)—would demonstrate the extent to which all elements of the occupational bureaucracy regarded the imminent anti-Jewish actions as a political hot potato. Best's petition to Hanneken for troop reinforcements was met with a cold shoulder. So too was Best's request that Hanneken issue a decree requiring Jews to report for 'work' at Wehrmacht offices. Best was thus deprived of a way to get Jews to report for deportation 'voluntarily' as well as the manpower necessary to conduct round-ups by force. Thus, the only avenue left for Best was a door-to-door search, an operation he himself would soon sabotage by forbidding police from breaking into Jewish homes.³⁸ In a letter to Hitler, Ribbentrop, too, registered his reservations, as did the German navy—which still had hopes of recruiting sailors from among the interned Danish servicemen. Finally, when Best informed Georg Duckwitz, the German shipping attaché in Denmark, of the upcoming operation, Duckwitz—a long-time friend of the Danes who feared such an operation would irreparably harm Danish-German relations—leaked word of the imminent round-ups to prominent Danish politicians, men who, in turn, informed the president of Denmark's Jewish community.

Not surprisingly, the operation was an utter fiasco. An understaffed German police force, hampered by Best's order not to knock down doors, discovered that most of Denmark's Jews were already in hiding. A mere 284 Jews were taken into custody on the first night, largely those who were too ill to hide or escape or those who were simply in denial. Further arrests brought the total to 475, a figure which still represented a mere 6% of the Denmark's total Jewish population. After the fiasco, Best attempted to put the best possible face on the results, claiming that the objective of the operation was not to seize a great number of Jews, but to make Denmark *Judenrein*—an objective which was ultimately achieved.

For the Jews, the horribly eventful evening was only a beginning. They still had to make it to Sweden. Through the efforts of Danish physicist Niels Bohr, who personally intervened with the Swedish king, entry to Sweden was assured for all who could make it—and that left matters up to the sailors and the resistance.³⁹ Of course, smuggled passage to Sweden on a fishing boat was not free. In the early days of the flight, before routes and prices became regularized, fares ranged from 1000 to 10,000 kroner (\$150–\$1500) per person, while some captains took advantage of the situation and the fear—extorting as much as 46,000 kroner (\$6900) from those who were rich and desperate enough to pay. In the end, however, the average fare came to about 500 kroner (\$100) per person, something that most at the time considered reasonable, given that fisherman did in fact put themselves and their vessels at risk. Eventually, the resistance took part in what turned out to be a massive operation. Donations were collected, money was channeled, and a loan was secured against the assets of the Jewish community. A handful of escapees were intercepted on their way to the docks. Another few drowned while attempting the treacherous passage. But, in the end, over 7000 people (5919 full Jews, 1301 'part Jews', and 686 non-Jews with Jewish spouses or family) made their way to safety. Fewer than a hundred Jews remained in hiding in Denmark itself.⁴⁰

Crucial to the entire operation was the utter lack of gusto demonstrated by nearly everyone in the German chain of command. German officials from all departments in the occupational bureaucracy sabotaged the operation, even their own contributions to it. Though the escapes by sea were essentially an open secret, the German naval commander for the port in Copenhagen decided that his entire fleet of patrol boats was due for 'repairs' at the very moment when the smuggling operation was at its peak. Jewish residents of Copenhagen report sleeping through the raids, and only finding out later that the Germans had come their way. Ordinary soldiers and

even Gestapo officers refused to take part in the operation or simply looked the other way. Whatever the reason for this monumental breakdown in the Teutonic work ethic—promises of Allied victory and retribution, knowledge of the fate of deportees, even a genuine ‘change of heart’—the motives of German officials in Denmark are only part of the story, and their actions must be seen within the wider context of the occupation. In Denmark, Jews took advantage of a sympathetic population and escape routes to Sweden at a time when knowledge of Nazi criminality was widespread. These factors combined to make the German operation a failure, saving both the bulk of Danish Jewry and Denmark’s postwar reputation. None of this would have been conceivable had Danish leaders, like their Norwegian counterparts, been crushed or expelled in the early stages of the war.

As a final epilogue on the Danish case, the relatively few Jews who actually *were* captured and deported were taken to the German ‘show-camp’ at Theresienstadt in Czechoslovakia. At this transit and prison camp, far from the killing center at Auschwitz, the Danish prisoners found themselves under the attention and supervision of their fellow citizens and governors in Denmark. Charitable organizations, private benefactors, and even the Danish Department of Social Welfare organized the regular shipment of packages. Later, at the behest of the Danes, the Red Cross inspected the camp. And, for the duration of the war, various sectors of Danish society lobbied for their release. Ultimately, the advocacy and oversight were effective. Not one of the Jews deported from Denmark—not even the stateless Jews—was taken to the death camps (Hæstrup: 51–2). By war’s end, only 51 prisoners had died, a surprisingly small number given that most of the Danish Jews deported in the first place were those too sick or elderly to escape.

The survival of the Danish Jews, even those in Theresienstadt, was a final slap in the face for German authorities in Denmark. In fact, it represents a lasting consequence of Christian X’s camouflaged defiance. Just after the government’s resignation and just before his arrest, the Danish king gave his blessing to a ‘replacement government’ of sorts—a cabinet of administrative secretaries—bureaucrats who had, until that time, been seconds-in-command of the various state ministries. (The king’s concern had been that, without these people, Denmark would be subjected to even more direct German rule with even less governmental protection.) In the end, the king’s caution paid off. After the Danish Jews were deported, the administrative secretaries played a pivotal role in the follow-up efforts to protect them. These Danish authorities were behind the constant

monitoring, the lobbying, the inspections, and even the prisoners' eventual release. (They were released early, on white busses that made their way to Sweden. Their release was part of Himmler's attempt to negotiate a separate peace with the Allies.) The lesson is that local governments, no matter how weak, could play a role in protecting their citizens. The fact that, even in this position, Danish authorities were able to protect their citizens suggests that Germany, even after revoking formal autonomy from a country's elected government, was still willing to make concessions for the sake of smooth administration.

Reflections on the Danish Case, and on Reflections Generally

Reflecting on the Danish case, it is easy to forget how little Jews had to do with most of the events in this story. The lapse of memory is easily understood: The two most important works on the subject are Leni Yahil's *The Rescue of Danish Jewry* and Leo Goldberger's *The Rescue of the Danish Jews*.⁴¹ Another book is named after the events of *October 1943*—that is to say, not 'August'. But what the lapse of memory hides is that so many of the events crucial to the rescue of Danish Jewry had nothing to do with Jews at all. Resistance to German pressure within the ranks of the Danish government seems to have been influenced more by Germany's fate on the battlefield than by Germany's threat to the Jews. The resignation of the Danish government, which sparked off the massive wave of public resistance, was a *precursor* to the anti-Jewish actions, not a reaction to them. Indeed, even the ultimatum of August 1943, which led to the government's resignation, was a German bid for Danish help in *counter-sabotage* operations, and had no specifically Jewish component. This point is not unnoticed in the literature. Indeed, a number of scholars contend—quite rightly, I believe—that the people of Denmark would have taken a stand against German persecution of *any* local minority or perhaps against any foreign interference in the local political, legal, or moral order.

Regardless of the spark that finally ignited Danish resistance, the sociological similarities between Denmark and Norway are more impressive than the differences. In Denmark and Norway alike, Germany faced a more difficult task when the façade of local rule was removed. The public consensus against the invasion, against German-inspired law, and especially against anti-Jewish policies was broad and overwhelming. In *both* countries (though fewer Jews ultimately escaped Norway), the illegal flight of human cargo to Sweden was very well developed—involving huge proportions of their total populations. Indeed, both countries boasted a certain

infrastructure of resistance that was nearly unknown in the experience of German occupation.⁴² Thus, the democratic tradition, the infrastructure of resistance, and even the solidarity with local Jews—all so crucial in establishing the ‘special character’ of the Danish people—are, in fact, some of the most remarkable *similarities* between Denmark and Norway.

It is all the more surprising, then, that these attributes of national character are so often invoked in explaining ‘Danish uniqueness’. The striking difference between Denmark and Norway is the puzzle from which this chapter makes its start: it is the fact that, *despite* the similarities in political heritage, democracy, religious tolerance, and even political opportunism, the Jews of Denmark and Norway fared so differently. The puzzle is that, despite the fact that ordinary Danes and ordinary Norwegians *both* made their aversion to German hegemony known, the Jews of Denmark survived and the Jews of Norway did not. Seeing what we have seen so far, it hardly warrants mention that this important difference cannot owe itself to something that these countries share in common!

The most fruitful result of comparison is the difference it reveals. This realization is at the heart of comparative political science, and it is the single greatest deficit in national reflections on the Holocaust today. By focusing their attention exclusively on the Danish case, many scholars have overlooked or underplayed the very real similarities that existed between Denmark and collaborationist regimes across German-occupied Europe. By focusing attention exclusively on the Norwegian case, we have become entranced by the treachery of Quisling or the fierceness of the resistance, without realizing that *both* features of wartime Norway were the result of a tragic (but understandable) choice by the country’s constitutional leadership. By focusing attention on one story or the other, we have come to see Denmark and Norway as far less similar than they really are. We have absurdly, but understandably, attributed differences to a commonality.⁴³ Learning from these events will require discerning the differences among them. And this will require focusing on something other than their uniqueness.

CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER TWO

The salient and indeed unique aspect of this study is that it sees Denmark and Norway in comparative perspective. This perspective allows us to make the more important—and perhaps most surprising—conclusions about each.

While most reflections on the Danish case point to Denmark's uncompromising dedication to democracy and toleration, the comparison of Denmark with Norway reveals that Danish policy for the first phase of the war was, in fact, *defined* by compromise, not averse to it. Denmark did not display loyal attachment to the principles of democracy; in fact, it displayed loyal attachment to the principle of *self-preservation*, a principle for which many a democratic value had to be sacrificed. In fact, of all the countries in the German sphere of influence, the one to which Denmark bears the most similarity is not Norway, but Finland—an Axis power and one of Germany's reliable military allies. Like Finland, Denmark dedicated its economic and military strength to the Axis cause; like Finland, Denmark sacrificed a few of its 'less desirable' inhabitants on the altar of Nazi ideology; like Finland, Denmark was rewarded handsomely for its efforts—with territorial rewards and, depending upon your political point of view, reliable cover for the removal of communists from public life; and, like Finland (and Germany's partners around Europe), Denmark saved the lives of its Jewish citizens.

It is true, of course, that Finland's contribution to the Axis cause was more direct than Denmark's. Finnish conscripts and soldiers (including Jewish ones!⁴⁴) fought alongside German forces on the Russian front; the Danes on that front were volunteers. But it also stands to reason that Finland had more at stake in the battle against the Soviets, and so its dedication to that issue is understandable. We might also remember in this context that Finland saved even more of its Jews from Nazi persecution than did Denmark, and that most Finnish Jews survived the war in the comfort of their own homes.⁴⁵

The point of seeing Denmark in comparative perspective is not to make a moral judgment about its decision or its strategy or to show that the Danish strategy was 'better' or 'worse' than those of its Scandinavian neighbors. The point is to show the very real similarities that existed between Denmark and other countries in the German sphere of influence. Denmark was not different from these countries in kind, but in degree. Even in terms of the policy of 'negotiation' and even in terms of the rescue of its Jews, it is not a 'unique' case, but can be characterized, instead, on the very same spectrum with other countries—a matter of *more or less* autonomy from German rule and an example of the profitable consequences that resulted from that autonomy. Denmark was not the (one) shining light, but a more typical story of what happened when countries were willing to help Nazis in order to help themselves. It is not a 'miraculous' exception, but the ordinary rule.

That which is said of heroism in Denmark can be said of treason in Norway. Far from simply being the country that gave us Quisling, Norway

is the country that gave us some of the most impressive and most crucial resistance in the international struggle against Nazi tyranny. It is not enough to say that quislings were simply more available in Norway. As we have seen, 'Clausens' were only *more* available in Denmark—boasting three seats in parliament long before the war. The crucial difference seems to be that Quisling received the continuous and direct support of Germany's occupational administration, whereas Denmark's government provided enough voluntary support to make Clausen irrelevant. Thanks to the German gun, Quisling's party was the only game in town; thanks to Danish collaboration, Clausen was an unnecessary nuisance. The Norwegian Jews were killed, not because of a lack of moral stature in Norwegian society, but because of a choice that had deep roots in the same democratic tradition that all Scandinavian countries seem to share. It was a choice that every country in Western Europe had to make; and had other countries not been emboldened by Norway's costly example, all Europe—including Denmark's Jews—might have paid the awful price.

In Denmark, on the other hand, the choice was to collaborate and to sacrifice long-standing principles of democracy and religious toleration in an attempt to avoid the worst. The Danes did not, as some accounts suggest, preserve their democratic values in theory or in practice. They violated them, reluctantly and understandably, in an attempt to save themselves. The Danish case does not show that it was possible to preserve cultural values and prevent extermination at the same time; it shows that it was *impossible* to do so, because under Nazi occupation these two noble purposes were incompatible. By rejecting any compromise of its democratic values, Norway's self-sacrificing leadership shows that it was impossible to maintain a moral high ground and save Jews at the same time. The Danish case shows us quite clearly that to help their own citizens during the war, local leaders had to help the Nazis, too.

In her report on the banality of evil, Hannah Arendt declares that she is tempted to recommend the story of the rescue of Danish Jewry as 'required reading' in political science. I am inclined to agree. But the moral of the story is not necessarily the same among all readers. The rescue of the Jews of Denmark is not a unique expression of praiseworthy heroism, but a sad reminder that many of Denmark's heroes were dead long before we praised them. If Eichmann's pathetic life was an expression of the banality of evil, wartime Denmark is not a 'ray of light' in the history of the Holocaust, but a shining reminder of the banality of goodness.

NOTES

1. Dominique Enright, *Wicked Wit of Winston Churchill* (Michael O'Mara Books, 2011).
2. The genesis of the yellow star myth is fascinating and illustrative of Allied attitudes toward Denmark during the war. While there were certainly non-Jews in other German-occupied countries (e.g., Bulgaria, Belgium, the Netherlands, France) who wore yellow stars (or carnations or even yellow crosses) in solidarity with their Jewish compatriots, or in mockery of the German decree, the myth that ordinary Danes or even the Danish king did so likely has its origins in the activities of Danish–American friendship societies and other Danish expatriate associations in the USA and Britain. These organizations were anxious to counteract criticism of Danish collaboration in the Allied press and to repair Denmark's reputation abroad.
3. Julius Margolinsky, as related in Abrahamson (1987: 11). Another mythologizing account, that of Emmy Werner's *Conspiracy of Decency*, calls the story 'worthy of a Hans Christian Anderson tale' (p. 7).
4. Few scholars draw the parallel between 'negotiation' in Denmark and collaboration. To my knowledge, only Hans Kirchhoff uses the word explicitly when, in an article about the role of Werner Best in the action against the Jews of Denmark, he says that the 'so-called policy of negotiation was actually a collaborationist policy' (Kirchhoff 1994: 196. Also see Dethlefsen: 31–2). Also see Nathaniel Hong's discussion of the issue (p. 65n). In Danish, the policy was referred to as *samarbejdspolitik* or *forhandlingspolitik*.
5. Because its independence from Germany was never formally violated, Finland is less important to this study of occupational administration than Denmark and Norway. In fact, this chapter uses it for mostly illustrative purposes, and does not treat Finland explicitly as a case in its own right. Still, the fact that, without ever violating Finnish independence, Germany was able to deport even *some* of Finland's Jews suggests that even formally independent countries might usefully be considered within the German sphere of influence. As we shall see in a moment, the difference between independent and occupied countries during World War II was often a matter of degree, not of kind.
6. See Dawidowicz: 358, 371–4; Levin 1968: 389–401; Arendt 1963: 170–175; and Fein: 70.

7. See, for example, Richard Petrow's gripping account: *The Bitter Years: The Invasion and Occupation of Denmark and Norway*, which offers simultaneous but conceptually distinct accounts of events in these two countries. The same can be said of Hoidal's 'Betrayal and Rescue: The Fate of the Jews in Scandinavia during World War II' and of Yahil's 'Methods of Persecution: A Comparison of the "Final Solution" in Holland and Denmark'.
8. The president of Norway's parliament, Carl Joachim Hambro, was Jewish, as were three members of the Danish parliament.
9. Much of the membership of Norway's NS (apparently drawn in more by their party's anti-communism) 'expressed no open anti-Semitism' (Petrow: 114).
10. Mythologizing accounts of Danish democracy and religious toleration are almost too numerous to count (see especially Borschsenius; Abrahamsen; Yahil 1969; Goldberger 1987; Cohen 1987; Werner; WJC; and Flender). Other scholars are more 'grounded' in their assessments, but still attribute primary importance to this factor (see Hoidal: 173–4; Kirchoff 1995: 477; and Benz 2002: 47).
11. See Paulsson 1995; Christensen, Poulsen and Smith 2003; Tveskov 2003; and Hollander 2004a.
12. Rich 1973: 133, 140ff; 1974: 107.
13. The significance of Norway's military contribution is widely observed. Consider: Murray & Millett: 65–66; Shirer 1990: 771; Flender: 23; Petrow: 97; and Worm-Muller: 113.
14. 'The title *Reichskommissar* had a long and honored place in German history, having been used to designate a special representative of the central German government who was assigned to deal with emergency situations that normal governmental agencies could not handle. In the Third Reich, Hitler added political functions to the job, making the post an exceptionally powerful one' (Petrow: 102). Clearly, just the appointment of a Reichskommissar in Norway indicated a shift toward the hierarchic end of the spectrum.
15. For a brilliant, if not objective, account of these negotiations by someone who participated in them, see Worm-Muller (pp. 51–62). In voting against collaboration, one Storting member declared: 'We have to risk our position and our lives, be ready to go to concentrations camps or to be shot, but we will never betray what we hold sacred, for then all our work for democracy will have been humbug.'

16. Terboven began his speech by blaming Norway's defiance precisely on the fact that its people had come to regard democratic modes of thought as 'second nature' (Worm-Muller: 137). In other words, Terboven, too, noticed the unflinching democratic spirit of the Norwegian people.
17. See Petrow: 108 and Gleditsch: *passim*. The only organizations that Terboven left untouched were the trade unions, for fear of disrupting the Norwegian economy.
18. Gjelsvik: 7, 93n, 107.
19. The USA entered the war in December 1941.
20. Terboven's cabinet appointees had already been given the official title of 'Ministers', a symbolic promotion of sorts, in September 1941.
21. It is interesting that NS membership seemed to follow the contours of German military success. Like Germany's furthest advance in the field, NS membership reached its apex (43,000 members) in 1943. The existence of such a direct relationship between German military success and NS membership is some indication that at least a good portion of the new recruits were opportunists rather than 'true believers'.
22. Over the course of the war and even with the invasion of Russia, the Regiment Nordland, a Norwegian regiment of the Waffen-SS, attracted only 6000 members. This failure is particularly notable given the strong incentives for Norwegians to join.
23. Quisling's initial request for a treaty was more than just cosmetic, since his treaty proposal entailed a reduction in the number of German administrators in Norway.
24. The letter, from Reichsminister Hans Lammers on September 17, 1942, shows particular exasperation at Quisling's persistence. 'The Fuehrer would be particularly obliged to you, my dear Prime Minister, if you too would personally take care to have within your movement all discussions discontinued which aim at a change of the present political as well as of the constitutional and international position of Norway.... If this is at present not handled in this manner,' Lammers warns, 'I shall if necessary see to it that the required steps will be taken accordingly.'
25. Denmark featured less active resistance, but also had far more to lose in terms of national autonomy.
26. That is to say, Germany's military objectives in Norway failed to materialize, although the assault on that country's Jews was devastating. In Denmark, by contrast, Germany failed with regard to the Jewish Question, but, at least in the beginning, reaped the military and economic rewards of a negotiated occupation.

27. During the war, 5431 non-Jewish Norwegians were deported to concentration camps in Germany.
28. Denmark made similar concessions during World War I. Soon after the outbreak of hostilities, Denmark, at Germany's behest, mined one of the two major nautical passages to the Baltic Sea. In doing so, Denmark provided protection for the German naval base in Kiel—a job the Germans themselves may very well have undertaken of their own accord had Denmark not been so accommodating. Thus, Denmark was able to maintain its 'neutrality' throughout the war.
29. To truly understand the Danish situation, imagine this statement coming from a Vichy official or a Quisling. Postwar hagiography notwithstanding, this is the language of collaboration.
30. Denmark's status as a 'Model Protectorate' also served Germany a propaganda victory overseas. It allowed Germany to 'demonstrate' that its occupational methods were humane.
31. Møller was the leader of the Danish Conservative party, and went on to become an important figure in the Danish resistance.
32. In October 1942, the king himself attended High Holiday services in the Copenhagen synagogue. (For the non-Jewish reader, the significance of this sacrifice should be noted.)
33. For example, the Horserød detention center, to which the Danish communists were brought, was a Danish institution, and conditions there were far more acceptable than in its German equivalents.
34. After the Scavenius government created a corps of Danes to protect local factories from sabotage, a BBC resistance broadcast felt the need to remind listeners that behind every Dane who defended a factory from sabotage was a German who could thereby remain at the front lines: 'If you put a Dane into a German uniform and send him to the Eastern Front to shoot Russians, then the majority agree to call him a "traitor". But if you give a Dane a German revolver and give him orders to shoot his own countrymen, then he is called a "sabotage guard"' (see Petrow: 188).
35. Remember, King Haakon refused to give his blessing to *any* German-appointed government, even after Germany dropped its insistence on a government headed by Quisling.
36. This is only significant when compared to Quisling's NS, which, at the time of the German invasion, had no representation whatsoever. For complete election results, see Dethlefsen: 41.
37. Best's motives for ordering the deportation have been the subject of much debate. Most see it as an attempt to curry favor with Berlin,

- especially vis-à-vis General Hanneken, his chief rival for power in Denmark.
38. It seems that Best, determined to impress his superiors with his 'correct' attitude, was simultaneously determined to ensure the operation's failure. Best anticipated that the successful deportation of Denmark's Jews would lead to a general uprising, and, according to some analysts, 'therefore allowed the action to fail' (Yahil 1969: 195). If true, the request thus demonstrates the full measure of Best's hesitation and ambition. After the war, Best was to make much use of this ambiguity—convincing a Danish court that his double-dealing was explicitly carried out with an eye toward the well-being of the country's Jews (Arendt: 158).
 39. The Swedish response to events across the Sound played a crucial role in the inspiration and eventual success of the rescue operation. The fact that Danish Jews would be welcomed to Sweden was broadcast on Swedish radio soon after the round-ups began. Meanwhile, the Swedish navy sprang into action, patrolling Sweden's territorial waters and, in some cases, rescuing Danish refugees from their overcrowded vessels midstream. Most of all, knowing that they would be welcome in Sweden gave Danish Jews and their rescuers the confidence necessary to attempt the hazardous journey in the first place (see Hollander 2013: 54–55, 58; Mogensen: 42–43; and Valentin: 237). While Sweden's reaction to the round-ups in Denmark is also inspiring, we must be mindful to apply our demythologizing approach to both sides of the Øresund: When the Norwegian Jews were deported, Sweden remained silent—an uncomfortable reality that cannot be unrelated to the fact that, at that point, Germany was still winning the war.
 40. Petrow: 223–5; Hilberg 1971: 567–8; Goldberger 1997: 191; Arendt 1963: 156.
 41. It is worth adding that Goldberger's work is an edited volume, compiled in part from the proceedings of a conference organized by Tribute to the Danes, an organization devoted exclusively to perpetuating the memory of the Danish rescue. Yahil began her work on the Danish case while her husband was an Israeli diplomat in Copenhagen. That is to say, both scholars have a vested interest in preserving good relations with Denmark, and good relations have a way of producing good reflections.

42. Victor Magagna brought my attention to this interesting point of comparison.
43. For more on the vital importance of applying the comparative method to the study of the Holocaust in Denmark and Norway, see Hollander 2013: 56–9.
44. See Hannu Rautkallio's fascinating article, "'Cast into the Lion's Den': Finnish Jewish Soldiers in the Second World War'. The article explains the relationships, from tension to camaraderie, that developed between Jewish and non-Jewish Finns, and even between Jews and Germans, on the front lines of battle. Rautkallio's book, *Finland and the Holocaust: The Rescue of Finland's Jews*, is dedicated to those Jews who, during World War II, 'gave their lives fighting for their native country', an Axis power.
45. This is not a trivial accomplishment. As we have seen, occupation and alliance are not opposite sides of a coin, but matters of distinction and degree. The difference between an ally and a collaborator can be very small indeed. And the fact that *any* Jews were deported from Finland at all (8 out of 2000) suggests that even this German ally perceived the need to pay a price for its sovereignty.

Western Europe: The Politics of Judgment

“I do not consider Hitler to be as bad as he is depicted. He is showing an ability that is amazing and seems to be gaining his victories without much bloodshed.”

—Mahatma Gandhi, May 1940¹

Maurice Papon was Secretary-General of the Gironde Prefecture in occupied France during World War II. In 1997–1998, he was put on trial for his role in the deportation of over 1500 Jews from Bordeaux and the surrounding regions. On March 6–7, 2004, I had the opportunity to interview Maurice Papon at his home in France, where he was under house arrest, serving a ten-year sentence for complicity in crimes against humanity. He remains, to this date, the only Vichy official to be tried and convicted of crimes directly related to the implementation of the Final Solution in France.²

For many observers of the trial, Papon came to personify the Vichy regime itself. In fact, his defense echoed that of other Vichy defendants since the war: Papon claimed to have stayed in office during the German occupation so as to help the resistance and to protect those he served from the brutality of a direct German occupation. Among other things, he claimed to have stricken hundreds of names from deportation lists, to have secured exemptions for many more would-be deportees, and even to harboring a Jewish member of the resistance in his own home. Some of these claims, including the last, have been corroborated by credible sources.³ In early 1943, the Gestapo circulated an internal memo warning German officials that, in their eyes, Papon was ‘untrustworthy’.

Given all that he claimed to have done, I asked Papon if he regretted staying at his post during the German occupation. In a dramatic tone, Papon declared:

I used my position to diminish the severity of the German occupation. I procured ration cards and supplies for use in the resistance. I used my contacts—my *limited* contacts—with the Germans to interfere in their programs or to help those that they would harm. I erased names from an arrest list that I would never have even seen had I resigned. Do I regret not stepping down? Not for a moment! In fact, if I had resigned, I'd feel like a coward to this day.

Despite having met Papon personally over the course of two days, I do not know if he is telling the truth. But the claim itself is compelling, and reveals what I believe is the single most harrowing moral dilemma of the Holocaust.

The Limits of Criminality in German-Occupied Western Europe

The historical study of Vichy France begins with an indictment. In *Vichy France and the Jews*, the foremost work on the topic and one of the first to truly address the regime's complicity in the Final Solution, Michael R. Marrus and Robert O. Paxton begin with the suggestion that Vichy France contributed to 'unlimited criminality' in the murder of innocents. They go on to remind us—rightly, I think—that their study will tell us more about the occupied than about the occupiers.⁴

The wisdom of their study is undeniable, and it has changed the course of Holocaust historiography for the better. With a few notable exceptions (one of them, Paxton's own *Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order* [1972]), earlier research on the Holocaust in France (or in any occupied country, for that matter) tended to focus on Jewish victims and *German* persecutors, with little direct attention to the often significant role of indigenous individuals and institutions in that persecution. With the change in emphasis in Holocaust historiography, however, apologists for the collaborators could no longer claim that their clients had done as much as possible to mitigate the evil policy of an all-powerful empire. Marrus and Paxton rightly turned our attention to the role of *France* in the persecution of French Jews during the Holocaust. Thus, by helping to shape the public perception of collaboration, Paxton, who was later to testify for the

prosecution in Papon's trial, might very well have played an indirect but key role in bringing someone like Papon to trial in the first place.

Far from returning an unambiguous verdict on the severity Vichy's guilt, however, judgments like those of Marrus and Paxton bring us due cause for somber deliberation. If Vichy is guilty as charged of leading the way to 'unlimited' criminality, an investigator with no role in that verdict might ask why it is that so many Jewish subjects of that criminal regime actually survived the onslaught. Vichy France is a county where about 75% of the Jewish population survived the war. With the exception of Denmark, its survival rate is higher than that of any other country in Western Europe. In an occupied country where three out of four Jews survived the war, just what is it about Vichy criminality that was 'unlimited'?

In comparative perspective, the puzzle is yet more acute. In fact, the following comparison of victimization rates in Western Europe (Table 3.1) largely defies preconceived notions of national guilt or innocence.

The comparison is even more puzzling when we consider other characteristics of the countries in question. Like both countries in the previous chapter, the Netherlands is a constitutional monarchy with a long history of religious toleration. In fact, it was both one of the first countries in Europe to extend full citizenship to Jews and one of the oldest democracies in the world. At the time of the German invasion of course, France was a democracy like the others. In stark contrast, however, interwar French democracy was characterized by deep discontent, along with important elements of the xenophobia and antisemitism that so often go with it. Though to a somewhat lesser extent in Belgium, Jews were prominent in politics and society throughout the region. Of all the countries in Western Europe, only France experienced notable outbursts of antisemitism like the Dreyfus Affair. Clearly, even where we see important differences among Belgium, France, and the Netherlands, they are neither to the extent nor in the 'direction' that their victimization rates would suggest.

With regard to victimization rate variation, this chapter will show that the most important differences among these countries only emerged in May of 1940, in the immediate aftermath of the German invasion. As with Denmark and Norway, Germany presented each of the Low Countries with a tragic choice at the moment of invasion: Surrender immediately and 'enjoy' preferential treatment in Germany's expanding empire, or resist and suffer the consequences. The temptations to deal with the devil were powerful indeed: At the time of the invasion, Denmark and Norway were already defeated, Hitler's pact with Stalin was outwardly intact, British resolve

Table 3.1 Victimization statistics for Western Europe

| | <i>Jewish population</i> | <i>Percent with citizenship</i> | <i>Number (%) victimized</i> | <i>Number (%) killed</i> |
|-------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Netherlands | 159,806 ^a | 80 | 107,000 (67.0–80) ^b | 101,900 (63.8) |
| Belgium | 55,670–65,687 ^c | 10 | 28,902 (44.0–51.9) ^d | 28,902 (44.0–51.9) |
| France | 310,000 ^e | 50 | 79,721 (25.7) | 77,221 (24.9) ^f |
| Luxembourg | 796 ^g | n/a | 674 (84.4) | 638 (80.1) |

^aThe number of officially registered Jews in the Netherlands as of January 10, 1941 (Jozeph Michman: 1047). See also: de Jong: 12; Hilberg 1985: 579 (quoting Presser); and Blom: 347

^bThe number of victims includes about 2000 individuals who died while still in the Netherlands (many in the transit camps, and others by direct German measures or suicide). It also includes about 5100 people who survived deportation to concentration camps (see Hilberg 1985: 594). Other scholars put this figure as high as 75% (Marrus and Paxton 1989: 195; Dawidowicz 1975: 403); 76% (Seibel 2002b: 213 [citing Benz 1996]); 80% (Steinberg: 203); or even 96% (Rich 1974: 163)

^cThe lower figure comes from Steinberg and refers to the number of ‘Jews in the register-card system of the security police’ (p. 203n10). The higher figure, also cited in Steinberg, refers to the number established by the ‘postwar Belgian bureau in charge of the matter of war victims’ (203n9). See also: Hilberg 1985: 601 and Rich 1974: 187

^dSteinberg measures the ‘efficiency’ of the Final Solution in Belgium at 44% (p. 203n10). A higher figure of 28,902 Jews who ‘perished’ (from Dan Michman 1990: 161) is probably a better measure, since it likely includes both Jews killed in Belgium itself and Belgian Jews deported and killed after escaping to France. For our purposes, the important point is that, even at the extremes, the victimization rate for Belgium is never higher than the lowest estimate for the Netherlands and never lower than the highest estimate for France

^eThere may have been as many as 500,000 additional Jews in Morocco, Algeria, Lebanon, Syria, and other overseas French territories. French anti-Jewish legislation during World War II extended to Jews living in these territories; however, they were never deported

^fThese victimization figures come from Jackson (p. 362) who says that 75,721 Jews were deported from France if one includes both those Jews deported from Nord and Pas-de-Calais (the two northern departments administratively attached to Belgium) and also those deported for political crimes (such as participating in the resistance). To this, he adds that about 4000 Jews died in France itself, either in French detention camps or in retaliatory executions. About 2500 Jews returned from the concentration camps alive. These figures are remarkably consistent across a variety of sources. See also Marrus 1990: 512

^gThe statistics for Luxembourg are relatively straightforward and reproduced in a number of sources, among them Hilberg (1985: 598) and Zariz (928). There were actually about 3000 Jews in Luxembourg before the war, but most fled during the initial period of the German occupation

to actually do anything about German aggression was evidently low, and France, invaded on the very same day, had problems of its own. Thus, it is no small wonder that the government in each of the tiny Low Countries stood up to an enemy it was powerless to defeat. In near-simultaneous

protest against German aggression and near-unanimous rejection of any compromise in democratic values, government ministers and prominent politicians in the Netherlands, Luxembourg, and Belgium fled the German advance, re-establishing their governments-in-exile in London. In all three, the functions of government were left in the hands, not of politicians, but of bureaucrats. Only in Belgium did the royal family remain in the country, where the monarch, King Leopold III, continued to exercise his constitutional authority. His counterparts, Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands and the Grand Duchess of Luxembourg, joined their ministers (and the King of Norway) in exile. All three countries were immediately placed under German occupational administration: Luxembourg and the Netherlands under the direct authority of German civil officers and Belgium under a somewhat less invasive military administration. (As we shall see, this difference and the informal influence of the Belgian royal family were both to have great effect on that country's 'middle' position on the victimization scale.) Nevertheless, ordinary citizens in all three of those countries paid dearly for their governments' principled refusal to compromise with Nazi Germany.

Only in France was complete German conquest interrupted by local officials willing to make a deal. Within six weeks of the German invasion, on the night of June 16–17, the cabinet of the Third Republic voted—constitutionally, albeit under duress—to appoint a new head of state with the charge of overseeing a peace treaty with the Germans. They chose, for that task, Marshal Pétain, World War I's Hero of Verdun. By June 26, most of Pétain's new government was already in Vichy and the Armistice he approved was already in effect. France's constitutional authorities could thereby credit themselves with the invention of 'collaboration'.

This chapter will investigate, in comparative perspective, the effects of that invention. With the advent of Collaboration, French officials, like their counterparts in Denmark, had devised a way both to preserve their positions in office and, at the same time, to protect the bulk of their own citizens from the worst of the German occupation. The difficult truth of that unpleasant decision will become clear in comparison with France's northern neighbors. In the Netherlands and Luxembourg, government officials took the moral high ground, favoring political death to life in moral purgatory. In Belgium, most, but not all, constitutional authorities did the same. But in deciding to leave their positions of power, political leaders left their constituents powerless to defend themselves against the raw onslaught of Nazi brutality. As a state authority, countries like the

Netherlands contributed far less to the German military machine than countries like Vichy France. (This is so, even when we adjust for obvious differences in size and productive capacity.) And ordinary Dutch citizens, Jew and non-Jew alike, paid the cost of ultimate victory in greater proportion.

Of course, this chapter should not be construed as a defense or ‘apology’ for Vichy France. More than any country we have investigated so far, France was a country that actually *could* have imposed huge costs on Nazi Germany, had it chosen to resist. French collaboration helped the Axis powers in the war by securing Germany’s Western flank, by giving Germany the use of its territory, and, most of all, by saving Germany the significant costs of directly administering a huge and potentially restive territory only miles from Great Britain. France’s relatively low victimization rate does not mean that Vichy leaders somehow ‘did the right thing’ during the war. Still, it remains the case that, without a real French government in Vichy, French Jews might have fared much worse.

Explaining Victimization Rate Variation in Western Europe

The puzzle about victimization rates in Western Europe has been posed many times, but never adequately resolved. Once again, the main reason for this shortcoming is a tendency among historians to focus on one particular country or another, rather than positioning their conclusions in broad historical context.⁵ Without sufficient and explicit emphasis on cross-country comparison, their conclusions can only be considered provisional. Among other things, this chapter will demonstrate the value that comparative politics methodology contributes to analyses of the Holocaust. It will also highlight the importance of state-centered approaches to historical analysis.

In the vast literature on the Holocaust, several factors emerge as possible explanations for the considerable variation in Jewish victimization throughout Western Europe. Thus, some have argued (1) that the victimization rate in the Netherlands was higher because that country was placed under the command of a civilian (SS) Reichskommissar. Belgium and France, on the other hand, were under military command. And as we have seen, the Wehrmacht had a tendency to prioritize stability and security over ideological concerns like the Final Solution; (2) others have argued that France’s mountainous terrain and geographic size provided Jews there with ample places to hide, in stark contrast with Belgium and

the Netherlands, which were tiny, crowded, and flat; (3) still others promote a cultural argument, attributing the high victimization rate in the Netherlands to a supposed passivity and ‘deference to authority’ pervasive in that country; and, finally, (4) some apply this cultural argument specially to the role of the Dutch Jewish Council, which (tragically and infamously) contributed to the efficiency of the Final Solution by assuming the administrative burden of carrying it out. While each explanation contributes something to our understanding of the Holocaust in this vital region, no one of them is sufficient to explain the variation—because it fails to either ‘predict’ the observed outcome or recognize the fundamental role of the occupied state itself in the implementation of the Final Solution. Let us consider each of these explanations in turn.

1. **Germany’s occupational bureaucracy.** The relative dominance of particular German agencies within an occupational administration might have affected the implementation of the Final Solution. Because of its dedication to Nazi racial principles and ideology, the Nazi SS placed greater relative emphasis on the implementation of the Final Solution than other German agencies. The military, by contrast, had a tendency to sacrifice or at least delay anti-Jewish operations because it saw strategic concerns and the prevention of domestic unrest as paramount. According to this logic, the relatively high victimization rate of the Netherlands is due to the relative dominance of the SS in that country and to the fact that it was placed under a civilian (SS) Reichskommissar. Victimization rates were correspondingly lower in Belgium and France, which were under military, rather than civilian or SS, administration.

SS dominance in the Netherlands clearly played a role in that country’s high victimization rate. There are, however, two respects in which this explanation is incomplete. First of all, when we talk about the relative efficiency of the SS and its personnel, we must be careful not to neglect the national contexts in which they operated. True as it may be that the Netherlands was subjected to an ‘Austrian mafia’ of loyal and dedicated Nazis,⁶ it is also the case that the absence of high-ranking domestic officials in the Netherlands made the job of the German occupiers significantly easier. Without the need to negotiate with or even worry about important Dutch governors, German officials in the Netherlands had more room to maneuver than their counterparts in other countries. Civilian occupation authorities certainly had more zeal

for the Final Solution than their military counterparts, but their task was made considerably easier when they could proceed without concern for the interests of high-ranking domestic officials.

Second, there are important ways in which the particular German agency in charge of an occupied country is an effect, not a cause, of policy in that country. As we saw in the previous chapter, for example, Norway was subjected to the relatively brutal administration of a Reichskommissar because its ruling officials rejected Germany's terms for an immediate cessation of hostilities. Had Norway accepted Germany's offer, there is every reason to believe that its government, like Denmark's, would have continued to operate under the less invasive administration of the Wehrmacht and the Foreign Office. While additional factors were clearly at work in the cases of the Netherlands and Luxembourg,⁷ the fact that their constitutional officials completely rejected any compromise with the Germans almost certainly played a role in leading to the establishment of SS dominance in those countries. On the other hand, military (rather than civilian) occupation was, at least in part, a German 'reward' for the cooperation of Belgium's monarch. Due to Leopold's 'proper attitude', Germany may have decided to treat Belgium more like France than the Netherlands.

2. **Geography** might also have played a role in determining victimization rates. It was certainly among the factors that contributed to the survival of so many Scandinavian Jews overall, even though variation among Scandinavian countries was due to other factors discussed previously. Thus, some have argued that more Jews survived in France because its sheer size provided Jews with ample places to hide. Tiny, crowded, and flat, the Netherlands, by contrast, provided few hiding places for Jews attempting to escape.⁸

This argument seems questionable on a number of levels: First, Belgium (with nearly identical size, terrain, and population density) would have been subject to similar geographic constraints as the Netherlands, even though almost twice as many Belgian Jews survived the war. Second, the argument suggests that most *onderduikers* [literally: 'divers', people who went into hiding] hid in the countryside, in forests, or in mountains, an adventurous claim for which there exists little evidence.⁹ In fact, many Jews who survived the war 'in hiding' did so above ground, concealing their identity with false papers and documents while maintaining a public, albeit artificial and inconspicuous,

persona. Finally, the claim suggests that Jews who survived the war by illegal means constitute a major component of total survival figures. In fact, illegal survival was the exception, not the rule. Jews survived the war *legally* in a number of ways: by belonging to or joining exempted groups, working in essential industries, exploiting legal loopholes, or simply by knowing the ‘right’ people. In fact, even in the Netherlands, 8600 Jews survived the war by virtue of having been married to non-Jews or by showing proof of sterilization. In countries where local law-makers had autonomy or even a modicum of political influence, we might expect even more opportunities for legal survival—and hence, diminished significance for the geography and ample hiding places of countries like France. As is so often the case, the interesting question is not how or where Jews survived given a particular set of laws, but why those laws were relatively extensive in some cases and plainly limited in others.

3. **Political culture.** As we saw in the previous chapters, discussions of political culture often dominate explanations for victimization rate variation. Comparisons between France, Belgium, and the Netherlands are no exception. But in no other case are such arguments put to the test so starkly as they are in Western Europe, for this is the region where the country with the highest victimization rate (the Netherlands) is also one of the world’s oldest democracies and, by any standard, one of the most religiously tolerant countries in the region.

In fact, the concept of political culture is simply so vague that, even here, scholars apply it with illusory success. For example, in what might be the single most widely contended explanation for the Netherlands’ high victimization rate, an array of observers blame the tragedy in that country on its citizens’ ‘traditional deference’ to authority.¹⁰ Others relate the argument specifically to the attitude of the Jewish leadership in the Netherlands, saying that the Jewish Council there was particularly deferential to German demands.

As will become clear over the course of this chapter, the argument that the Dutch reacted to German demands with ‘traditional deference’ is indefensible. Immediately after the German invasion, the Dutch government defied German authority more resolutely than any of its neighbors. In February of 1941, the Netherlands became the only country in Europe to experience a general strike in opposition to German anti-Jewish policy. And in that same country, 25,000 Jews—requiring up to 100,000 non-Jewish helpers¹¹—went into hiding,

18,000 surviving the war. With no basements to hide in and no mountains to flee to, these rescuers risked their lives to *defy* German authority and ultimately hid twice as many Jews as the entire Jewish population of Denmark and Norway combined. The notion that Dutch deference to authority led to the victimization of its Jews is simply incorrect. As the people of Norway were already beginning to learn, and as the people of the Netherlands were about to, *resistance* to German authority, not acquiescence, was a primary and tragic cause of suffering for nearly everybody in an occupied country.

Ordinary bystanders and their structural setting clearly determined key aspects of a country's experience under German occupation. There can be no doubt, for instance, that strong traditions of democracy and religious tolerance led to the overwhelming rejection of German demands throughout the Netherlands, from high-ranking government officials, who preferred to lose their jobs than give in to German demands, to ordinary Dutch citizens, who resisted earlier and with greater intensity than most. However, as much as these factors do to define the 'character' of a country under German occupation, they do little to explain degrees of Jewish victimization. Without at least considering the role of local governments in hindering Nazi designs, we are left wondering why, in this chapter as in the last, the countries with the strongest traditions of democracy were precisely those that lost the most Jews.

4. **The role of the Dutch Jewish Council.** Finally, a great deal has been made of the organization of the Jewish community in the Netherlands, especially with regard to the Dutch Jewish Council and its activities to help implement the Final Solution. To be sure, the Jewish Council played an important role in contributing to the high rate of Jewish victimization in the Netherlands.¹² It certainly did more to advance the Final Solution in that country than its fragmented counterparts did in Belgium and France. But we must remember that, like the attitude and action of the German supervisory institutions, the behavior and composition of Jewish councils in Western Europe were largely determined by the national contexts in which they operated.¹³

Under immense pressure and in extraordinary circumstances, the Dutch Jewish Council certainly contributed to German 'success' in the Netherlands regarding the Final Solution. But without a thorough investigation of the political context in the Netherlands at the time, we have only a partial explanation for the intensity of that pressure and

little understanding for the extraordinary nature of those circumstances. As we shall see, the direct and unhindered nature of German rule in the Netherlands helps us distinguish the Dutch Jewish Council from similar institutions elsewhere in Western Europe, particularly in France. Once again, we see a powerful explanation for victimization rate variation made possible by the inclusion of a factor, German hierarchy, that otherwise gets little explicit attention in questions of Jewish survival.

THE NETHERLANDS

The Netherlands is the nation of the righteous gentile. Whereas Denmark is the country rightly revered for eventually coming to the rescue of its Jews, the Netherlands was home to more 'righteous gentiles' per capita than any country in Europe. It was also the adopted home of Anne Frank, and thus the country where the selfless sacrifice of ordinary citizens has been highlighted most thoroughly. Here, too, contemporary scholars point to the heroic action of non-Jews as 'a light in the darkness' of the Holocaust. But here too, legend has clouded our judgment. In the end, Anne Frank was killed, like so many of her fellow Nederlanders.

But why, in a country where so many gave so much, where democracy and religious tolerance were so ingrained, was the situation of Jews so desperate? Clearly, the absence of a 'favorable factor' has something to do with it. Unlike Norway and Denmark, Holland did not have a neutral neighbor. Unlike France and even Belgium, its citizens had few options for escape. But the most conspicuous absence is the one that receives least attention: Unlike any country in Western Europe (except Luxembourg), the Netherlands retained not even the symbols of local governance. This section highlights the precise ways in which the absence of *this* favorable factor spelled doom for the people of the Netherlands, Jewish or otherwise. As such, it provides a more troublesome test for a democracy than any in Scandinavia.

The Five-Day War

The German attack on the Netherlands came suddenly and almost without warning on May 10, 1940. As with Belgium and Luxembourg (attacked, along with France, on the very same day), Germany tried to reach an agreement that would preserve the cooperation of the Dutch government and

avoid the need for a potentially costly military confrontation. Citing reasons very similar to those which accompanied the invasions of Denmark and Norway, Hitler assured the local governments that this was a defensive maneuver and that he had no intention of infringing upon the sovereignty of either kingdom. Given Germany's limited objectives in the region, there was much reason to take Hitler at his word. Besides, if they wanted to know the likely consequences of their action, Benelux leaders had only to look to Denmark for an idea of the benefits that conciliation could bring. Nevertheless, fully aware of what might follow from resistance, the Dutch queen and her government rejected Germany's demands, called for Allied assistance, and prepared the country for an impossible war. Within five days, Queen Wilhelmina, her family and her government, had fled the country. And Hitler, as even he sometimes did, made good on his promise: Rotterdam was destroyed (Fig. 3.1) and almost 5000 inhabitants lay dead, most of them civilians. Germany paid a real price for Wilhelmina's decision to resist. Over the course of the five-day campaign, over 80% of the



Fig. 3.1 Rotterdam in ruins (Photo credit: US Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Instytut Pamięci Narodowej. Record No. 51422)

German air transport force was damaged or destroyed. By far, however, the higher price was being paid by the people of the Netherlands.¹⁴ For them, the nightmare of direct German occupation was only beginning.

The departure of the constitutional government did not leave the Netherlands completely leaderless. After the queen's flight, the Netherlands still had a military commander-in-chief (General H.G. Winkelman), a parliament (the States-General), and, most importantly, a staff of permanent civil servants, the direct subordinates of the elected government ministers. Following the suspension of Parliament and the imprisonment of General Winkelman,¹⁵ these Secretaries-General formed the backbone of Dutch administration. As in the days before the German invasion, these professional bureaucrats had little in terms of political or decision-making authority. Rather, they were in charge of the day-to-day administration of the Netherlands. With queen, cabinet, and parliament out of the picture, the Secretaries-General were the closest thing to a domestic government left in the Netherlands. But as we shall see, even this toothless, headless administration was to face the constant oversight and molestations of its German masters. By and large, real political authority fell into German hands—although the constant interplay between German command and Dutch implementation was to become an integral component of German occupational administration in the Netherlands.

In the political vacuum that followed Dutch capitulation, Hitler appointed Arthur Seyss-Inquart as 'guardian of the interests of the Reich and ... supreme civil authority' in the Netherlands.¹⁶ His title, Reichskommissar, was the same as that of Terboven in Norway; and, like his Norwegian counterpart, Seyss-Inquart had the responsibility to oversee an otherwise 'headless' native administration. Seyss-Inquart immediately went about the business of appointing a staff of four *Generalkommissare* (General Commissioners) to help in this supervision.¹⁷ Each of these had the task of overseeing and, in many cases, reorganizing one or several Dutch ministries. Technically speaking, all of the General Commissioners reported directly to Seyss-Inquart. At least two of them, however, had important, informal connections in Berlin, sufficient to blur the Reichskommissar's lines of authority. Hanns Albin Rauter, for example, was appointed to the post of General Commissioner for Security following the direct intervention of his former boss, Himmler. Not to be outdone, Bormann secured the appointment of his former colleague, Fritz Schmidt, as General Commissioner for Special Affairs. The tangled lines of authority (Fig. 3.2) led to a great deal of bickering in the occupational

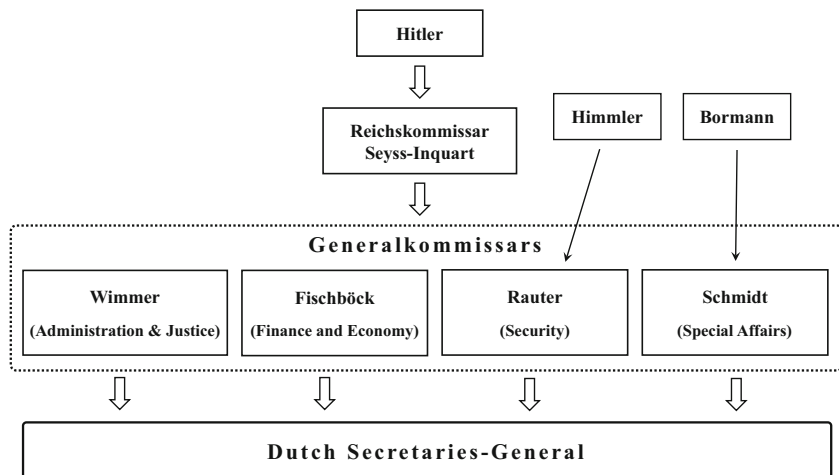


Fig. 3.2 German occupational administration in the Netherlands

administration and may even have played a role in Schmidt's 'untimely' death,¹⁸ but, bureaucratic infighting, a characteristic common among Germany's many and varied occupational regimes, does not seem to have interfered with Germany's ability to implement the Final Solution in the Netherlands.

In charge of implementing the orders of Seyss-Inquart and his staff were the Secretaries-General of the various Dutch departments. Originally, of course, each Secretary-General reported directly to a (constitutionally appointed) government minister in the Dutch cabinet. With the government's flight and subsequent re-formation in exile, however, direction of the Secretaries-General was left in the hands of General Winkelman, the Dutch military commander and acting head of state following the queen's departure. This meant that, initially at least, the secretaries-general had every legal right to act as governors.

After Winkelman's arrest, however, justification for rule by the secretaries-general was somewhat more ambiguous. According to the 'Directives of 1937',¹⁹ civil servants in times of military occupation were to continue their work so long as doing so served the general welfare. However, the very same law ordered them to resign when the benefit of that service to the Dutch population was outweighed by its benefit to the enemy. The determination, of course, was a difficult one, and left considerable room for

individual interpretation. In fact, to this day, the actions of the secretaries-general are the subject of continued controversy and debate.²⁰

Attempts at Negotiation

After the dust settled, Germany found what it thought would be a relatively workable situation in the Netherlands. While many in the German administration, of course, would have liked for prominent domestic officials to have stayed at their posts (thus, adding a Dutch face to the German occupation), Dutch civil servants under German supervision seemed to exhibit a somewhat ‘natural’ division of labor, with officials of the occupying power issuing broad political directives and ‘petty’ domestic bureaucrats implementing them. In his first public appearance after taking office, Seyss-Inquart expressed his optimism regarding the situation on the ground, telling his new subjects: ‘There is nothing that should prevent us from meeting each other on a plane of mutual respect’ (as found in Lemkin: 447).

Indeed, the Secretariat-General was among the first Dutch institutions to meet the Reichskommissar on this plane of mutual respect. At first, it did so simply by staying in office and agreeing²¹ to carry out the orders of its (now-German) political principals. But within weeks of the occupation, the Secretaries-General themselves began to seek a more political role. As senior civil servants and bureaucrats, these officials always had the power (if not the right) to attach their own political ‘spin’ to the orders they executed—if only by making sure to implement some orders ‘more efficiently’ than others. Following the flight of the Dutch cabinet, however, the responsibilities of the remaining Secretaries-General almost naturally expanded to fill the vacuum, and many bureaucrats now hoped to give their civil service a more explicitly political role.

The shift in emphasis was reflected in the behavior of the ‘Council of Secretaries-General’, the collective body of General Secretaries which, theretofore, had merely and rarely met for the purposes of inter-agency communication. Within weeks of the occupation, the Council increased the frequency of its meetings and adopted its collective title on its letterhead and on the minutes of council meetings. The Council also established quiet contacts between prominent Dutch citizens and German occupational authorities; finally, it participated in the establishment of the *Nederlandse Unie*, a Dutch mass movement that advocated and sought accommodation with Nazi Germany (to be discussed below).

Naturally, the Council envisioned some sort of gain in return for its activism. Clearly, many individual members hoped to advance a particular political agenda. (Even technocrats, after all, sometimes have political opinions.) But it seems clear that the Council, perhaps fearful of a situation like that in Norway, also hoped to prevent the Germans from promoting Dutch fascists to ministerial positions.²² By taking a more proactive role in governing the country, they hoped to make such promotions unnecessary. Formally speaking, this goal was achieved: For the duration of the war, no Dutch fascist was promoted to a cabinet-level position; and the Secretariat-General, albeit with a constantly changing composition, continued to deliver on German demands. Although the Council would eventually be rendered irrelevant, it was not because the Germans subjected it to an NSB government. Seyss-Inquart soon realized that he could gain the compliance of the Secretaries-General directly without appointing domestic intermediaries. With that major concern out of the way, the Reichskommissar soon looked beyond the Council for a ‘more representative’ partner in negotiations.

The leading contender as a negotiation partner for the German Reichskommissar was the Nederlandse Unie, a Dutch political organization that advocated and sought accommodation with Nazi Germany. As a national movement, the Unie was truly representative—formed as an amalgamation of prominent individuals, grass-roots social movements, and political parties that spanned the political spectrum.²³ In fact, the Unie even survived Seyss-Inquart’s July 1941 decree that outlawed most other political parties in the Netherlands. The Unie grew dramatically during the first year of the occupation. By February 1941, it had almost 800,000 dues-paying members, offices in virtually every Dutch town, and even a weekly paper. But the Unie was also beset by internal disagreement and infighting about everything from its official stance toward the (now-exiled) House of Orange, rapprochement with the NSB, and the standing of its Jewish members, who, much to German chagrin, were not officially ousted from the organization until November 1941. Unable to find agreement among its own members and, much less, with the German administration, the Unie plodded along until December 1941, when Seyss-Inquart disbanded the organization and turned his attention to the NSB.

In terms of national leadership, the NSB (the Dutch fascist party) fared little better than its democratic counterparts in Dutch political life. Several factors account for its irrelevance. As in most of Western Europe, the Dutch fascist party was exceedingly small—polling about 4% of the vote

on the eve of the occupation. The NSB also suffered from the rise of the Unie, which gave a 'legitimate' face to Dutch nationalism and, as was the purpose of at least some of its members, actually succeeded in diverting attention from the NSB, at least for a while. For their part, the Germans had learned from the Norwegian case the dangers of backing the wrong national socialist horse too quickly²⁴ and were thus more hesitant about coming to the NSB's aid. But German officials saw an additional problem with national socialist rule in the Netherlands: namely, Anton Mussert, the leader of the NSB itself. As a *Dutch* rather than *Deutsch* nationalist, Mussert hoped for the resurrection of Holland's seventeenth-century empire and actually opposed any sort of political integration with the German Reich.²⁵ Thus, while German officials were happy to make use of the Dutch Führer and to bestow upon him certain ceremonial honors, Mussert's Quisling-like promotion to a position of national leadership was largely out of the question. The same was true for those in Mussert's party, who, as we shall see in the next section, soon staffed local political offices and much of the executive bureaucracy, but nothing on the cabinet level.²⁶

Ultimately, no attempt to form a domestic political institution with even a modicum of authority met even the limited and fleeting 'success' of the Unie, a statement which highlights the failure of attempts to negotiate a political settlement in the Netherlands. Unlike his Norwegian counterpart, Seyss-Inquart was never able, not even with time, to find reliable local elements to head a domestic administration. This meant that, in the unsavory business of occupational rule in the Netherlands, the Germans themselves would have to take a more active role.

Seyss-Inquart's Empire

Seyss-Inquart's failure (or refusal) to find suitable domestic elements to head up the occupational administration increasingly forced him to take on the burdens of that administration himself. With the escape, imprisonment, resignation, or ouster of Dutch civil servants from all levels of government, the Reichskommissar soon found himself the governor of an occupational empire unmatched in Western Europe. Ever weary of the increasing costs of that empire, Seyss-Inquart still hoped to rule through the *existing* domestic administration, insofar as that was possible. But by staffing that administration with NSB members and others he found reliable, the Reichskommissar won the obedience of his legions, albeit at a price.

The Reichskommissar's empire-building was to have its greatest impact on the secretariat-general, the highest remaining level of the Dutch bureaucracy. As we have seen, the jurisdiction and authority of this heretofore merely administrative institution rose dramatically as a consequence of the constitutional government's departure. The newfound importance of this body presented ruler and ruled alike with a difficult choice: For his part, the Reichskommissar could attempt to ensure compliance by hiring more Germans to supervise the existing Dutch administrators or by replacing the existing administrators with more ideologically reliable elements (namely Dutch National Socialists). But these strategies entailed costs for the German administration as well: the first, financial, and the second, owing to public resentment of the NSB, political. Like their German superiors, the Secretaries-General also faced a difficult choice—a choice made no easier by the ambiguity of the 1937 Directives: On the one hand, resignation was the only way to ensure that one gave no quarter to an illegal occupation. However, each Secretary-General also had powerful incentives to remain in place: civic responsibilities not to abandon one's post or merely a personal desire to keep one's job. Indeed, for one Secretary-General, continued service brought an additional reward: exemption from the anti-Jewish measures to which he would otherwise fall victim.

Indeed, the experience of one Jewish Secretary-General, Hans Max Hirschfeld, illustrates the difficult choices that faced a Dutch civil servant under German occupation. In fact, his experience is a microcosm, of sorts, for the collaborator's dilemma and the effect it had on European Jews. As the Secretary-General of *two* departments (Commerce, Industry, and Shipping; Agriculture and Fisheries), Hirschfeld had wide authority over the wartime economy. As such, his responsibilities often brought him into the direct service of the German war effort. Throughout the war, Hirschfeld's guiding principle seems to have been the avoidance of chaos, something for which a functioning economy and the steady flow of supplies were essential. He took strong measures against the black market—the 'biggest enemy' of a sound economy—and he condemned sabotage. But Hirschfeld also kept contact with the government-in-exile, conservative resistance groups, and vigorously objected to numerous occupational decrees, including the 'Aryanization' of Jewish businesses and the forced deportation of Dutch workers for labor service in the Reich. Ultimately, Hirschfeld vowed never to leave his post unless the Reichskommissar established an NSB government, a threat neither had to execute. For his part, Seyss-Inquart was quite satisfied with the work of the 'intelligent and capable' Hirschfeld—so satisfied, in fact, that he was willing to overlook the Secretary-General's Jewish ancestry and contacts with the resistance.

Of course, Hirschfeld's continued tenure at such an important post must have irked the NSB to no end. But the Reichskommissar was evidently unwilling to hand such an important position to an inexperienced agent, even one with 'better' ideological or 'racial' credentials than Hirschfeld. Ultimately, Hirschfeld's experience gives us some indication as to what would have happened to other Dutch officials had they made a similar decision to stay in office. As a Dutch Jew, his survival illustrates a tragic opportunity that existed for national leaders throughout Europe, where civil servants of higher rank acted as Hirschfeld did.²⁷

In the Netherlands, however, Secretaries-General like Hans Max Hirschfeld were the exception, not the rule. With the outbreak of the first serious unrest in the Netherlands in February of 1941, the demands of the Reichskommissar became more onerous, and the acquiescence of an already-hesitant Council of Secretaries became more difficult to secure. Thus, though the establishment of German rule was initially met with only a few tentative resignations, only 3 of the original 11 Secretaries-General remained at their posts by the end of 1943. The other posts were either left vacant, dissolved entirely, or given to trusted members of the NSB. Meanwhile, domestic administrators, new and old alike, had the constant 'assurance' of J.J. Schrieke, Secretary-General for Justice and himself an NSB scab, that they could always claim that their actions were made under duress in the event of an Allied victory (Warmbrunn 1963: 122).

As in Norway, this dynamic of resignation and replacement cascaded down to nearly all levels of government. Of the eleven Provincial Commissioners appointed by the queen before the war, only three remained in office; one post was left vacant and the other seven were filled, after careful consideration and approval, with people who were either NSB members or reliably pro-German. The same was true of mayors from around the country, who, after all, were appointed or dismissed on the advice of these Provincial Commissioners. By June of 1942, the occupational authorities had installed 152 new mayors, half of whom were members of the NSB. The share of mayors on whom the Germans could rely steadily increased over the next period of the occupation, such that, by September 1943, the composition of the approximately 850 mayoral posts in the Netherlands stood as follows:

- 341 (40%): Newly appointed (mostly NSB members or confirmed 'reliables').
- 253 (30%): Investigated, but reconfirmed.
- 208 (25%): 'Holdovers' from before the occupation.
- 48 (5%): Unfilled mayoral posts.

For obvious reasons, occupational officials placed particular emphasis on establishing reliable contacts in the larger Dutch towns. Thus, while more than one-third of the mayors in the Netherlands were members of the NSB, over *half* of the people in the Netherlands (including those of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and The Hague) lived under an NSB mayor. Due to the importance of Dutch mayors for the supervision of the Dutch police, Germany's reliable henchmen in Dutch municipalities were to play a key role in the arrest and deportation of Holland's Jews (Hirschfeld 1988: 42; Warmbrunn 1963: 37).

Indeed, the stamp of German hegemony was no more evident than on the institution of the Dutch police. In this area of administration, authorities in Berlin (and particularly ideologues in the RSHA) had a head start of sorts, given that supervision of local police fell under the purview of Hanns Albin Rauter, the Generalkommissar for Security Affairs and, according to Bruno de Wever, a sort of 'regional Himmler' in the Netherlands. Always eager to please, Rauter paid special attention to the reliability of local police. With the able assistance of Jacobus Schrieke, a loyal NSB member who replaced J.C. Tenkink as Secretary-General for Justice in 1941, Rauter turned the pre-existing, disorganized Dutch police forces into a centralized and disciplined executor unmatched in Seyss-Inquart's empire. Aside from thoroughly reorganizing the Dutch police forces and placing them more squarely in the service of occupational authorities, Rauter also oversaw a dramatic increase in the size of these forces—adding thousands of officers via a central recruiting board that labored under the watchful eye of a German 'advisor'. Few other indigenous Dutch institutions were the subject of such thorough and invasive interference. It should therefore come as no surprise that the Dutch police would turn out to be some of Germany's most loyal henchmen in Western Europe.

It should also be remembered that, like the Dutch police, all civil servants in the Netherlands worked within the context of a German administration that, more than almost anywhere else in Western Europe, extended down the ranks of the executive bureaucracy. Unlike in Norway, the *highest*-ranking domestic authorities in the Netherlands were not even of ministerial rank. Rather, they were permanent under-secretaries—bureaucrats who, formally speaking at least, had no political role in the first place. Thus, when the Norwegian Reichskommissar tinkered with the composition of the domestic administration, he did so at the level of the Norwegian government. (Terboven's quislings were *ministers* of their various governmental departments.) In the Netherlands, a government

of *Germans* was assured; and every resignation, every replacement, every screening for loyalty, and every exertion of German pressure took place at the relatively powerless level of the Secretariat-General. At all administrative levels higher than that, authority was exclusively German. In Norway, the reins of executive authority were taken over by local national socialists, subject to German approval. In the Netherlands, these reins were held tightly by the Germans themselves.

It should also be noted that loyalty within Seyss-Inquart's empire was only maintained at great cost to the Reichskommissar himself. In 1942, the Seyss-Inquart's staff had reached 2000 persons, about a third of whom were Dutch citizens in mostly subordinate positions (office workers, couriers, drivers). Not included in that figure are the nearly 5000 German police stationed in the Netherlands. Those numbers are astounding when compared to Holland's small size. In France (much larger, and with an active and militant resistance), the existence of the Vichy government allowed Germany to get away with a mere 3000 police. And Belgium, though similar in size to the Netherlands in both land area and population, was ruled by a comparatively miniscule contingent of just over 200 German administrators.²⁸ Seyss-Inquart would indeed gain the compliance of his legions. But compliance would come at the cost of a larger, more cumbersome, and ultimately more invasive occupational administration.

In short, the Reichskommissar's stated preference to rule the Netherlands with merely a supervisory administration was not to be realized. German ambition, Dutch resistance, or both brought the relationship between ruler and ruled in the Netherlands toward the hierarchical end of the hierarchy spectrum. To be sure, there was no shortage of willing civil servants and collaborators in the lower echelons of the Dutch bureaucracy or even in the ranks of domestic security forces. But, in most cases, these people were hand-picked or at least approved by their German masters. As a result, their 'traditional' deference to authority is hardly surprising and hardly characteristic of the Dutch populace more generally.

The Reaction of the Dutch Populace

As both cause and consequence of Seyss-Inquart's imperial ambitions, the Dutch public reacted to German occupational authority with 'uncharacteristic' hostility. As early as June 29, 1940, the exiled House of Orange had become a rallying point for Dutch resistance—when demonstrators poured in to the streets on the occasion of Prince Bernhard's birthday. The German

reaction was swift and harsh: a number of agitators were arrested, the mayor of The Hague was dismissed, and further demonstrations of support for the exiled royals were forbidden. But the German moves only enhanced the poignancy of these potent symbols; soon, wearing the color orange or the colors of the Dutch flag (also banned) became effective, if subtle, demonstrations of resistance. By late autumn of 1940, it was clear that Germany's 'gentle hand' in the Netherlands was failing to take hold.

The first major demonstrations against Nazi rule in the Netherlands took place in February 1941, after the arrest of hundreds of Jews for 'terrorism' against German forces. Protesting the arrests (on February 25, 1941), municipal workers, streetcar operators, and laborers around Amsterdam failed to appear at work and, instead, congregated near the city center. No serious incidents took place, however, because the Dutch police deployed to disperse the crowds showed up late and employed relatively soft-handed means of crowd control. The character of the strikes changed dramatically the next day, however, when *German* police arrived on the scene. Their more draconian methods included a declaration of martial law, firearms, and an effort to crush the strike with utter brutality. Pitched battles broke out in the city streets, more than a thousand were arrested, and several were killed. By the next day, relative calm was restored. An embarrassed Seyss-Inquart returned from Vienna (where he had been traveling), imposed fines on the municipalities involved, and dismissed the mayors of Amsterdam, Haarlem, and Zaandam for failing to adequately quash the unrest (Moore 1997: 201). The February Strike was the first mass strike in any territory under Wehrmacht occupation. As we shall see below, it was also the only case in which strikes broke out in direct response to German anti-Jewish measures.²⁹

Following the uprising, German forces in the Netherlands reacted with ever more severity to acts of resistance, unrest, and terror. Arrests, hostage-taking, and summary executions all became increasingly common. But the strikes were also a source of inspiration for the ever-growing resistance. In a sequel to the strike of February 1941, half a million people from around the country took part in the work stoppages of April–May 1943.

As in Norway, defiance to German molestations extended to many aspects of public life in the Netherlands. By the end of 1941, almost 7700 public and confessional associations had been shut down, including youth groups, sports clubs, religious associations, the Rotary Club, and the Boy Scouts. In many cases, members of these groups continued to meet 'underground' or slipped into the resistance. But even where the German administration attempted to 'restructure' such organizations,

their efforts met with failure. When Seyss-Inquart established the Dutch Labor Front in May 1942 [*Nederlands Arbeidsfront* or NAF], it attracted a mere 200,000 workers—as compared with nearly 800,000 organized workers before the war. The medical profession proved resistant as well: When membership of the German-inspired *Artsenkamer* (Chamber of Doctors) was made compulsory, barely 1000 of 6500 practicing doctors in the Netherlands joined the organization.³⁰

Dutch students were among the most defiant groups in the Netherlands. When J. van Dam, Secretary-General for the German-created Department for Education, Science and the Protection of Culture, first attempted to extend the labor draft to university students, the registrar's office at one prominent university burned down and the Free University of Amsterdam simply closed, citing fuel shortages. Eventually, the German administration had no choice but to drop the plan. The Secretary-General's new 'solution' required students to sign a loyalty pledge, and threatened those refusing to sign with immediate draft for labor in Germany. Despite the severity of the threat, only 15% of Dutch students signed the pledge, and most refused to turn up for labor service despite threats of reprisals against their families and the fact that a state of emergency was still in force. By the 1943–1944 academic year, enrollment was at only 10% of its normal level. (In defiance of German molestations, many professors continued to administer exams to students in hiding.)³¹

This brief exploration of public resistance in the Netherlands should serve to demonstrate two important lessons: First, as we saw in the previous chapters on Denmark and Norway, there appears to be a direct relationship between German violations of national sovereignty and domestic demonstrations of resistance. By extending its authority over ever-widening spheres of Dutch political life, the occupying power enhanced its control over the implementation of public policy in the occupied country. However, doing so came only at two great costs—first, the cost of developing an ever-larger administrative apparatus and, second, the cost of maintaining that apparatus in the face of ever-increasing resistance. Of course, all over occupied Europe, resistance usually grew stronger as the war progressed and Germany started to lose. Nevertheless, the decreasing marginal returns of *extending* occupational hegemony at any given moment in the war are hard to ignore. Second, these stories of resistance lead us to question the prevailing view of Dutch political culture. In light of the forgoing, the notion that the Dutch people were somehow 'traditionally deferential' in the face of escalating German abuse seems unreasonable.

Preparing for the Final Solution in the Netherlands

In the Netherlands, the persecution of the Jews proceeded entirely according to plan. It was to become, quite literally, a model for the implementation of the Final Solution elsewhere in occupied Europe. But the efficient execution of Nazi policy in the Netherlands was no more an accident of history than it was a reflection of the (supposed) passivity of the Dutch people. Rather, the destruction of Dutch Jewry was an inevitable consequence of the occupational regime imposed upon the Netherlands by Germany. With direct—albeit costly—oversight of the administration in this rebellious province, German leaders could proceed with the flawless implementation of genocidal policy without concern for the middlemen who so often hindered German persecutors elsewhere on the continent.

Genocide began in the Netherlands, as it was to do in most of Europe, with the steady onslaught of anti-Jewish legislation. Within weeks, it was clear that initial German restraint in the Netherlands—short-lived as it was, anyway—was not to apply to the Dutch Jews. By August and September of 1940, most Jewish newspapers were banned and preparations were already underway for the suspension of Jewish civil servants. In October, Seyss-Inquart published his administration's legal definition of a 'Jew'—a definition that followed, by and large, the guidelines set out at Nuremberg.

Given the unrest that greeted the mass arrests of February 1941, Seyss-Inquart recognized the value of addressing the Jews of Holland through an organization of their own making. Thus, he established contact with the newly formed Jewish Council (or *Joodsche Raad*), an umbrella organization for Amsterdam's Jews led by Abraham Asscher (a diamond merchant and President of Holland's Ashkenazi Jewish community) and David Cohen (a classics professor). From then on, all German decrees concerning the Jews of Holland would be issued through the authorities in the Dutch Jewish Council.

In fact, the Jewish Council was not the first comprehensive Jewish organization in the Netherlands. A few months earlier, a Jewish Coordinating Committee (*Joodse Coördinatiecommissie*) had been founded by L.E. Visser, the recently suspended president of Holland's Supreme Court. But Visser's views clashed with those of Asscher and Cohen, the former being viewed as a strong-minded (or 'stubborn') revolutionary opposed to any direct contact with the occupying power and the latter, "realists" (in their own words), dedicated to making the best of a bad

situation. Ultimately, it was the accommodationist camp that won out: Visser's Coordinating Committee was disbanded and the Jewish Council's authority was extended over the whole of the Netherlands.

As the Germans had hoped when they established it, the Council became a conduit for the German administration of Jewish life in the occupied territory, ranging from initial molestations like the Jewish star decree in May 1942 to the provision of social services. Gradually, the Council took over for native Dutch institutions in attending to the needs of Holland's Jewish citizens, serving, in parallel, many of the same functions while being responsible for the enforcement of an ever-increasing array of German decrees. The Council's most infamous role, however, was its somewhat direct participation in the deportation of Dutch Jewry.

Deportations

German preparation for what would become a huge operation was attended by the usual host of infighting among those in the occupational administration. Seyss-Inquart showed great concern that the deportation orders, which would inevitably arrive via the RSHA-established Central Office for Jewish Emigration [*Zentralstelle für Jüdische Auswanderung*], would serve to enhance the position of Rauter, his sometime subordinate. But despite the occasional and usually minor setback caused by such squabbles, the Final Solution in the Netherlands proceeded according to plan. Once the deportations were under way, Eichmann was able to reflect on his accomplishment: In the Netherlands, he said, the 'transports ran so smoothly that it was a joy to watch them'.

The first transport left Amsterdam for 'labor service' on July 15, 1942. In preparation, the Germans arrested some 700 Jews as hostages the day before. This led the Jewish Council to reluctantly participate in the process, reminding those slated for transport that the fate of 700 fellow Jews was at stake. But Cohen also managed to extract a small concession from the Germans, who agreed to use passenger trains rather than freight cars for the deportation. Once the transport was on its way, and even though the total number of Jews reporting was short of quota, most of the hostages were released.³²

The Jewish Council was charged with the difficult task of selecting Jews for deportation. This assured that many of the early victims came from the almost 20,000 foreign Jews³³ living in the Netherlands, precisely those with the least connection to the Dutch elite of the Jewish Council. The

transports continued with ‘chronological precision’ (Moore 1997: 102) for the rest of the year and into the next. By the end of March 1943, over 52,000 Jews had been deported. In the spring and summer which followed, various tie-ups in the machinery of destruction forced transports from France and Belgium to a virtual halt.³⁴ But transports from the Netherlands steadily increased over the same period, as Dutch Jews were simply diverted to Sobibor instead. The ‘success’ of Nazi operations in the Netherlands clearly pleased the likes of Rauter and Seyss-Inquart, not to mention Eichmann. But the operation also caused concern for lower-ranking officials in the German occupying administration, who feared that, with the Dutch Jews gone, Berlin might find it prudent to have them transferred to the Eastern Front.

As a somber epilogue in this story of destruction, Raul Hilberg notes that Germany’s expropriation of Jewish property was more thorough in the Netherlands than anywhere else under Axis domination. The reason, he adds, is because German authorities in the Netherlands had no need to make property concessions to indigenous authorities. Though more direct and more costly, German efforts in the Netherlands were also more successful than elsewhere in the German sphere of influence.

The Dutch Police

Police played an important and increasing role in the operations and their success. As the fiction of ‘labor service’ slowly became known and fewer Jews responded to the Council’s pleas for ‘voluntary’ deportation, German authorities came to rely, more and more, on mass arrests to make up for the shortfalls. Of course, with a security force of about 5000 German police, Rauter had a substantial staff of his own to carry out the task.³⁵ But given his ambitious and able reorganization of native security forces in the years before, he also had access to Dutch SS regiments, NSB militias, and the ordinary Dutch police.

On the whole, even the Dutch police turned out to be loyal to their German masters. Of course, there were occasional reports of Dutch police leaking word of impending operations or shirking in their duties; and, in a letter to Himmler praising the Dutch police for their zeal, Rauter also complained that they had a tendency to enrich themselves with Jewish property. But these complaints must be seen in the context of a larger (and successful) operation—one about which German authorities were rightly satisfied. In the words of one Rauter subordinate: ‘it would have been

practically impossible to seize even 10 per cent of Dutch Jewry without them!’ (as quoted in Hirschfeld 1988: 173 and Moore 1997: 203). We should note that the loyal practice (if not attitude) of the regular Dutch police applied to *all* aspects of occupational policy.³⁶ Just as the Jews of the Netherlands suffered more intensely than those of Belgium or France, the non-Jewish citizens of that country faced a more brutal occupation than their contemporaries in more compliant regimes. The suffering of Dutch Jewry was part and parcel to the suffering of Dutch people writ large.

But the participation of the regular Dutch police—so often ‘credited’ with Holland’s high victimization rate—must be seen in the context of a German occupation that made it virtually impossible for them to opt out. Though NSB members and Dutch SS men were certainly only a minority in the Dutch police force, their numbers were, thanks to Rauter’s extensive reorganizations, far greater than in other areas of the Dutch administration. Moreover, intense supervision on the part of Reich authorities and their appointed henchmen in the domestic administration (including, of course, J.J. Schrieke, the NSB Secretary-General for Justice as of July 1941) resulted in both carrots and sticks for loyal participation: Rauter made sure that those refusing to participate faced immediate dismissal and threats against their families. But he also promised promotion, recognition, special leave, and bonuses for those who did their work. Of course, the most overarching explanation for police compliance may lie in the ‘psychological climate’ in which the operations were carried out (Hirschfeld 1988: 177) or simply in the hierarchical structure common to any police organization (à la Browning 1992b). But here too, the sheer number of German appointees and their prominence in the administration meant that even those few with the wherewithal and inclination to object to their duties did so with ‘no sympathetic superior ear’ (Moore 1997: 203) and without the support of their ‘more ordinary’ colleagues. While there was certainly no shortage of ‘willing executioners’ in the mix of the ordinary Dutch police, it is nonetheless clear that, by and large, their behavior was an issue of circumstance, not attitude. Ordinary Dutch police participated in the operation, not because they demonstrated ‘typical’ Dutch complacency, but because their ranks had been so thoroughly vetted, supervised, and infiltrated by Nazis, antisemites, and German appointees.

Of course, the price of compliance increased as Germany started to lose the war.³⁷ Germany changed its tactics accordingly—first, by relying more on arrest than appeal to meet deportation quotas and, later, by leaning more heavily on German rather than Dutch units to do the work.³⁸

The latter stages of the occupation were also marked by the creation of auxiliary Jew-hunting units, including the notorious Henneicke Column, but even this organization was eventually disbanded and attached to a German security force. The operation was expensive, and increasingly so. But nowhere in Western Europe (except in Luxembourg) did Germany see comparable results.

Exemption Stamps

Concurrent with Germany's redoubled efforts to root out Dutch Jewry was an equally intense scramble for exemption stamps. The formalization of the exemption system began as a German concession to the Jewish Council, which had complained that, given the sheer pace of round-up operations, it had no time to investigate individual exemption claims. Soon, German authorities divvied out exemption stamps to a whole range of exempted Jews: Jews in mixed marriages, Christians, workers in essential industries, citizens of the 'right' foreign countries, and—by far the largest of any such group (with 17,500 exemptions)—employees of the Jewish Council. The scene at the Jewish Council office on the day the first stamps were issued was—quite understandably—one of chaos. Charges of elitism followed, and they continued throughout the war and even to the present day (see Moore 1997: 97). But for most, even the elite, the frenzy constituted a mad dash to the upper decks of a sinking ship: By May 1943, the relatively small number of Jews left in the Netherlands no longer justified such a large Council staff, and German authorities instructed Asscher and Cohen to select 7000 'exempted Jews' from among their own ranks. Some, of course, argue(d) that the Council never should have gotten to such a stage in the first place; but, in its sad consistency, the Council even agreed (unanimously!) to deport its own members. The 'core' of the Jewish Council steadily diminished in size until September 1943; at that point, Asscher and Cohen were themselves deported (albeit, to 'better' concentration camps) and the Council was closed. What remained was a tiny staff of four or five functionaries, maintained, ostensibly, for record-keeping, but perhaps more likely as an argument for those in Berlin that the German personnel who supervised the Dutch Jewish Council were still needed in the Netherlands rather than on the Eastern Front (Moore 1997: 103, 127).

At this point, the few Jews who remained in the Netherlands did so either legally or as *onderduikers* ('divers', people in hiding). Initially, the

latter group consisted of about 25,000 Jews, but only two-thirds of those survived for the duration of the war. Those who survived above the surface did so as members of ever-shrinking and ever more precarious exempted groups. These included 'sterilized' Jews in mixed marriages,³⁹ Jews of 'disputed' ancestry,⁴⁰ 'baptized' Jews from obedient churches,⁴¹ and 'foreign' Jews from select countries.⁴² The survival of so many Jews in hiding or by quasi-legal means is remarkable for a country of such small size, under such thorough German surveillance, where the penalties for disobedience were so severe. It also reflects the desperate situation of those in German-occupied Holland, who, unlike their counterparts in Belgium or France, had no official channels through which to direct their efforts to survive. Though going underground was a difficult and risky option anywhere in German-occupied Western Europe, it was the *only* choice for most Dutch Jews; in Belgium, France, and Italy, there was at least the faint hope (and, indeed, the reality) that government-level authorities would intervene on behalf of local Jews. Opportunities to survive the Nazi onslaught legally, rare everywhere, were virtually non-existent in the Netherlands.

Public Reaction to the Anti-Jewish Actions

Ordinary citizens and indigenous Dutch institutions reacted strongly to the persecution of Dutch Jewry. But the tragic nature of their choice was to become immediately clear.

Consider, for example, the reaction of Dutch universities to Nazi anti-Jewish policy and the German response which followed. In November 1940, occupational authorities announced the dismissal of all university professors of Jewish ancestry. As early as October, however, when the impending action was merely a rumor, a diverse group of professors petitioned the German command to desist from anti-Jewish measures. When the Reichskommissar went ahead with the plan anyway, universities in the Netherlands faced a choice as to how they were going to react.

At two of the Netherlands' major public universities (the University of Leiden and the Technical Institute of Delft), the faculty protested the measures and student strikes broke out. These universities were soon shut down, and the most outspoken professors, arrested. The remaining faculty (who, for almost two years, remained on the payroll at an empty university) resigned in May 1942, when the NSB Secretary-General for Education threatened to replace dismissed or arrested professors with NSB scabs. Those professors, too, were arrested in large numbers.

The more quiescent universities in the Netherlands remained open for a time, with many university officials discouraging resistance and, at the same time, advising that university enrollment was a student's best chance to avoid the labor draft. As we have seen, it was not until March of 1943 that Germany's henchmen attempted to institute the draft at the remaining Dutch universities, and, then, with 'disastrous' results.

Thus, in the reaction of Dutch universities, we see both a foreshadowing of what was to happen in the Netherlands and a microcosm of events around German-occupied Europe. While no institution was safe from German molestation in the long term, nearly all could extract concessions for early acts of obedience. Radical rejection of Nazi policy was a prelude to severe retaliation. And while a willingness to compromise could do little to alter Germany's ultimate intentions, it could at least delay the repression until more outright acts of defiance were prudent.

We saw a similar dynamic when Nazi-inspired anti-Jewish measures extended beyond the hallowed halls of the university to Dutch society at large. When Seyss-Inquart threatened to dismiss all Jews from public service, for example, the College of Secretaries-General initially refused—but eventually gave in on the grounds that, by doing so, they could 'produce a better financial settlement for those dismissed' (Moore 1997: 56). On the other hand, the February Strikes give us a case where acts of defiance were met with ever more severe repression. As we have seen, the strikes led to punitive fines, the dismissal of several key mayors, and the imposition of martial law. But they also led, in a more general sense, to a fundamental change in Germany's treatment of the Netherlands and the Dutch people: Far from meeting these 'fellow-Aryans' on an plane of mutual respect, Germany soon subjected the Netherlands to a mode of occupation (and a corresponding level of brutality) unknown in Western Europe. The Dutch Jews were to share (in greater but proportional degree) the burden of that brutality with their fellow citizens.

What is remarkable about much of the unrest in the Netherlands, however, is its specifically Jewish character. Although there is some indication that certain shipyard workers *also* joined the February Strikes because they feared that the arrest of Jews would set a precedent for later, labor-related deportations, the Jewish catalyst for the unrest can hardly go unnoticed. German-occupied Europe gives us only a few cases of widespread resistance to anti-Jewish measures per se; but in the Netherlands, anti-Jewish measures were resisted *because* they were anti-Jewish, not because they represented a German incursion in an otherwise non-Jewish area of public

policy. If the Netherlands was subjected to a particularly harsh occupation, widespread concern for Dutch Jews is at least part of the reason.⁴³ The Dutch people, Jew and non-Jew alike, would pay dearly for their opposition to Nazi antisemitism.

In many respects, the experience of Dutch churches during the war presents, in microcosm, the dilemma faced by all sorts of institutions under German occupation. In the summer of 1942, when the deportations were first announced, Catholic and Protestant churches made their opposition known and threatened to read letters of protest from pulpits around the country. Commissioner-General Schmidt quickly warned them against doing so. Ultimately, Roman Catholic and Calvinist churches went ahead with the protests anyway, ensuring that Jewish converts in their congregations were among those to be deported. Only the large Dutch Reformed Church heeded Schmidt's warning, and thus earned reprieve for its 1000 or so Jewish members.⁴⁴ Though different in scope, religious and educational institutions faced a similar dilemma as the occupied state itself. Cooperative universities could protect their students and staff; cooperative churches could protect their (Jewish) parishioners. Resistance, though noble and good, was tantamount to institutional suicide. This was true both of state institutions and social organizations.

Reflections on the Dutch Case

Juxtaposed against the cases we have already seen, the German occupation of the Netherlands fits a clear pattern. As in Norway, institutional resistance to the occupation led to the imposition of a particularly direct form of occupational hierarchy. In fact, for a variety of reasons and in a number of respects, the resulting equilibrium was even more hierarchical than in Norway and more closely resembled the direct administrative regimes imposed on Eastern Europe.⁴⁵ This 'Eastern' style of occupation was costly for occupier and occupied alike. The Dutch people paid dearly for their resistance. And while Seyss-Inquart's empire was only maintained at great expense, Germany was, by and large, successful in meeting its objectives.

This presentation of the Dutch case challenges the notion that the Dutch people were somehow 'traditionally complacent' in the face of this brutality. To the contrary, given the extreme nature of German authority in the Netherlands, the levels of resistance in that country are actually quite impressive. Though not usually military in nature, civil disobedience

in the Netherlands was organized early (when a German victory looked certain) and encompassed vast sectors of the civilian population. Nowhere else in Europe was resistance directed so specifically against the antisemitic policies of the Nazi regime. And nowhere else in Europe (except Poland) did so many individuals risk so much to help individual Jews avoid capture. The Netherlands' 4289 'righteous gentiles' (more than double the number in France (1913) and triple that of Belgium (1172)) are hardly emblematic of their country's reputation for 'traditional deference'.

Thus, by illustrating the 'opposite extreme' of the Danish case, the Dutch case presents a considerable challenge to the prevailing notion that political culture has much effect on rates of Jewish victimization. Like all of the countries we have considered so far, the Netherlands was a constitutional monarchy with deeply entrenched democratic attitudes and a long history of religious toleration. Not surprisingly, then, Dutch political elites rejected any compromise with the Nazi regime; and ordinary Dutch citizens participated in broad-based (albeit non-military) resistance to Nazi policy, particularly anti-Jewish policy. Far from saving the Jews of the Netherlands, however, these acts of defiance only stiffened German resolve and contributed to the establishment of ever more direct forms of German hierarchy. In a certain manner of speaking, the Netherlands did not lose so many Jews *despite* its resistance to Nazi policy, but because of it. Moral assessments of events and attitudes should be based on something more nuanced than rates of Jewish victimization.

Reflections on the Jewish Council

While the extant literature is, in my view, wrong in its assessment of Dutch responses to the Holocaust, judgments of Dutch Jewish Council, like the actions of the Council itself, are more complex. There can be no doubt, of course, that Council leaders helped the Germans in a dreadful task, that they did so, hindsight now tells us, for far longer than they should have, and, most infamously, that they personally benefited from their cooperation with the Germans—be it by securing exemptions for their closest confidants or by ensuring that their own deportation would be to a 'better' concentration camp.⁴⁶ There can also be no doubt, on a practical level, that they failed in their stated task: protecting Dutch Jewry from an even worse fate.

But due, in part, to the insightful work of historians like Bob Moore, debate on the Jewish Council has recently come to focus not on the

irresponsibility of its actions or the purity of its motives, but on the national context in which it operated. This refocused debate, Moore argues,

rightly, gives prominence to the power and administrative organisation of the Germans and their ability to harness Dutch institutions and organisations to carry out their plans. While of vital importance to the history of the Jews in the Netherlands, the Jewish Council, its leadership and its actions were only of secondary importance in the execution of the 'Final Solution'. (Moore 1997: 111)

In other words, the Jewish Council shared a fundamental similarity with *many* institutions in German-occupied Holland. Its failure to extract concessions from the Germans was limited and poor, not or not only because its membership was 'traditionally deferential', but because German authority and supervision in the Netherlands was so absolute. Given the nature of German hierarchy in the Netherlands, the Jewish Council, like its non-Jewish counterparts in the governmental bureaucracy, had little room to maneuver. It might have been able to do more, or its members might have been fools for thinking that they could. But, in the shadow of other, far more central factors for Holland's high victimization rate, its influence is wrongly inflated.

BELGIUM

Belgium constitutes a 'middle' case in this study of the Final Solution. Due to varying estimates by the occupying power itself and contemporary disputes about how to calculate Belgium's Jewish population during the war, the precise 'accounting' for the destruction of Belgian Jewry varies considerably in the historical record. Nonetheless, by all accounts, Belgium remains a country where about half of the Jewish population survived the Nazi onslaught.

This section endeavors to show that Belgium is also a middle case in terms of German *Besatzungspolitik*. Though it is often and correctly 'lumped together' with the Netherlands as having a 'headless' domestic administration during the war, Belgium actually shared significant features with its southern neighbor, France. Like France (and unlike the Netherlands), Belgium was subjected to military rather than civilian occupational rule. Belgium also retained an importantly symbolic institution for the duration of the war, a king and royal family whose mere presence

and behind-the-scenes lobbying provided a constant counterweight (or headache) to German policymakers in Berlin. Thus, even though German hierarchy in Belgium shared some important features with German hierarchy in the Netherlands, it also shared some characteristics with German-occupied France. Belgium was a middle case, not just with respect to the Final Solution, but in terms of the nature of German hierarchy in the country.

The German Invasion of Belgium

The Belgium that German troops encountered on May 10, 1940, was no less hostile to Germany than the Netherlands. On both sides of the linguistic divide, Belgians had little sympathy for their national socialist neighbor, a sentiment fortified by Belgium's prior experience, unique in Western Europe, with full German occupation during World War I. But Belgium's strong commitment to neutrality and united opposition to Nazi Germany hide an underlying 'Democratic Crisis' in the country, where political elites, King Leopold included, expressed growing impatience with the 'petty partisanship' of parliamentary politics. This sentiment reflected a widespread skepticism as to nineteenth-century liberalism's ability to accommodate twentieth-century problems, and it mirrored similar undercurrents throughout democratic Western Europe. In Belgium alone, however, the existing crisis foreshadowed a coming schism between king and parliament over how to respond to this sequel in German military conquest.⁴⁷

German troops faced stiff opposition in Belgium. Led by their king and commander-in-chief, Belgian forces held out until May 27—inflicting heavy losses on the advancing German army and thereby facilitating British and French retreats. The resistance of this tiny nation was not futile. But Belgium paid a hefty price for its initial opposition to the German invasion. When the smoke cleared, 12,000 Belgians lay dead (most of them civilians), and the British retreat left swaths of the country in ruins.

In some ways, the most significant casualty of the German invasion was the already-tenuous relationship between king and parliament. Within hours of the invasion, the Belgian prime minister, Hubert Pierlot, asked the king to address parliament and rally the nation for the fight to come, much as King Albert (Leopold's father) had done at the start of World War I. Citing his duties as commander-in-chief, the king refused; but for some, the king's refusal signified an unwillingness to side with the Allies

and, in a more general sense, his continued frustration with parliamentary politics. The schism culminated in an acrimonious meeting on May 25, when defeat was all but certain and, over the strenuous objection of Pierlot and other cabinet ministers, Leopold made clear his intention to remain with his troops, to sign an armistice, and to allow himself to be taken as a prisoner of war (POW).⁴⁸ Pierlot threatened that such an action would leave him no choice but to repudiate the king;⁴⁹ however, in a radio address on May 28, he refrained from actually doing so, for fear that exercising this 'nuclear option' might prompt the king to appoint a new government under the Germans.

Judgments over the king's actions were (and are) bitterly divided. Soon after the capitulation, a committee of Belgian jurists justified Leopold's actions.

It was clear in the eyes of everyone that [the king's] only choice was between more horrible carnage of soldiers and civilians ... and the decision he made.... By sharing the army's fate, he assured the best treatment for his army both militarily and in terms of morale. Ultimately, if order and discipline were maintained after the surrender, the presence of the king played the greatest part in this. (Carlyle: 196–7)

Just as important, the king's judgment found an echo in Belgian public opinion, where the inevitability of defeat and the king's 'valiant' decision to stand by his troops and subjects won more praise than condemnation. French accusations of Belgian 'betrayal' only stiffened Belgian resolve and enhanced public support for the king's 'noble' sacrifice. An already-popular monarch was quickly revered for his martyrdom and became a focal point for Belgian nationalism in a time of international crisis.⁵⁰

German Objectives in Belgium

German objectives in Belgium were somewhat more limited than in the Netherlands, Luxembourg, or even the 'Nordic' states. Though Himmler and some ideologues advocated attaching Belgium's Flemish areas to the Netherlands in preparation for eventual annexation, Hitler was eventually won over by his administration's more pragmatic elements, who feared that such encroachments might disrupt economic production or fuel unrest among the general populace. The Flemish National Union (*Vlaamsch National Verbond*, or VNV), the most important political party

for Flemish nationalists, continued to lobby for a closer union with the Netherlands, and thus shared their aspirations with the Dutch NSB. In the eyes of economic and military planners in Berlin, Belgium's main utility to the German Reich lay in the possibility for economic exploitation or as a jumping-off point for the eventual invasion of Great Britain. As such, Belgium could, for the time being, be governed by a less invasive military administration, one capable of preserving order and tranquility while not jeopardizing Germany's other aims or closing future options.

To achieve these goals, Hitler summoned the General Baron Alexander von Falkenhausen out of retirement and appointed him military commander (*Militärbefehlshaber*) of occupied Belgium and two adjoining departments in France (Nord and Pas-de-Calais).⁵¹ As a military commander, Falkenhausen was not directly responsible to Hitler (as were Reichskommissars Seyss-Inquart and Terboven), but rather to the Wehrmacht. His position in the German chain of command thus fit well with his primary instructions, to treat his administration as a temporary one and to give the Belgian people every indication that his was a regime of occupation rather than annexation. Falkenhausen's marching orders fit well with his personal ideology: He was described as 'clear-headed [and] sober (at least in judgment)'; but he was not, in fact, a Nazi. Falkenhausen's personal outlook also made him vulnerable to the charge that he was too soft on the Belgians and even 'ideologically untrustworthy, ... a man who could not be counted upon to impose Nazi principles in Belgium with vigor or conviction' (Rich 1974: 174).⁵² As we shall see, Falkenhausen himself (and his similarly minded staff) was to play an important role in mitigating the worst Nazi policies; in fact, after the war, he tried to justify his role with the 'lesser evil' argument of many collaborators, claiming that his failure to cooperate would have led Berlin to impose a civilian administration on Belgium, much like the Netherlands' or Norway's Reichskommissariat.⁵³

Falkenhausen was assisted by a staff who shared his general approach to the occupation. His chief subordinate was SS Obergruppenführer Eggert Reeder, a Nazi of long-standing, but a man who determined, after being commissioned to study German occupation policy in Belgium during World War I, that Germany's primary error at that time had been the attempt to control the country's domestic affairs too tightly. At times, Reeder may have been annoyed by his relatively low level in the administrative apparatus, but his position had a hidden blessing in that his role in a *military* institution insulated him (as it was to insulate Belgium) from

molestation by the SS or other civilian arms of Germany's bureaucratic jungle. All in all, the various German occupational agencies in Belgium got along well, and internal morale remained high throughout the occupation. Like his superior, Reeder's professionalism (and perhaps opportunism) led him to appoint a staff and promote policies aimed more toward pragmatic governance and Germany's ultimate victory than to the 'grand designs' of fanatical idealism.

All things considered, we see in Belgium an occupational staff of military moderates. Unlike Norway's Terboven or Holland's 'Austrian Mafia', von Falkenhausen was a retired military man, an aristocratic holdover from the old regime, and a person whose political sensibilities (insofar as he had them) lay far from those of his Nazi superiors. His highest subordinate, Reeder, was a Nazi and a member of the SS, but he was also a loyal administrator and an opportunist, whose professional experience taught him that Germany's mistake in World War I had been to rule Belgium too directly. Of course, we cannot know every factor that led Germany to appoint a moderate staff such as this one, nor can we hope to reduce such complex decisions to any one factor. But it seems clear that King Leopold's cooperative stance—his decision to stay in the country and the calming effect this had on his subjects—was a pivotal determinant of Belgium's relatively gentle occupation regime. Let us now consider the king's role in greater detail.

The King's New Clothes

Symbolism is powerful. Stripped of their democratic leadership, the Belgian people turned to their formally symbolic leader, endowing him with real power as a coordination point for national resilience and as a model of dignified behavior for prisoners in a time of crisis. The Germans took note of Leopold's office and made every effort to avoid offending a popular monarch who, for good or for ill, endured the sacrifice of imprisonment to stay with his loyal subjects. In time, they even hoped the king would give his blessing to a quisling government of pro-German Belgians—a government with a royal stamp of approval that might, thereby, win the popular support that still alluded Quisling himself. Leopold's popularity, and the potential power this granted him, meant that even the Germans had to tread lightly in His Majesty's presence.

The king played a key role in Germany's decision to subject Belgium to military, rather than civilian, rule. For one thing, German policymakers

may have anticipated the king's calming effect on the populace, and thereby reckoned that, with the king in Belgium, a 'supervisory administration' (*Aufsichtsverwaltung*) was all that was needed (see Wever 1998: 155). It also did not hurt Belgium's cause that the king had relatives in Italy's royal family, or that the aristocratic Baron von Falkenhausen could be expected to fraternize with Belgian nobility (which he did). But most importantly, the mere presence of King Leopold III led the Germans to refrain from imposing a more invasive civilian authority on Belgium, a hesitation the Germans did *not* show in the Netherlands. According to historian Bruno de Wever:

Hitler hoped to be able to win the political approval of the Belgian head-of-state and thereby wanted to avoid alienating him [... *nicht vor den Kopf stoßen*]. As a result, he held fast to the Military Administration, an occupation regime which had, in principle, no political role and would thereby leave open all future options. (1996: 79)

The king was ideally positioned to give sanction (or withhold disapproval) regarding Hitler's most important military objectives in Belgium. His safety and his continued presence in Belgium were, therefore, of the utmost concern to policymakers in Berlin.⁵⁴

In fact, recognition of the king's *de facto* significance found its way to the highest levels of German government. As late as 1943, Himmler issued a tersely worded report to his field commander in Belgium, SS-Brigadeführer Richard Jungclaus:

In the name of the Führer, I authorize you to make use of every resource to insure that, under no circumstance, should the Belgian king be allowed to escape. The Chief of the Military Command [Falkenhausen] has received the same order from [head of the German army] Keitel. I am holding you personally responsible for this; so take all necessary measures. (NS19/75)

It goes without saying that a 'merely' symbolic leader would not have attracted the same attention, even and especially by those who still advocated more invasive modes of occupational rule.

Indeed, the king was no ordinary POW, his official status notwithstanding. On November 19, 1940, he was granted an audience with Hitler himself, a meeting in which he asked for German assurances regarding three primary issues: Belgian independence (by which he also meant territorial integrity), the provision of food [*Lebensmittelversorgung*], and the release

of Belgian POWs.⁵⁵ Hitler was careful to make no promises, and prudently noted that all final decisions would have to wait until the end of the war. But the nature of the conversation was interesting. When asked for more specifics regarding the possibility of Belgian independence, Hitler replied that the ‘internal independence of Belgium would be ever greater, the clearer and more explicitly Belgium stood by Germany diplomatically and militarily’. Leopold pressed the issue, asking Hitler for assurances that Belgium’s political independence would be re-established. To this request, according to a Foreign Ministry summary of the meeting, the Führer was ‘very clear, that Belgium must hold up its end of the bargain to cooperate in the areas of military and foreign policy’.⁵⁶ Leopold’s meeting with Hitler made it explicitly clear that the king could only help his subjects by bringing his government (or what remained of it) into line with the German war effort.

Though the king’s specific requests may have fallen on deaf ears, he was still being heard. Secret discussions among German authorities in Berlin reveal that the king continued to play an active role, albeit from behind the scenes. A 1941 report from Gottlob Berger (Himmler’s Chief of Staff) makes mention of Leopold’s meeting with a Reich official (Head of the Presidential Chancellery, Otto Meissner) and of Leopold’s complaint that German meddling in Belgian fascist organizations could only problematize relations between the two countries (NS19-1539). Two years later, King Leopold complained about the cruel treatment [*grausamer Behandlung*] of Belgian deportees and forced laborers.⁵⁷ He went on to add that Belgium ‘must cooperate, by way of labor, in fighting the danger of communism. Belgium carries the responsibility to get involved in the war’ (NS19-2264). Both in direct conversation with the king and behind closed doors, German policymakers expressed the notion that only Belgian cooperation could result in German concessions.

Later on in this chapter, we will discuss the Belgian Queen Mother’s very direct role in the protection of Belgian Jewry. (She lobbied on behalf of Jewish citizens in her country—though she remained mostly silent during the deportation of Jewish foreigners.) In this discussion of the nature of Germany hierarchy, however, it makes sense ‘merely’ to observe the king’s important role in affecting German behavior during the occupation. By virtue of his very title, Leopold III held within him the potential to sanction Germany’s future plans. German officials, therefore, had every incentive to show him that his public cooperation (if not his private approval) would lead to certain rewards. Even without a formal political role, the

king's potential influence was clearly on the minds of many in Germany's occupational administration. '[H]is very presence within Belgium', argues Martin Conway, 'would have a major influence on the political life of the country' (p. 26). Some may suggest that the king, as a POW, was of no political import. But wartime administrators in Germany clearly felt otherwise, and theirs was the assessment that ultimately mattered when it came to the implementation of the Final Solution in Belgium.

The Administration of German-Occupied Belgium

As in the Netherlands, the day-to-day administration of occupied Belgium was carried out by the Secretaries-General of the various government ministries. Legal basis for their authority rested on an emergency decree, passed by the Belgian legislature on the very day of the German invasion. This decree served the function that the 1937 Directives did in the Netherlands, giving the highest-ranking civil servant in each department legislative power in the event of his superior's resignation. As in the Netherlands, Germany used this domestic, 'headless' administration to expedite the implementation (and export the costs) of occupational policy.

In placing administrative responsibility on the shoulders of domestic officials, Germany left little to chance. Using the subterfuge of a mandatory retirement law, Germany dismissed thousands of governors, judges, mayors, and police commissioners loyal to the departed regime. In so doing, occupying officials ensured that the domestic bureaucracy was 'friendly' (or at least not 'unfriendly') to the occupational administration. In the process, Germany also found a place for discharged soldiers and youthful opportunists. By War's end, half of Belgium's mayors⁵⁸ and eight of nine provincial governors had been replaced. In total, some 2800 civil servants were dismissed from their posts, clearing the way for German appointees more willing to toe the occupier's line.

In practice, the Secretaries-General in Belgium acted quite differently from their Dutch counterparts. For much of the war, the Secretaries-General of Belgium met regularly as a committee and came to constitute a governing body (if not a formal government) with an effective veto over German decrees. Of course, the aforementioned mandatory retirement law applied to the members of this committee as well; however, though Germany usually 'strongly endorsed' certain candidates and ultimately retained an (informal) veto, replacement Secretaries-General were chosen by the members themselves, who thereby retained the power to set

the agenda in terms of who those replacements would be. (We must also remember that, on the German side of this equation, the relevant veto-players were pragmatic military men, rather than civilian ideologues.) As a result, Belgium's civil service scabs were usually chosen on the basis of professional—rather than ideological—merit. And though, by war's end, only three of the original eleven Secretaries-General remained at their posts, only two were clearly pro-German. In formal terms, Germany's administration of Belgium looked much like its administration of the Netherlands, but there were important (informal) differences in terms of how that administration was actually carried out in practice.

This is not to say that Germany was somehow passive in its administration of a small and formerly hostile country. By maintaining only a supervisory administration in Belgium, Falkenhausen was indeed able to limit the size of his staff in that country and thus conserve valuable manpower.⁵⁹ But according to Werner Warmbrunn, the

concept of a purely supervisory administration [in Belgium] must be taken with a grain of salt, even if it remains true that ... existing government services [there] were left more scope and autonomy than in the Netherlands. (1993: 72)

In other words, the practice of occupational administration in Belgium and the Netherlands differed slightly but importantly. As we shall see in the next sections, the Final Solution was one such policy that would be affected by informal differences in the Belgian and Dutch occupation regimes.

The Implementation of Anti-Jewish Policy and the AJB

Belgium's Jewish population differed somewhat from that of the Netherlands. Though the two countries were similar in terms of total population size and land area, the Jewish population of Belgium at the time of the German invasion was smaller, consisting of only 65,696 persons.⁶⁰ Most of Belgium's Jews were concentrated in Brussels and Antwerp, with smaller communities in Liège and Charleroi; and, compared to that of the Netherlands, the Jewish community in Belgium was younger, less affluent, and less settled, in no small part because more than half of the Jews in Belgium were immigrants. Still, in a Jewish sense, Belgium and the Netherlands shared two important features in common: (1) German expectations for deportations

from *both* countries were rather low, and (2) the citizens of neither country had a 'proper' understanding of the Jewish Question from the German point of view.⁶¹

Germany introduced a slow but steady stream of anti-Jewish decrees during the first two years of the occupation. Starting in October 1940, ritual slaughter was outlawed, 'Jews' were defined, and the Jewish Community was forced to conduct a census. Within months, Jews were removed from various positions in the social life of Belgium (Jewish teachers and civil servants were forced to step down). The stream continued through 1941, when Jewish-owned radios were confiscated, a curfew was introduced, and Jews were legally confined to the cities of Brussels, Antwerp, Liège, and Charleroi. In January 1942, Jews were forbidden from leaving the country. In March of 1942, a labor draft was introduced. And in May of 1942, Jews were forced to wear the yellow star.⁶²

In November of 1941, Germany created a Belgian Jewish Council (the *Association des Juifs en Belgique* or AJB) and made membership compulsory. (It was a sign of the community's unstable character that no such institution already existed.) To make matters more complicated, many prominent Belgian Jews had fled the country in the wake of the German invasion, and so the Council that was created commanded little authority within the unorganized, fragmented, and beleaguered Jewish Community itself.⁶³ Making its job even more difficult, a group of Jewish partisans burst into the AJB's office in July 1942 and destroyed its list of would-be 'labor' draftees; a month later, partisans killed a chief official in the organization, Robert Holcinger. As a result of these actions and the AJB's general lack of authority in the Jewish Community, the behavior of the Belgian Jewish Council was never comparable to that of its Dutch counterpart; however, the AJB's diminished role also spared it the complicated and troubling judgments that surround the Dutch Jewish Council to this day.

Most importantly (and in this way, the Dutch and Belgian Jewish Councils share something in common), the Belgian Jewish Council was kept under the watchful eye of German occupational officials. When a report circulated suggesting disobedience (or simply incompetence) in the AJB's implementation of certain anti-Jewish decrees, an RSHA representative in Belgium threw the organization's leaders into a concentration camp⁶⁴ and ordered the nomination of replacements who would fulfill their duties with greater diligence. In other words, foot-dragging or incompetence by the Belgian Jewish Council played no more important role in the magnitude of the Final Solution in that country than diligence or deference did in the Netherlands. In the Dutch

case, the Council was obedient, and Germany's resolve to force that obedience was never put to the test. But possible sabotage of German policy in the actions of the Belgian Jewish Council simply led to the outward expression of Germany's (otherwise implicit) coercive capacity. On the level of a country's government, collaboration with Germany left room for the sabotage of German anti-Jewish policy. But Germany's treatment of the Belgian Jewish Council suggests that, at this relatively lower level of public administration, agency loss was minimal and policy sabotage, all but impossible.

Investigating the forced compliance of the AJB therefore allows us to consider the actions of the Dutch Jewish Council in a new light. As suggested above, we would do well to follow the trend in recent scholarship and see the actions of both Jewish Councils *in the context* of German occupational hegemony. Jewish councils were not institutions that had important effects on rates of Jewish victimization, either by their deference or by their intransigence; rather, they were organizations that, due to their relative powerlessness and low rank in the occupational regime, had little choice regarding the implementation of the Final Solution in the first place. Deference in the Dutch Jewish Council could not have been a root cause of the high victimization rate in the Netherlands; had the Dutch Jewish council been any less cooperative, we have every reason to believe that its ultimate cooperation would have been brought about by force, much as it was in the case of the AJB.

The Deportations

By mid-1942, most of the preparations for the deportation of Belgian Jewry had already been made. However, the German occupational staff—and especially the Military Administration—had strong reservations about including Jews with Belgian citizenship in the transports. According to one representative of the Foreign Office in Brussels, the 'Jews of Belgian nationality are considered Belgians by the population'. There were also concerns that deporting Belgium's more established (read: wealthy and connected) Jews might disrupt the economy. On this score too, the Foreign Office's representative in Belgium reported, the Military Administration's 'objection may be overcome, if the deportation of Belgian Jews can be avoided' (NG-5209: p. 1). Prudence, professionalism, and concern for stability dictated that the deportation of Belgian Jews would have to wait, and Belgium's pragmatic Military Administration was one of the dominant forces making this the case.⁶⁵

The Military Administration's case (to delay the deportation of Jews with Belgian citizenship) was strengthened by the brave actions of Queen Mother Elisabeth, the widow of King Albert and a former Bavarian duchess. Already very popular as an advocate for the poor and a patron of the arts, Elisabeth remained active and in public view, even after the capitulation. In the summer of 1942, for example, several hundred Jews with Belgian citizenship were arrested in Antwerp. The Queen Mother immediately stepped into action, meeting with members of the Jewish Council and appealing to Hitler himself (through Falkenhausen, on August 1) on behalf of her Jewish subjects. Though imprisoned for almost a year, most of these Belgian Jews were ultimately released. And when major transports began in earnest later that month, the Queen Mother's actions were likely pivotal in insuring that they would be limited, by and large, to Jews without Belgian citizenship. Germany's delay in attacking Belgian nationals was to play a key role in their disproportionate survival over Jewish foreigners.⁶⁶

The first transport of Jews for 'labor service' in the East took place in August 1942. In the hundred days that followed, over 15,000 Jews (about two-thirds of the Belgian total) had been deported. With the exception of a few Belgian citizens who had refused to wear the yellow star, all of those deported were foreigners, mostly from Eastern Europe. For the initial transports, the AJB took care of issuing the appropriate summonses and most of the deportees reported 'voluntarily'. As such 'voluntary' reporting fell to a trickle; however, German police⁶⁷ and Belgian auxiliary militias⁶⁸ resorted to raids and individual arrests, making increased use of informants, bounty hunters, and denunciations.⁶⁹ All the while, however, the Military Administration watched⁷⁰ nervously, knowing that the more visible, massive, or violent the action, the more likely it would be to touch off adverse public reaction.

In the summer of 1943, under increased pressure from Berlin, preparations were made for the deportation of Jews with Belgian citizenship. Reeder and Falkenhausen tried (historians disagree as to how earnestly) to have the order rescinded or modified, with Reeder himself making a trip to Berlin for that purpose. But Falkenhausen eventually agreed (some say, 'reluctantly acquiesced'), so long as the police agreed to begin with Jews who were convicted of actual crimes and to exempt children and the elderly. (To that, Reeder added the condition that military authorities should be notified of any major operations in advance.) Eventually, plans were made for *Aktion Itlis*, which was to commence on the night of September 3,

the first night of Rosh Hashanah. Interestingly (but not surprisingly), the police ‘failed to notify’⁷¹ the Military Administration of the impending action; in fact, German police ‘specifically instructed’ their units to conceal their actions from Falkenhausen’s men and to avoid taking Jews ‘in whom the Military Administration had shown a special interest’ (Warmbrunn 1993: 162). In other words, fearful of opposition from Belgium’s Military Administration, the SS *completely bypassed* Falkenhausen’s authority. One can only imagine how much more tragic the operation would have been had the police had military backup or manpower to help in the operation. Even so, 750 Belgian Jews were arrested and most of those were eventually deported.

In the aftermath of these arrests, the worst fears of the Military Administration came to be. Incompetently or maliciously,⁷² the cargo hold of an overcrowded truck transporting prisoners from Antwerp to the central deportation depot at Malines was ‘accidentally’ starved of air and much behind schedule. Nine prisoners were killed and hundreds left unconscious or brain-damaged. Word of the tragic event spread quickly, and resonated among the Belgian population because these prisoners, after all, had mostly been fellow Belgians. The Committee of Secretaries-General and the royal family made their anger known, and Reeder ordered the immediate termination of all mass arrests. With the exception of a few, the balance of the Belgians arrested in *Aktion Iltis* were ultimately transported to Auschwitz; but all future anti-Jewish actions in the country were small, careful, and quiet; and the police ultimately agreed to exempt certain categories of Jews from all future operations. These included Jews in important industries, Jews in mixed marriages, members of the AJB, and—at the urging of the Queen Mother—children and the elderly.

While no such exemption could ever be expected to offer complete protection from German persecution, the incident certainly changed the character of all future operations and must have indicated to Belgian Jews—if ever they needed such a reminder—that even their status as citizens would not protect them forever. The relatively dangerous tactics of going underground, escaping, or joining the resistance were now seen by many as the only realistic options, all things considered. A total of 25,000 Belgian Jews—roughly the same number (but a larger percentage) as in the Netherlands—survived the war in hiding; and the Military Administration, scared that the aforementioned fiasco might put cooperation in jeopardy, was less than eager to root them out. The delay in the attack on Jews with Belgian nationality, secured by the Queen Mother’s

persistent lobbying, was undoubtedly a factor in their disproportionate survival.

Of note is the near-complete absence of Belgian authorities in the direct implementation of the Final Solution. Germany was almost never able to make use of Belgium's public administration for persecuting the country's Jews, and in only two specific cases (both in Antwerp in the summer of 1942) were local police used in mass arrests. In fact, rather than making use of local institutions for these purposes, Germany had to tread lightly, lest it risk losing the support of 'professional' civil servants and police, whose ideological commitment to the Final Solution was minimal at 'best'. According to historian Maxime Steinberg, a situation in Belgium prevailed in which,

every time an anti-Jewish action was pending, the occupation authorities *had to negotiate* with the Belgian state apparatus for the latter's cooperation, taking care at every stage to consider where not to go too far. (Steinberg: 212 [my emphasis])

This is not to say, by any stretch, that German officials treated occupied Belgium with velvet gloves. The German occupation of Belgium was direct and brutal, and it is perhaps only in a comparative work such as this one (and following a section on the Netherlands) that one may appropriately speak of Nazis such as Reeder in the tone that I have above. But there can be no doubt that, all other things being equal, the cooperation of Belgian authorities and the (related) pragmatism of occupational officials led Germany to make certain concessions in Belgium that it never considered in the Netherlands. Unlike most of the Jews in Netherlands and most of the foreign Jews in Belgium, Belgium's Jewish citizens were among those who 'benefited' from this situation.

In a tragic *denouement* of the Belgian case, Falkenhausen's Military Administration was pushed from power and replaced by a civilian authority on July 18, 1944. Josef Grohé, a former Gauleiter of Aachen, was appointed Reichskommissar, and Germany's occupation regime in Belgium came to resemble that which already reigned in the Netherlands and in Norway. The Civilian Administration quickly demonstrated the horrible difference between the two occupational regimes: Of all the hostages shot during counterterrorism operations in Belgium, for example, nearly a third were killed during Grohé's short (45-day) tenure in office at the end of the occupation. But as far as Belgium's Jews were concerned, the late

‘victory’ of Nazi ideologues in the country left Himmler whistling ‘Dixie’ at Appomattox. Allied forces liberated Brussels on September 3, 1944, just as Himmler’s legions were settling in.

Reflections on the Belgian Case

The most important purpose of this section has been to compare the situation in occupied Belgium to that in the Netherlands. In both countries, Germany made use of a ‘headless’ domestic administration—a staff of (formally non-political) local bureaucrats who, by and large, carried out the commands of Germany’s occupational authority. In both countries, the existence of a local bureaucracy eased Germany’s burden of occupational administration—in no small part because, in both cases, Germany made sure that the bureaucracy was re-staffed with locals who had few ties to the departed regime. But because of the non-invasive character of Germany’s Military Administration and the coherence of Belgium’s Committee of Secretaries-General, the administrative apparatus in Belgium maintained its ‘pragmatic’ and ‘professional’ disposition, and was never effectively recruited for the implementation of Germany’s anti-Jewish policies. Belgium’s royal family contributed to the situation, both because the king’s mere presence affected Germany’s decision to maintain a less invasive occupational mode and because German officials hoped that, by showing appropriate reserve, they might eventually win the king’s blessing for a local government of sympathetic Belgians to head local bureaucracy.

We must be careful, of course, not to make too much of Belgium’s popular king or of Falkenhausen’s pragmatic administration. Belgium was still an occupied subject of Nazi Germany, and, like the Netherlands and unlike France, it endured the blows of German policy without the benefit of a cabinet-level ‘buffer’. The fact that Belgium’s government fled (despite being given an offer much like Denmark’s) no doubt contributed to the suffering of its people, noble as such refusal to collaborate may have been. Though proportionally more costly for Germany to administer than Denmark and France, the situation in Belgium and the Netherlands benefited Germany as well: A year after the invasion, Hitler himself noted:

I am pleased ... that there exists neither in Holland nor in Belgium any government with which we should have to negotiate. This will enable us to impose whatever we feel is politically expedient and obviously useful. (Rich 1974: 179)

Belgium was still the home to some 35,000 Jews who lost their lives, and it is perhaps only in the context of a comparison with the Netherlands that such a result can be termed 'better'.

Indeed, the comparison with the Netherlands is fruitful when we look to the experience of the general citizenry as well. Though seemingly trivial by comparison, Belgium was still a country where most citizens kept their radios (despite the ease of picking up British-based transmissions) and where, until the spring of 1944, most of the universities remained open (preventing an influx of unoccupied students into the resistance or onto the streets). In Belgium, penalties for anti-German activity were 'not applied in their full severity'; and Belgium never experienced a 'hunger winter' as did the Netherlands, despite the fact that 50% of the national caloric intake in Belgium was imported (Warmbrunn 1993: 185, 142, 6). As if reflected in the lower Jewish victimization rate, Belgium's non-Jewish citizens also fared somewhat 'better' than their Dutch counterparts.

What is intriguing is the extent to which Belgian Jews were used as a 'currency' in later negotiations between Belgian authorities and German occupational officials.⁷³ Though Germany's initial decision to impose a military rather than civilian administration was made with reference to strategic concerns and the king's continued presence, the system had the unintentional effect of protecting Belgium's Jews. Germany was essentially able to 'purchase' the continued operation of Belgium's state apparatus with assurances that deportations would never extend to the country's Jewish citizens. The 'agreement', of course, was temporary and imperfect—and Germany eventually reneged on this 'deal' as it did on many others in Belgium and elsewhere. But the exchange was exceptionally explicit in Germany's response to the various appeals of the Queen Mother, and must have been somehow 'below the surface' in other dealings with Belgium's domestic authorities.⁷⁴ Needless to say, very little of this negotiation could have taken place had these officials not stayed at their posts when Germany initially invaded. At the same time, it is interesting that the initial setup had little or nothing to do with the country's Jews.

The presence of the royal family proved beneficial to the Jews of Belgium in two important ways. On the one hand, the royals' direct intervention on behalf of Belgian Jews led to an expansion in the number of exemptions and also to a crucial delay in the deportation of Jews with Belgian citizenship. But in a more general sense, their mere presence in the country acted as a restraint on German authority. The Germans endeavored

not to alienate a king who might someday be useful in the formation of a 'legitimate' Belgian government, and the king's 'cooperative attitude' contributed to Germany's decision to subject Belgium to a pragmatic military administration—one that was under the leadership of a retired commander whose loyalties lay more with Europe's old aristocracy than with Nazi ideologues in Berlin. The monarchy's contribution to Jewish survival in Belgium thus manifests itself in direct and indirect ways.

Of course, protecting their fellow Belgians (Jewish and otherwise) required that Belgian authorities (from king to bureaucrat) cooperate in other areas of occupational policy. The royal family protested consistently but quietly, and refrained from openly distancing themselves from the German administration; and the Secretaries-General knew that they would have to cooperate in *certain* policy areas in order to keep their jobs or (in what sometimes amounted to the same thing) to prevent Germany from imposing ever more invasive occupational institutions. But in a territory where the occupier's objectives were many and varied, in the context of an administration that was 'professional' rather than ideological, in a part of Europe where antisemitism seldom ran deep, and in a country where a popular royal family still had the potential to sway public opinion in one direction or the other, the negotiated 'deals' were, *ceteris paribus*, more likely to involve Belgian cooperation in (mutually beneficial) matters of economic and industrial policy and German concessions in matters that would otherwise adversely affect Belgium's Jewish citizens. Reduced efficiency in the implementation of the Final Solution was a price that Germany was apparently willing to pay for achieving its economic and military aims in Belgium.

FRANCE

Over the past half-century, France has captured the public imagination in the West for its significant contributions to *both* sides during World War II. In part, this is due to the country's importance, the size of its Jewish community, and the magnitude of its influence on international politics both during and after the war. During the Cold War, open access to Europe's largest democracy drew attention, first, to the role of the French underground in the Allied cause and, later, to the Vichy regime's open (if mostly indirect) contribution to German wartime aggression. The high-profile prosecution of various Vichy officials has ensured that the most notorious aspects of the regime's wartime behavior will be recorded and

remembered, if not always punished. And thanks to the brilliant historical work of Robert Paxton and Michael Marrus (among others), we also recognize the regime's considerable autonomy and the fact that many of its most notorious policies were largely of domestic origin, *not* the result of direct German pressure. This recognition has led many to question the postwar claim of Vichy's wartime leadership that, while de Gaulle represented France's sword against the German menace, the Vichy government represented its shield.

But the question of Vichy's guilt becomes ever more complex when we focus specifically on the rates of victimization for the Jews of France as compared to those of other countries. While no one can deny the domestic origins of Vichy's anti-Jewish legislation, the role of the French police in arrests and deportations, and the antisemitism of French society at large, it is difficult to escape the remarkable fact that three-fourths of the Jews of France (and 85% of the French Jews) survived the war. Wartime France is, in a way, the mirror image of wartime Holland—with its credentials for resistance to the occupation rightly re-examined but its Jewish community largely intact.⁷⁵

Unsure of what to make of this apparent dilemma, many historians of the Holocaust in France subtly shift their focus to the *intentions* of the Vichy regime. Most of French Jewry survived the war, they seem to say, but only *despite* the regime's worst intentions. Thus, the single most important monograph on the subject, *Vichy France and the Jews*, concludes with the observation that, while

Vichy undoubtedly hoped to save some French Jews from whatever was meant by 'work' in the east ..., [t]here is no indication ... that this aim ... formed part of a well-articulated plan. (Marrus and Paxton 1981: 346)

Indeed, even John P. Fox's insightful article, 'How far did Vichy France "Sabotage" the Imperatives of Wannsee?'—to my knowledge, the only historical investigation to explicitly consider the notion that the Vichy regime hindered the Final Solution—relegates the answer to his question ('There was a "shield", and it worked.') to a footnote (p. 214n85), while ending the main text with a judgment, that Vichy's "'protection"[⁷⁶] of French Jews ... was undertaken more from concern to maintain certain principles of French sovereignty than for altruistic reasons' (p. 206). Thus, throughout the historical literature on Vichy France, there is a tendency to judge the regime's *motives* in protecting Jews rather than explaining the *mechanisms* by which this protection was achieved.

The aim of this project is not to judge the participants in the Final Solution, but to explain their actions. Thus, my aim is to avoid matters relating to their intentions and motives, and to focus, instead, on their incentives and interests, and on the institutional structures through which these were articulated. I am not (or not primarily) interested in Vichy France's guilt or innocence, but rather in the established fact that, despite its best and worst intentions, most of the Jews in Vichy France survived the war.

This section will highlight the specific mechanisms by which so many Jewish people survived in a collaborationist country like Vichy France. Whether they did so despite or because of the regime's criminality—and whether their survival justified the regime's involvement in other Nazi crimes—are questions that I ultimately leave to the reader and to history.

Invasion, Capitulation, and Constitutional Revision

France declared war on Germany on September 3, 1939, making good on its promise to protect Poland's sovereignty in a way it did not Czechoslovakia's. But the war which followed was a 'phoney' one, *la drôle de guerre*, with Britain and France largely avoiding direct conflict with the enemy and elements in both countries quietly hoping that peace in their time could still be preserved. Eight tense months later, Germany broke the silence, launching an attack across the forests of Sedan and thereby revealing fissures in Western military defenses and in the Western Alliance itself. When British forces fled inevitable defeat from the beaches of Dunkirk, many French people viewed the retreat as an abandonment of the alliance and busily reconsidered their options in a battle they could not win alone and about which so many had been hesitant from the start.

Having taken refuge in Bordeaux for the third time in 70 years, the government of France, led by Paul Reynaud, quickly divided between those who favored an armistice (a group that included everyone from Nazi sympathizers to pacifists, not to mention 'realists' of all political persuasions) and those who favored continuing the fight, possibly from French North Africa. But when Marshal Philippe Pétain, the man who had saved France in World War I, joined General Weygand in favoring an armistice, public opinion rallied behind the 'Hero of Verdun', and Pétain was established as Reynaud's legal heir. On June 17, Pétain addressed his people for the first time as premier: 'With a heavy heart,' he said, 'I tell you that we must cease hostilities.' On June 22, a settlement was reached and signed in the same place on the

same railway car in which the Treaty of Versailles had been signed some 22 years before. The Armistice came into effect three days later, after Vichy leaders signed a similar agreement with Italy, granting Germany's partner a much smaller occupation zone in the French southeast.

The negotiated peace was welcome news to Hitler, who had already told Mussolini that he wanted to avoid the 'unpleasant responsibility' of occupational administration in France; and it was welcome news to many French people as well, many of whom had nightmarish memories of World War I's carnage and feared that, with ever more destructive implements of war, 'Paris would be worse than Guernica' (Paxton 1972: 7, 11). By the time the Armistice was signed, the people of France had seen the destruction of Warsaw and Rotterdam (not to mention the pristine condition of Copenhagen). France's six-week war with Germany and its eventual capitulation certainly affected the course of the war to come. Fight as it did, France allowed Britain a valiant last stand at Dunkirk, resulting in escape for the greater part of its army; fight as it did not, French leaders went on to facilitate the German occupation and missed the opportunity to divert Germany's attention from the Continent by fighting on from North Africa. In terms of the greater war effort, the Armistice was a setback for the Allied cause, but it was to spare the French people some of the horrors visited upon their European neighbors.

The value of the Armistice to Germany may be measured in terms of what Germany offered France. German forces (maintained at French expense⁷⁷) would occupy the northern three-fifths of the country, including Paris, Bordeaux, and the entire Atlantic coast—the more industrialized region of the country and the part most vulnerable to a British invasion. (Germany also took control of Alsace-Lorraine, subjecting that region to virtual annexation.) But Pétain and his government, once relocated from occupied Bordeaux to the spa town of Vichy, would remain in office, uncontested rulers of the unoccupied (southern) zone but nominally in charge of the whole of France,⁷⁸ including the occupied zone—where its decrees were subject to the approval of German occupation officials. France was allowed to maintain an armed force of 100,000 men, necessary for internal security, although 1.5 million French POWs were to remain in German captivity until a final peace agreement could be reached. Most importantly, Germany would not have access to France's naval warships (provided they remained unarmed and docked) or to its vast overseas empire. This last stipulation was to become a major bargaining chip in Franco-German negotiations for the early part of the war. For their part,

French officials in the occupied zone were directed by the Armistice 'to conform to the regulations of the German authorities and collaborate [*zusammenarbeiten*] with them in a correct manner'. 'Collaboration', nothing new in practice, had been given its name.

Under the Armistice Agreement, France maintained many of the trappings of an autonomous and neutral state. As a sign of its continued independence and legality, the regime maintained full diplomatic relations with 40 countries (including Switzerland, the USA, Canada, and China) and was never persuaded to sign the Anti-Comintern Pact, something that even Denmark could not (or did not) avoid. Indeed, France was the only country in occupied Western Europe with autonomy comparable to Denmark's (Jackson: 134–5). It is therefore no accident that these were the two Western European countries most able to negotiate with Nazi Germany, nor also, as we shall see, that they were the two with the lowest rates of Jewish victimization.

The institutional legitimacy of the Vichy regime is not (and was not) widely questioned. Though appointed in a moment of crisis, Pétain had the unanimous approval of the French cabinet, and his reorganization of French government found widespread acceptance among the French people as a whole. In the wake of Pétain's legal ascension to power, it was de Gaulle who was the dissident and the rebel. Few people of any importance paid attention to his defiant radio address of June 18, and the BBC regarded the speech of such little consequence that it did not even make a recording. Of the nearly 20,000 French sailors stranded in the British Isles at the time of the Armistice, almost all accepted Britain's offer to be repatriated to Vichy France. A mere 900 (with few officers among them) heeded de Gaulle's call to stay in Britain. Soon after the Armistice, de Gaulle was sentenced to death *in absentia* for desertion by a French military court.⁷⁹

Though appointed democratically, Pétain was no democrat. His peasant roots were appealing in France's rural south, but his advanced age (83) and his stature as a war hero lent him an air of experience and professional wisdom for those in France who sought a father figure to bring them through the crisis. To most, however, Pétain was simply the man who saved France from the Germans during World War I and the man who, in this new crisis, was called upon to do it again. Politically speaking, Pétain was a blank slate—a fact that no doubt enhanced his widespread appeal. But he also carried a contemptuous disdain for parliamentary democracy—ultimately blaming his country's military failures on the partisan bickering of the interwar years.⁸⁰

In his new political role, however, Pétain soon warmed to his own celebrity—coming to see himself as the Christlike Savior that many of his countrymen considered him.⁸¹ Thus, in the weeks following the Armistice, Pétain embarked upon a program to fundamentally transform French politics and society, the ‘National Revolution’. On July 10, the French parliament committed suicide, authorizing Pétain, by a huge margin (569 to 80, with 17 abstentions), to undertake the process of ‘constitutional revision’. (The principle of ‘constitutional revision’ had been accepted one day earlier, by a vote of 624 to 4.) Within days, Pétain, using the royal ‘we’ [*Nous, Philippe Pétain, maréchal de France...*], issued a series of decrees dismantling the Third Republic, establishing himself as head of state [*président du Conseil*] and dismissing parliament ‘until further notice [*jusqu’à nouvel ordre*]’ (Carlyle: 119–21). As his deputy prime minister [*vice-président du Conseil*] and successor, Pétain appointed Pierre Laval,⁸² a seasoned political opportunist known for his warm relations and contacts with Germany.

Like Pétain’s appointment as head of state, his anointment as Savior was no *coup d’état*. The National Revolution he led both inspired *and reflected* a fundamental transformation in French institutions and values because, in losing the war, the ‘Third Republic had lost its legitimacy’ and it was ‘unthinkable simply to put things back the way they had been’ (Paxton 1972: 20). There were some, of course, who saw this drift toward authoritarianism⁸³ as a way for Vichy leaders to ingratiate themselves to their new German overlord—a reasonable expectation, although not something that turned out to be of much significance.⁸⁴ But by and large, it is fair to view June 25 and July 10 (collaboration and National Revolution) as politically distinct: the former, a politically expedient foreign policy realignment; and the latter, a revolution aimed at overcoming the ills of an old regime whose time had clearly come. Vichy France came to an agreement with Nazi Germany and did away with its democratic system of government—but one did not necessitate the other.

German Administration of Vichy France

Independent as Pétain’s government formally was, German power was never far behind the scenes—even in the unoccupied zone. So long as Vichy officials wanted the release of French POWs, a reduction in occupation fees, a more conclusive peace treaty, or even a return of the French capital to Paris, Germany could get what it wanted without resorting

to direct threats. But Germany used sticks as well as carrots when dealing with the French. Even the territorial division of France itself was as an important coercive institution, with Germany threatening to tighten travel restrictions across the demarcation line in order to get its way with Vichy officials.

Formally speaking, however, Germany exercised its authority over Vichy by way of three administrative channels: the Foreign Office, the German Armistice Commission, and the Military Administration. Based on the notion that Vichy France was both foreign and formally independent, the German Foreign Office maintained a diplomatic liaison with Pétain's government, Ambassador Otto Abetz. Of course, reflecting the fact that Vichy's independence was somewhat illusory, Abetz's powers were not merely those of an ordinary diplomat. And it is telling, for example, that Abetz maintained his residence in Paris rather than Vichy. (In contrast, Admiral William Leahy, the US representative, was moved to Vichy with the French government.) But Abetz also enjoyed particularly close relations with Laval, and was thus able to (1) exert considerable influence in the Vichy administration and (2) to press his claims with relative strength vis-à-vis the other German agencies in France. This was especially so in the earlier stages of the war, when the fiction of Vichy autonomy was a more closely guarded secret.

As the agency most directly responsible for regulating and supervising French cooperation with the Armistice, the German Armistice Commission was also set to wield considerable power within the occupational administration. For a time, the Commission acted as an important channel of communication between German and French authorities. But the Armistice soon proved to be woefully inadequate, with Hitler demanding access to French bases in North Africa and Pétain—hoping to take advantage of France's newfound importance in the German war effort—hinting that he wanted a more equal relationship between the two countries. As the military situation continued to change, German and French authorities alike found themselves working to 'renegotiate' the terms of the original Armistice. As a result, by late 1941, the power of the Armistice Commission was slowly eclipsed by that of other agencies, particularly the military.

As in Belgium, Germany established a military government in occupied France, investing it with supreme executive power in the occupied zone. As in much of Germany's empire, the military administration largely restricted itself to strictly military concerns, namely the preservation of law

and order and continuing the fight against Britain and the Allies. In fact, the military administration in France prided itself on its merely supervisory role, maintaining an administrative staff of only 489 persons. Thus, while the military administration was crucial for the implementation of German policy in France, the military commander (*Militärbefehlshaber*), General Karl Heinrich von Stülpnagel, was able to keep his hands clean of some of the more onerous Nazi policies, namely the round-up and arrest of Jews.⁸⁵

Staking out a claim among these overlapping administrative agencies was the Vichy government itself, which, much like the people it represented, largely approached the war in the spirit of *attentisme* [wait and see]. In return for its willingness to negotiate, wartime France enjoyed extraordinary freedom compared to its Western European neighbors; and Vichy leaders, probably earnestly, used that freedom to shield their citizens (most of them, anyway) from the sheer devastation they saw visited upon the more resistant people of Norway and the Netherlands. But by staying in office (however calculated, reluctant, self-serving, or altruistic their decisions to do so), Vichy leaders also lent immeasurable service to the German war effort—if only by painting a veneer of ‘legitimacy’ on the occupation and thereby quelling the resistance. Vichy would, in the end, avoid direct intervention in the military conflict around it and even save the bulk of its Jewish citizens; but it would only do so at great moral cost and at the expense of its reputation for decades to come.

Between Scylla and Charybdis: Vichy’s Two-Front War

Most important in the eyes of many Vichy leaders was the effort to avoid direct involvement in the war around it. Sure, there were some who saw closer military ties with Germany as a path to a more conclusive peace agreement, to total independence or even to Britain’s colonial holdings. But most Vichy leaders valued neutrality above all,⁸⁶ in no small part because they led a war-weary population that saw foreign entanglement as a major cause of the current crisis itself.

A major test of Vichy’s commitment to neutrality came just days after the Armistice was signed, and even before parliament’s vote for ‘constitutional revision’. Fearing that the French navy—the second most powerful in Europe—would fall into German hands, Churchill ordered British forces (on July 3, 1940) to attack the French naval station at Mers-el-Kébir, Algeria, and to seize French ships in British ports. The attack killed almost 1300 French seamen—sailors who, just a month

earlier, had been fighting alongside the British. France responded with a bombing raid on Gibraltar. French and British forces clashed again a few months later off the coast of Dakar, constituting yet another flare up in a 'de facto war' against its former ally that was to continue for the year to come.⁸⁷

By the fall of 1940, Hitler turned his attention south, to a Mediterranean strategy that would require reconciliation and cooperation among Italy, Spain, and France. To that end, he met with Franco at Hendaye on October 23, 1940. (He had met with Mussolini at Brenner Pass on October 4.) But Franco held as tightly to neutrality as the French did, and refused to enter the war. Thus, when Hitler met with Pétain at Montoire on October 24, the Mediterranean plan he envisioned was dead in the water, and the two men could only exchange vague promises for abstract requests.

Nevertheless, the meetings at Montoire were of tremendous symbolic importance. The photographs of Pétain and Hitler shaking hands 'as equals' did much to bolster the Vichy leader's claim that the decision to collaborate was the correct one. The meeting also set the stage for a number of cosmetic agreements that provided for the release of a few POWs and reduced occupation costs.⁸⁸ Soon after the meeting, Pétain again took his case directly to the people of France. In a radio broadcast of October 30, 1940, the Vichy leader declared:

I have accepted the invitation of the Führer voluntarily [*librement*]. I have not submitted to any 'dictate' or pressure. A relationship of collaboration has been envisaged between our two countries, and I accept it in principle...

This agreement directs the hand of French Destiny towards the creation of an atmosphere more favorable to safeguarding the interests of the country. [*Celui qui a pris en mains les destinées de la France a le devoir de créer l'atmosphère la plus favorable à la sauvegarde de intérêts du pays.*] It is for the maintenance of French honor and unity ... that we enter into active participation in constructing a New Order in Europe through collaboration. In this manner, the future suffering of the country could be diminished, the fate of our prisoners could be ameliorated, and the costs of occupation could be lowered. Thus also can the demarcation line be rendered more flexible, which will facilitate administration and food distribution throughout the country.

Alas, the Armistice is not a final Peace Treaty. [*L'armistice, au demeurant, n'est pas la Paix.*] France maintains numerous obligations as a vanquished country. At least, we retain our sovereignty. This sovereignty requires us to stand our ground, to overcome our differences of opinion, and to end the resistance of our colonies. (Carlyle: 126–7)

Pétain took little time using his diplomatic victory to secure domestic rewards. Emboldened by his increased personal prestige, reassured by the war's shift to the East (on October 28, Italy launched its attack on Greece), or simply frustrated with Laval's inability to gain anything of substance for his good relations with the Germans (negotiations to return the capital to Paris had reached a standstill), Pétain fired (the pro-German) Laval on December 13, 1940. Laval was taken to his country home in Châteldon and placed under house arrest.

Despite the 'internal' causes for the dismissal, Laval's removal sparked a harsh German reaction, in no small part because Abetz, the German Ambassador to Vichy who enjoyed particularly close relations with Laval, feared it might lead to the encroachment of rival German agencies (which it did). The Germans reacted immediately, closing the demarcation line and suspending contact with the principal instigators and beneficiaries of Laval's departure. Shocked by their misjudgment of German interest in the matter, Vichy officials scrambled to limit the damage. Eventually (on February 9, 1941), a compromise was reached: Admiral François Darlan, another government minister with pro-German credentials, was promoted to be Pétain's second-in-command and Laval was returned from house arrest, accepting a consolation prize that Darlan and Abetz would engineer his return to government at some future date.⁸⁹ Throughout the affair, some Germans even saw advantages in keeping Laval in Paris as a sword of Damocles, threatening to place him atop a rival French government if Vichy ever again displayed such contempt for German interests. In the end, the fiasco did little lasting damage to Franco-German relations: Vichy's groveling largely placated the Germans and served as a remarkable indication of its weakness.⁹⁰

In May of 1941, a new crisis gave the new French leadership a chance to show its mettle. When a *coup d'état* brought a pro-Axis leader to power in British Iraq, Germany seized upon the opportunity to arm its new-found ally against the British. But arming Iraq's new leader, Rashid Ali Al-Gaylani, required French cooperation, because the French mandate of Syria was the only realistic route to Iraq and because France already maintained significant stores of weapons there. Darlan agreed to be of service, releasing the weapons to Al-Gaylani and permitting German access to French bases in Syria. In return for Vichy's cooperation, travel across the demarcation line was relaxed, France was allowed to rearm a number of its warships, and Vichy's occupation costs were renegotiated. Once again, cooperation with Germany resulted in (minor) concessions for France.

In the new spirit of goodwill between Germany and (still neutral) France, Darlan met with Hitler (on May 11) and, later, with General Walter Warlimont of the Wehrmacht (on May 27–28) to discuss further avenues of cooperation. The product of these discussions, which included agreements on a range of issues from German access to French bases in North Africa to major arms transfers, came to be known as the Paris Protocols, and represented a significant ‘widening’ of the Armistice. German leaders and Darlan himself were dismayed, however, when Pétain effectively refused to ratify the accords. Though negotiations dragged on for another month, little progress was made, and Germany would have to wait another year and a half for the North African foothold it desired. Pétain, the man who gave the policy of collaboration its name, clearly knew how to hold his ground. Unfortunately for Vichy, this moment of strength was short-lived. After putting down the revolt in Iraq, Anglo-Gaullist forces counterattacked in Syria (on June 8) and Vichy France lost the territory entirely.

Darlan’s position was not enhanced by the deteriorating situation in France itself. In July and August 1941, just after the German attack on the Soviet Union, acts of sabotage in France skyrocketed. Though mostly directed at German targets, the insurgency also attacked Vichy collaborators⁹¹—with Laval injured in a bomb blast in Versailles on August 29. In order to prove their loyalty to Germany’s cause and to pre-empt an even more ruthless German response, Vichy carried out the retaliatory executions itself. As Hitler demanded an ever-increasing number of retaliatory executions for every German killed, however, Vichy officials worked out a way to (discreetly) select the hostages that German authorities would then shoot. Of course, Vichy officials did their best to reduce the number of executions and to ensure that most of those selected were communists and Jews—endearing themselves to the Germans and, to some degree, mollifying public reaction at home. Nevertheless, the executions solidified the opinion of many Frenchmen that Darlan’s administration was ineffective in resisting German pressure. In an effort to stop the bloodshed, Pétain even considered presenting *himself* to German authorities as a hostage, but he quickly reconsidered. All told, about 350 hostages were executed during Darlan’s tenure in office.⁹²

Thus, for all his efforts to bring Vichy into closer collaboration with Germany, Darlan, like his predecessor, was woefully inadequate in securing real concessions. By the end of 1941, the POWs were still held captive, the country was still divided, and the capital was still in Vichy. Darlan had

succeeded in maintaining Vichy's neutrality, despite the Syrian debacle, but ultimately, he was no more successful than Laval in standing up to German pressure. Having lost the approval of Pétain and the Germans, Darlan resigned in April 1942. Laval took his place, returning to the post he had been fired from a year and a half earlier. (Though removed from the cabinet, Admiral Darlan remained an important figure in the regime as commander-in-chief of the armed forces. His status was thus to be of much significance when Allied forces landed in North Africa.)

Laval's return to power ushered in a new phase of Vichy collaboration. Indeed, his return to power itself might reflect a shift toward greater German hierarchy—at least insofar as Laval's appointment, unlike Darlan's, seems to have been something more than a purely 'internal' affair. Of course, it might be the case that German pressure would have compelled *any* leader to give as much as Laval did over the next two years. Whatever the case, Laval's reappointment also entailed a change in Pétain's formal constitutional status: Previously, Pétain had been both prime minister *and* head of state; now, Laval was prime minister, leaving Pétain as head of state alone. New formal authority for a man who was already the darling of Berlin meant that Laval would become the central figure in Vichy's domestic politics for the duration of the war.

Europe was also a different place when Laval returned to power in the spring of 1942. With the USA and the Soviet Union now involved in the fight, a German victory seemed considerably less likely, and Vichy found itself with new incentives to satisfy officials in Washington as well as Berlin. Counterbalancing this trend, however, the increased pressure on Germany resulted in increased pressure on France.⁹³ Soon, Germany would no longer be content with the mere 'supervision' of a cautiously neutral neighbor; it would, instead, demand France's active and direct participation in Germany's economic, military, and ideological programs.

The pressure was felt first in the economic realm, as Germany adjusted its tactics in the East from Blitzkrieg to preparations for a war of attrition. The new operations required Germany's transition to a full-scale war economy, and this, in turn, required exploitation of the labor supply throughout the occupied realm. In May 1942, Fritz Sauckel, Germany's General Commissioner for Labor in France, demanded Laval's help in the 'recruitment' of 350,000 French workers. Laval worked hard to make labor recruitment a purely voluntary program. He also achieved two important concessions: the number of French workers demanded was reduced to 250,000 and Germany promised to release one French POW

for every three skilled workers sent to Germany. Laval even made much of his 'achievement', announcing the policy of *Relève* (Relief) in a triumphant speech⁹⁴ and going to the train station—with attendant publicity—to greet the released prisoners upon their return. Over the next year, however, shortfalls in the number of voluntary recruits dampened Laval's initial enthusiasm. Slowly, Laval found himself implementing a full-scale labor draft—attracting the ire of an angry French public and binding himself, ever more tightly, to Germany's eventual fate.

In some respects, however, the most important developments were to come in French North Africa. After a crushing defeat at El Alamein in October 1942, Rommel's forces found themselves in full retreat. The final nail in Rommel's coffin was set on the night of November 7–8, 1942, when US forces landed in Algeria. Pétain and Laval immediately ordered their forces to resist the attack and agreed to allow the Germans into Tunisia. Still hoping, perhaps naïvely, to avoid war, however, they refused to declare war on the USA.

Meanwhile, advancing American forces reached out to Darlan, who just happened to be in Algeria visiting his sick son. Even after his dismissal from government in February 1942, Darlan had maintained his position of commander-in-chief of Vichy's armed forces. Thus, he was the natural candidate to contact when the USA, like the Germans in 1940, sought an armistice with the French. On November 10, 1942, with French defeat again inevitable, Darlan ordered Vichy troops in North Africa to lay down their weapons and submit to the Allies. His capitulation prompted the angry reaction of Pétain, who immediately fired him.

News of the capitulation reached Laval later that day, just as he arrived in Munich for an emergency meeting with Hitler and Italian Foreign Minister Ciano. Not surprisingly, the poor performance of French forces in Algeria and Darlan's capitulation left Laval empty-handed in the negotiations. He had no choice but to assent to Hitler's demand to permit Axis occupation of the rest of France. On November 11, Germany crossed the demarcation line while Vichy's armed forces, instructed to do so by their government, watched on without firing a shot. (Vichy had thus resisted the American attack, but stood idly by as German forces crossed the demarcation line.) In a matter of days, Vichy lost the two things it held most dear: the last vestiges of its overseas empire and the unoccupied zone of France itself.

Meanwhile, Darlan took up the same position vis-à-vis the Americans that Pétain had with the Germans at the time of the Armistice. On the

justification that the independent French government to which he was loyal no longer existed, Darlan signed an agreement with the US commanding general (the Darlan–Clark Agreement), making Darlan the head of French North Africa. His stated aim, like that of Pétain in metropolitan France, was to preserve the last vestiges of French ‘neutrality’ and sovereignty in the region. The administration he created was thus a mirror image of Vichy’s. Darlan’s collaboration was a tremendous help to the Allies: French Equatorial Africa, under the leadership of the same governor who had fired on British and Gaullist forces in September 1940, was finally rallied to the Allied cause, and the French navy, the second largest in Europe, scuttled itself, rather than fall into German hands.

Though relations between Germany and Vichy France remained formally unchanged, the increased intensity of German hierarchy after November 11 was difficult to hide. According to Bertram Gordon, Vichy ‘assumed the characteristics of a satellite state’ and Pétain became more of a figurehead. Two weeks after the November crisis, Vichy’s Armistice Army was disbanded and replaced by a small volunteer force. Germany also upped the costs that the French government had to pay for the occupation from 300 to 500 Reichsmarks (RM) a day, an increase that was roughly proportional to the amount of new territory the Germans now had to ‘supervise’. By the fall of 1943, only 16 countries still maintained diplomatic relations with the government in Vichy (as opposed to 40 at the time of the Armistice), and Allied governments were finally taking real notice of General de Gaulle in London.⁹⁵

In the overseas empire and the navy, Vichy lost two of its most important bargaining chips vis-à-vis the Germans. But the very presence of a complete and local government—however emasculated—still gave the occupation a certain ‘fig leaf’ legitimacy. With a French government in place, Germany found invaluable service administering a huge country with a relatively tiny staff. And for some of Vichy’s top leaders, the pretense of real power was better than nothing at all. Vichy leaders still had something to offer their German masters. And public opinion would not turn decisively against the regime until the spring of 1943.⁹⁶

There can be no doubt that Vichy provided the Germans with valuable military and economic services. But perhaps its most important service was its very loyalty to the Axis cause. Although its contribution to the alliance was substantial, France, of course, was never an Axis power, formally speaking. But unlike Hungary, France never switched to the Allied side either, even when Germany’s defeat was inevitable.⁹⁷ In giving Germany

this valuable political asset, loyalty, Vichy France won significant bargaining power for itself. But as we shall see in the next sections, Vichy used this leverage to bargain for the protection of its own citizens, including its citizens who happened to be Jewish.

Vichy France and the Jews

The Germans gave high priority to their anti-Jewish operation in France and found what they thought would be fertile ground for its implementation. France had seen a surge in antisemitism in the generation before the war and this anti-Jewish sentiment went hand in hand with growing xenophobia, especially on the political right. The problem was compounded by the fact that over half of the Jews in France were citizens of foreign countries. But Third Republic France was also a place where Jews had made huge inroads in political and social life: Leon Blum was prime minister from 1936 to 1938, and Jewish integration continued steadily despite the occasional setback. Indeed, even the Dreyfus Affair, which brought the undercurrent of French antisemitism so hideously to the surface, can be regarded as a victory—albeit a limited and belated one—for the forces of liberalism and tolerance. (A belated victory for tolerance because, in the end, Dreyfus was acquitted and his name cleared.) In fact, it might be fair to say that prewar France was a place where antisemitism and the acceptance of Jews were *both* on the rise.⁹⁸

Since Pétain's cabinet was composed primarily of those who supported the Armistice, the influence of Jews in Vichy was naturally quite limited. Thus, even though the attitude of Pétain and Laval toward Jews might best be characterized as indifference, there was, in their new government, a significant contingent of committed antisemites, willing to carry out radical programs that higher-ups in the regime were merely prepared to tolerate. Their influence, set in the context of Pétain's 'National Revolution' and the social renewal it entailed, led the Vichy regime to implement a series of purely indigenous anti-Jewish measures, independent of their new German supervisors.

The first *Statut des juifs* was passed by the Vichy government on October 3, 1940, just months after the Armistice and Pétain's 'Constitutional Revision'. The decree defined Jews in racial terms and barred them from certain professions. Though relatively minor in itself, the statute was the first in a series of ever more hostile decrees directed against the Jews of France. To many, including many Jews, Vichy's anti-Jewish legislation

came as quite a shock. Little of the regime's propaganda had targeted Jews (in fact, the word 'Jew' does not appear in any of Pétain's war-time speeches), and the decree itself was introduced with something less than full enthusiasm, with government officials 'justifying' it in terms of national security. Maurice Duverger, an aspiring jurist affected by the new legislation, observed that the statutes '[had] the character not of reprisal measures but of measures of public interest'.⁹⁹

On the other hand, there is no question as to the statute's indigenous character. In fact, Raphaël Alibert (the statute's author) and Xavier Vallat (Vichy's first General Commissioner of Jewish Affairs) both used as part of their postwar *defense* that the law was theirs alone,¹⁰⁰ so as to negate the charge of complicity with the occupier! (There is also no documentary evidence of direct German pressure.) Still, there is every reason to expect that the Germans exerted *indirect* pressure on this front, or at least that Vichy authorities passed the laws autonomously so as to show the Germans that they had the 'correct attitude' about such things. Vichy also faced various pressures to pass such policies pre-emptively, so as to prevent Germany's unilateral implementation of similar policies in the occupied zone alone; such action, implemented by a foreign occupant in only half of France's territory, would put into question Vichy's unity and formal sovereignty over the whole of France. Germany only had formal sovereignty over the occupied zone; but insofar as the anti-Jewish statutes responded to or anticipated German pressure, we may see them as indicative of Germany's informal sovereignty over the independent government in Vichy.

While important for understanding the character and motives of the regime, the ultimate and informal authorship of Vichy's anti-Jewish legislation is somewhat beside the point. For the most part, German officials were indifferent to Vichy's obsequiousness and certainly never responded with formal concessions on other fronts. In fact, the intensity and autonomy of Vichy's *Statut des juifs* reveal a major irony of collaboration and the Final Solution: In some regimes, Vichy France being just one, victimization rates were low despite high levels of antisemitism and despite a regime's active participation in preparing the process of destruction. Antisemitism is, of course, an all-important factor in determining the nature of a regime's complicity in the Final Solution; and antisemitism is ultimately to blame for Vichy's anti-Jewish legislation, regardless of whether that legislation was responsive, anticipatory, or a purely domestic matter. But the case of Vichy France suggests that high levels of domestic antisemitism, and even native anti-Jewish legislation, could exist side

by side with low rates of Jewish victimization. As we shall see over the course of this chapter and this project, what matters is not so much the ‘degree’ of antisemitism but the ‘kind’. Despite their regime’s ‘voluntary’ implementation of antisemitic legislation, the vast majority of Vichy’s Jews survived the war.

The CGQJ and the UGIF

The governmental agency through which Vichy implemented its anti-Jewish legislation was the *Commissariat général aux Questions Juives* (General Office for Jewish Affairs or CGQJ), created in March 1941 under the leadership of Xavier Vallat. To ease its administrative burden in November 1941, the CGQJ created the *Union général des Israélites de France* (General Union of Jews of France, UGIF), a Jewish umbrella organization responsible for carrying out CGQJ directives within France’s Jewish community. Like much of its anti-Jewish legislation, Vichy created these organizations in order to demonstrate its sovereignty over the whole of France and to ‘pre-empt’ Nazi control over domestic matters like the Jewish Question.

As someone who eschewed the Nazis’ *racial* antisemitism and who, moreover, had significant contempt for his German overseers, Vallat would not have been Berlin’s first choice to head the CGQJ. German officials chronically complained, not so much as to the letter of Vichy’s law, as to the efficiency of its implementation. A year after Vallat’s appointment, Werner Best (Chief of the military’s Civil Administration for occupied France and the man who would later become Plenipotentiary of occupied Denmark) would sarcastically complain that the CGQJ commissioner should be called the *Judenschutzkommissar* [‘Commissioner for the Protection of the Jews’]. Under intense German pressure, Darlan felt obliged to dismiss Vallat in March 1942. He was replaced by Louis Darquier de Pellepoix, a ‘racial antisemite’ more in tune with German views on the subject. Regardless of what Vallat’s successor was later able to do (and we shall explore that issue in a moment), it is worth noting that the CGQJ and the UGIF were both created under the auspices of a Frenchman of Vichy’s choosing, whose antisemitism, though very real, was deeply at odds with Nazi racial ideology.¹⁰¹

A significant split *within* France’s Jewish community reflected the ‘non-racist’ (if one can call it that) origins of the UGIF. Soon after its creation, immigrant leaders (who, it must be added, stood the most to lose from

a distinction based on citizenship rather than ‘race’) bitterly rejected the UGIF’s authority, condemning its leaders as ‘Nazi collaborators’. The older, established community, on the other hand, generally accepted the distinction, albeit reluctantly.¹⁰² This citizen/immigrant split within the UGIF (an organization that would be responsible for, among other things, lobbying Vichy authorities about the implementation of the Final Solution) would find itself at the heart of Vichy’s dogged determination to ‘trade’ foreign Jews for French ones. As we shall see, rapprochement between the UGIF and immigrant groups was not to be achieved until 1943, when German determination to deport *all* French Jews became more apparent.

The replacement of Vallat by Darquier in the spring of 1942 was certainly pleasing to the Germans. But along with the change in personnel, Laval also changed the nature of the office itself. The change would soon limit the influence of Laval’s new appointee. Whereas the CGQJ had previously been an office within the Ministry of the Interior, Laval made the CGQJ Commissioner directly responsible to the prime minister. As a result of the bureaucratic reorganization, Laval placed himself in a position that would allow him to implement and subvert the Final Solution, while relegating the more committed antisemite (Darquier) to a more peripheral role. Thus, while replacing Vallat with Darquier was clearly intended by Laval to pacify the Germans, it was a calculated move. Its import was primarily symbolic, and, at the end of the day, the move gave Germany no greater access to the Jews of France than it had previously. In fact, the Germans now had to push much of their anti-Jewish agenda *through* Laval himself, and this, at a time when Germany’s ultimate victory was nowhere near as certain as it had once been. By replacing Vallat with Darquier, Renée Poznanski argues, ‘Laval was accommodating [the Germans] on a matter he considered secondary, thus hoping to win their good graces on matters he deemed much more important’ (p. 253). Vichy France had, once again, set the agenda in its negotiated relationship with Nazi Germany, and it had, once again, implemented a German-inspired policy while watering down its ultimate effect on the Jews of France. It may be the case, of course—and I would say it is quite likely—that Laval’s maneuvering had nothing to do with his ‘affection’ for the Jews of France, of which, it seems clear, he had little. It was, in my view, a power grab, primarily intended to increase his stature and importance within the occupational regime, although with some awareness that it might also allow him greater influence over the fate of his fellow citizens, even if they also

happened to be Jewish. Laval's motives can and should be an issue of further debate and exploration; but the *fact* that his moves made life less horrible for French Jews during the Holocaust can hardly be disputed, even if he 'protected' them unwittingly or for the 'wrong reasons'.

The Jewish Star Decree

One of the first major issues to face the CGQJ under Darquier's tenure was the Jewish star decree. In fact, the law (that Jews wear an identifying yellow star on their lapels) was first proposed in December 1941, when Vallat and Darlan were still in office. But implementation of the decree was delayed on account of several logistical concerns, most importantly, the question of whether the decree should also apply to Jewish citizens of Britain and the USA, citizens of neutral countries, and—most complicated of all—Jews who were citizens of Germany's Axis allies (Italy, Bulgaria, and Romania). For fear of insulting an ally, losing the support of 'neutrals', or simply burning a bridge toward an eventual peace, Germany eventually opted to exempt these Jews from the measure—a decision that affected nearly 10,000 persons.

With Darlan's replacement by Laval, and Vallat's by Darquier, the Germans saw their chance to push the demand with renewed vigor. But not even these stalwarts of Vichy collaboration could be swayed to pick up the political hot potato, especially one that applied, with equal measure, to France's Jewish citizens. Eventually, on June 7, 1942, the Germans were obliged to implement the decree unilaterally with the attendant and crucial caveat that, without Vichy approval, the decree would only apply in the German-occupied zone. For the duration of the war, even after the extension of German authority over the whole of France in November 1942, the Jews of Southern France were *never* obliged to wear the Jewish star. Southern France and Denmark were thus two of the only territories under German occupation where Jews were never subjected to this destructive, preparatory step in the genocidal process.

The Jewish star decree had the 'adverse' reaction predicted by Vichy authorities. The sight of French citizens, war veterans, baptized Christians, and even a priest wearing the badge led to a backlash and even inspired the first open defiance to the regime's anti-Jewish legislation.¹⁰³ Mocking the decree, some non-Jews wore yellow carnations on their lapels or yellow labels with the word 'Goy'. Most importantly, the public's reaction and the fact that Vichy's hands were clean of the decree meant that many

French policemen were ill-disposed to enforce what was, so clearly, a law of the German occupier. Countless Jews must have ignored the decree altogether. This meant that, even in the occupied zone (where Jews would otherwise be vulnerable), the Germans were largely deprived of this crucial step in the implementation of the Final Solution. The Jewish star decree is widely seen as a key preparatory step in the Final Solution throughout German-occupied Europe; and yet, because of Vichy's ambivalence about the measure, the decree was ill-enforced and, in any case, only applied to about half of Vichy's Jews.

Oberg-Bousquet

Preparations for the 'Final Solution to the Jewish Question' in Europe coincided with discussions of the Jewish star decree in France. Just before the Wannsee Conference of January 1942, Himmler had given France primary place in the Final Solution, in part because he believed the Vichy government shared his understanding of the Jewish Question. In fact, by the time of the Conference itself, Jews in the occupied zone had already been subjected to several waves of mass arrests. In these, German authorities and French police rounded up Jews—mostly foreign, but some French—for illegal activities such as not wearing the Jewish star or on trumped-up charges of sabotage. After the Wannsee Conference, these Jews were the first to go, deported in several convoys between March and June from detention centers that were still under French administration.

Major deportation operations, which were to begin in July of that year, would require more organization and, just as important, the cooperation of French authorities. In the early days of July 1942, Karl Oberg, leader of the German SS and police in France, met with René Bousquet, Chief of Police for the government in Vichy. For the Germans, Bousquet's cooperation was pivotal at this juncture because Oberg had a mere 3000 police at his disposal (as compared to Bousquet's 100,000), all in the occupied zone. (By contrast, Germany had over 5000 police in the Netherlands, a country, tiny by comparison, with one-fourth as many people and one-third as many Jews.)¹⁰⁴ The meeting resulted in one of Vichy's most notorious compromises: In return for the participation of French police in the coming arrests, Germany agreed to exempt Jews with French citizenship. French Jews in the occupied zone would *only* be deported if the number of foreign Jews arrested fell short of Himmler's quota. The Oberg-Bousquet Accords were ratified by the French government and set the tone for Jewish deportations from France for the next two years.

In the terms of economic theory, the Oberg-Bousquet compromise was ‘Pareto-optimal’ and worked to the advantage of both sides. As it was, the Germans lacked the manpower necessary to deport nearly as many Jews without the cooperation of French authorities. But by agreeing to participate, French authorities were able to protect French citizens—the very people to whom, as political leaders, they were beholden and the constituency better positioned to reward (or not sanction) the regime for its actions. Having seen the public’s reaction to an anti-Jewish measure that did not make such a distinction, the Vichy regime was hardly prepared to face the spectacle of French police arresting French citizens at German behest; nor was it anxious to have the chimera of its sovereignty or unity revealed by Germany’s unilateral arrest of French citizens who, however despised, were still considered to be French. Explicitly, consciously, intentionally or not, Jews had become in France, as they were in Denmark, a symbol of the country’s autonomy from German occupational rule. And they had become this because of or despite the prevailing attitudes about them in the country at large. Citizenship, bestowed upon the Jews of France by Napoleon in 1804, turned out to be a remarkably resilient category; over a century after its reinvention and despite a rise in antisemitic agitation, the institution was responsible for protecting the vast majority of France’s Jews.

By participating in the process, Vichy leaders were also able—literally—to set the agenda in terms of which Jews would be taken, ensuring that the despised foreign Jews would be the first to go. In fact, the policy was ingenious from the German point of view: Since shortfalls in the quota would be made up for with French Jews from the occupied zone, French police in both zones were obliged to do their best—lest their poor performance result in the arrest and deportation of their fellow French citizens.¹⁰⁵ As Laval would remark to his prefects at the height of the operation: ‘every time a foreign Jew leaves our territory, it’s one more gained for France’.¹⁰⁶

The Oberg-Bousquet Accord leaves the historian with several important questions: Did Vichy leaders envision the compromise as temporary or permanent? Did France give up too much or could it have bargained for more? To what extent did Vichy leaders know the fate of those they deported? And, most troubling, was Nazi evil such that no negotiation could be justified morally? Each of these questions is intriguing, and each might justify a study in its own right. I will not oversimplify any of them by trying to address it here. In discussing the deportation process itself, my limited aim is only to show that the mere existence of high-level

governmental collaborators in France contributed—intentionally, knowingly, justifiably or not—to France’s relatively low victimization rate and to reduced suffering for the people of France more generally.

Deportations

As we shall see, the Oberg-Bousquet Accord ‘worked’ for the first phase of the deportation. Over time, however, both sides began to ‘cheat’. Soon, the French police were found to be so unreliable that the Germans seldom used them. Obligated to do it alone, German forces went about deporting French Jews indiscriminately. But without the help of French police, German efforts were largely bound for failure.

On the night of July 16–17,¹⁰⁷ German officials, with the help of 9000 French police, implemented operation ‘Spring Wind’ (*Vent printanier*)—the attempt to arrest some 28,000 foreign Jews in Paris and its surrounding areas. Though French forces conducted most of the raids, and though French uniforms and ‘good’ behavior no doubt lulled the Jews into a false sense of security, the operation got off to a rocky start from the German point of view. Sympathetic police leaked word of the operation to a stunned Jewish public; and there were reports of other police announcing their arrival ahead of time, warning Jews to go into hiding. The over-representation of poor Jews in the mix led German officials to speculate that wealthier Jews had bribed disloyal police. And the public showed little sympathy for the operation as a whole. Ultimately, Operation Spring Wind netted a ‘mere’ 12,884 Jews, less than half of the objective. Simultaneous operations around the country fared little ‘better’: When a transport from Bordeaux had to be cancelled because only 150 Jews had been collected, Eichmann himself wondered aloud as to whether France ‘deserved’ to be included in his continuing plan (Hilberg 1985: 639).

Of special concern were the children of Jewish deportees. In an effort to preserve the ruse that Jews were being transported for ‘labor purposes’, Theodor Dannecker, Eichmann’s representative in Paris, gave the order that the first deportations be limited to Jews between 16 and 40 years of age. To Laval, however, the prospect of separating children from their parents was a political nightmare. Faced with a possible public backlash, Laval teased another ‘concession’ out of the Germans: Dannecker agreed to include children in the deportations after all. The deportation of children also allowed Laval to avoid having to find homes for what would have been thousands of Jewish orphans. And the concession was hailed as a victory by those in the Vichy regime who claimed to stand for the unity and sanctity of the family.

Problems with the implementation of the Final Solution in France continued throughout the year, especially in the unoccupied zone. By the end of 1942, ‘only’ 42,000 Jews had been deported, a number which included thousands who had already been detained in 1941. Merely a third of those deported came from the unoccupied zone, even though the zones were roughly equal in terms of their Jewish populations and even though the number of foreign Jews was almost certainly higher in the south.¹⁰⁸ By the time Germany occupied both zones, it was clear that France was lagging far behind in terms of the Final Solution.¹⁰⁹

Frustrated with the slow pace of deportations, German officials quietly considered expanding their operation to include Jews with French citizenship. After meeting with his French counterparts, however, Oberg warned Himmler that, in light of Laval and Pétain’s views on the matter, ‘such an action would have serious consequences’ (NG-1971). Himmler listened to the advice of his man in the field. Reporting on the exchange on September 25, 1942, Helmut Knochen (Chief of the SS Security Police in France) concluded that ‘Large scale Jewish deportations [we]re therefore impossible’ (NG-1971).

Germany’s problems only increased after its November 11, 1942, occupation of the whole of France. Though the occupational apparatus grew in response to the new situation, it now had to supervise a much larger territory. Moreover, the Allied landings in North Africa (which made the occupation of Southern France necessary in the first place) only made it more apparent that Germany would lose the war; and this, in turn, made Vichy’s cooperation more difficult to attain. As early as January 1943, German authorities reported that the reliability of French police was in steep decline when it came to rounding up Jews. Thus, over time, Germany relied less and less on French police for the arrests. This meant, however, that the occupier was no longer bound by the terms of Oberg-Bousquet, and, as such, the German police began indiscriminate attacks on *all* of the Jews in France. Without the help of French police—and with French Jews increasingly aware of what ‘labor’ entailed—Germany’s efforts were decreasingly effective. Deportations actually *slowed* after Germany’s occupation of the southern zone.¹¹⁰

Axis Resistance to the Final Solution in France

The Final Solution clearly met some resistance in (occupied, but technically neutral) France. But the policy was even less popular with Germany’s

closest allies. Finding the French Jews difficult to extract, Germany turned its attention to several thousand Romanian and Hungarian Jews living in France; but after Romania and Hungary each lodged a complaint with the French government, Germany found that these Jews, too, were beyond its reach. The matter was no less objectionable to Switzerland or Spain; for them, the concern was not only that Germany would arrest and deport their citizens but that the persecution of Jews in France might exacerbate an already developing refugee crisis.¹¹¹ (By May 1941, thousands of Jews had crossed the borders into Switzerland and Spain.) With their governments exiled and far away in Britain, Belgian and Dutch Jews were deported from France as early as August 1942, even though they, too, had originally been exempted. Clearly, a country's refusal to cooperate with Germany could have deleterious consequences for its citizens well beyond its own borders. With their forces deeply engaged in Germany's war effort, Romania and Hungary were well positioned to protect their citizens in France. The Belgian and Dutch governments were considerably less influential.

In this sense, then, it is unsurprising that the Final Solution in France found its greatest challenge from the forces of Germany's closest ally, Italy. On several occasions, this fellow Axis power actually intervened to prevent the deportation of Jews from its portion of occupied France,¹¹² even though the Jews in question were not Italian citizens. Nuremberg records even show that, in one instance, the Italian army actually surrounded a French gendarmerie barracks to obtain, 'by force', the release of Jews who had been detained there (NG-5087). In the Italian-occupied zone, the city of Nice became a haven for Jews escaping persecution in the German-occupied zones.¹¹³ Indeed, even in the German-occupied areas, Italian recalcitrance had a profound effect. In a secret memo of January 1943, Himmler urged Ribbentrop to exert pressure on the Italians because, he said:

For the French the fact that the Italians are our allies and are not willing to co-operate in the Jewish question, carries special weight. (NO-1893)

A month later, Knochen added:

[t]he Final Solution of the Jewish problem offered for the whole of Europe, [*sic*] was greatly impeded by the attitude of the Italian authorities throughout France. (NG-2268)

Of course, Italy's direct role in protecting Jews in France would come to an end in September 1943, when Italy capitulated and German forces occupied the region. But Himmler and Knochen were ultimately right in their concern that Italian stubbornness would 'spill over' to the rest of occupied France. In the words of Marrus and Paxton, it was only a matter of time before Laval himself 'eagerly played the Italian card' (1981: 319–20).

*Denaturalization: Germany's Last Attempt
and Laval's 'First' Refusal*

Throughout 1943, French authorities were becoming less cooperative and the Jews were becoming harder to find. In the summer of that year, Germany made one last attempt to attain French cooperation in large-scale deportations. With the help of Darquier, Germany pressed the Vichy government to cancel the naturalizations of Jews that had been granted since August 10, 1927. In so doing, up to 50,000 Jews who were French citizens would suddenly be rendered 'stateless'—and thereby subject to immediate deportation. Oberg's men called in reinforcements from Berlin, hoping to pounce on the relevant Jews the moment the new law took effect. But the proposal was met with the now-familiar procrastination of French authorities, some of whom simply proposed alternative (later) cutoff dates. Ultimately, Laval made it clear that he would not serve as Germany's *rabatteur* (Marrus and Paxton 1981: 325). After a year of procrastinating, prevaricating, quibbling, and negotiating, Laval finally met the Germans with an unequivocal 'No'.

To be sure, Laval's refusal to negotiate with the Germans on this issue was not evidence of sudden bravery or a genuine change in heart. It was one thing to reject Germany's anti-Jewish demands from the start (as the Danes, to their credit, largely did); but it was quite another to do so in August 1943, following Allied landings in Sicily and the Soviet victory at Kursk. Even Tunisia, the last outpost of France's once-great empire, where the Germans maintained a tenuous foothold, had finally fallen to the Allies in May 1943—leaving French officials with little to bargain for but the lives of their own citizens.¹¹⁴ The French public, which was largely indifferent to the persecution of foreigners, had never really come to accept the persecution of French citizens (even Jewish ones). And so as it became increasingly evident that Vichy's governors had backed the wrong horse, it became prohibitively expensive for those same governors to be seen as henchmen in Germany's war against French Jewry.

On the other hand, it is a bit unfair to characterize Laval's decision of August 1943 as 'the first [No] in the history of the Final Solution in France', as Marrus and Paxton do (p. 325). Every negotiation process involves at least two implicit No's, one on each side of the table; and it is arguably the entire point of negotiation to arrive at a mutually agreeable settlement that allows each side to get some of what it wants without resorting to making its 'No' explicit. In fact, Vichy France was remarkably consistent—throughout the Final Solution—in drawing lines in the sand (each one, a 'No') around Jews with French citizenship. And German negotiators, throughout most of the occupation, took remarkable care to avoid violating those lines. Indeed, it stands as a testament to the degree to which the occupier still needed Vichy collaboration that Germany even entered into such negotiations at such a late stage of the game. In that very same month, August 1943, the Danish parliament said 'No' to an even more invasive German demand; and Germany responded by putting an end to negotiation, subjecting Denmark to a more brutal form of occupation and ending the 'special relationship' entirely.

But Laval's 'No' reveals more than the limit of France's willingness to negotiate on the Final Solution; it reveals something of the nature of French versus Danish political culture. Denmark and France were both countries that used their 'unique' relationships with Nazi Germany to soften the blow of Nazi terror. They reveal something of their cleverness, if not their wisdom—their pragmatism, if not their idealism—their cowardice, if not their moral purity—by having accepted, albeit in very different ways and under very different circumstances, a German offer to negotiate rather than to continue fighting. The difference is in the nature of those negotiations, in the bargaining chips and in the very different No's that each country brought to the bargaining table. Denmark said 'No' to virtually every aspect of Germany's Final Solution and conceded, instead, on matters of domestic administration, economic cooperation, and even military aid. France conceded somewhat more, it must be said, on each of these fronts, and offered a much more 'nuanced' 'No' to Germany's requests for the Jews in its domain.

This comparison of Denmark and France (both countries where the great majority of Jews survived) shows us, therefore, the ways in which antisemitism and political culture *are* crucial to understanding the perpetration of the Final Solution. As we have observed throughout this study, these factors had very little net effect on comparative rates of victimization. However, these very same factors actually *defined* the particular

compromises that each country was willing to make in its situation. In democratic and religiously tolerant Denmark, collaborationist officials gave ground on certain political matters on the condition (explicit or not) that *all* of the Jews in that country remain unharmed. In antisemitic and xenophobic France, the government passed anti-Jewish legislation and arrested foreign Jews on the condition (temporary or not) that the French Jews would be spared. In a matter of judgment, the general consensus may be correct in considering Vichy's evil 'sinister' and Denmark's 'understandable' or 'necessary'. But in a matter of fact, there can be no doubt that domestic institutions in both countries achieved the protection of their Jewish citizens by sacrificing other things (or people) they considered expendable. Antisemitism and political culture do not explain France's low victimization rate any more than they do Denmark's. But they do tell us why, in the case of the former, the means to that end was the sacrifice of innocent people who had the misfortune of being foreign Jews in Vichy France.

The Final Breakdown of French–German Relations

Laval's refusal to be a party in the denaturalization of France's Jewish citizens was indicative of a more general breakdown in Franco-German relations, especially in matters concerning the Final Solution. In August 1943, Röthke told Knochen: 'It is no longer possible to count on any large-scale help from the French police for the arrest of the Jews' (as quoted in Hilberg 1985: 655); that same month, Röthke's boss (Oberg) explained that, while indispensable in the fight against communism, French police 'lacked initiative in the "struggle against Judaism"' (Marrus and Paxton 1981: 323). Whether it was due to Germany's poor performance in the war, better information as to the fate of the deported, or (in theory, at least) a sudden resurrection of human decency, enthusiasm for the arrest and deportation of Jews in France was clearly on the wane.

On the other hand, when French authorities lost their will to cooperate in the Final Solution, they also lost their ability to influence it. Though thoroughly understaffed, German police continued to carry out arrests without French help, but also without the limitations imposed by Oberg-Bousquet. Soon, German authorities abandoned even the pretext of observing the Accords, arresting Jews with French citizenship, former soldiers, and even UGIF personnel. With its delayed refusal to lend a hand in the Nazi process of destruction, Vichy France may have retained a shred

of moral credibility, but its long-standing Jewish citizens were paying an awful price.

In the end, victimization statistics in Vichy France reflect the ‘lesser evil’ that some French officials considered collaboration itself. Of the 310,000 Jews in France at the start of the Final Solution, some 75,721 (24.4%) were deported. Another 4000 or so died in France itself, victims of Germany’s notorious execution campaign or of simple mistreatment. Of the total number of Jews deported from France, however, ‘only’ 24,000 (or 32%) were French citizens. The other two-thirds were foreign Jews, even though non-citizens comprised ‘only’ half of the French Jewish population before the war. Ultimately, the victimization rate for *foreign* Jews in France was 41%; for Jews with French citizenship, it was only 12%. Every one of these statistics is horrible. It is, perhaps, only in the course of this *comparative* study that we might consider them, as we did the Danish case, ‘rays of light’ in the dark history of the Holocaust.

Reflections on the Final Solution in France

The most powerful indictment against Vichy France contends that it could have done more. Laval’s procrastination in stripping French Jews of their citizenship was too little too late, and hardly compensates for his zeal in deporting foreign Jews at earlier stages of the operation. To many at the time, and to even more today, the Oberg-Bousquet Accords represent a moment in which Vichy officials should have realized that they were not a shield but a sieve. To still others, that moment should have come some two years earlier, when Vichy’s government first agreed to do its part in Germany’s new world order.

It is true, of course, that Vichy’s government could have managed a better compromise: that it could have refused to allow its police to participate in the arrest of *any* Jews or that it could have stepped down, à la Denmark’s government, before its hands were dirty with the blood of saboteurs.¹¹⁵ Such a move might likely have triggered massive resistance to the Germans and maybe even resistance to the imposition of German anti-Jewish policy. But such a move, in mid-1942, would have required that Vichy ‘betray’ a Germany that appeared more likely to win rather than to lose,¹¹⁶ and that it do so in opposition to a horrible policy, the incredible horror of which was only slowly revealed in the year and years to come. My intention is not to ‘decide’ the most prudent moment

at which Vichy should have stood its ground, but to heed the advice of Pierre Vidal-Naquet (a Jewish-French historian), who reminds us that ‘To understand historical reality, it is sometimes necessary *not to know the outcome*’ (as quoted in Jackson: 112).

The question of Vichy’s motives (their purity or their articulation) is no less complex, empirically or morally. While the scholarly literature and historical reflection seldom focus on Vichy’s role in hindering the Final Solution, they are also quick to point out that Vichy’s actions were not undertaken for the ‘right reasons’ in that they were not part of a ‘consciously plotted strategy to save as many Jews as possible’.¹¹⁷ But the search for the intentions of Vichy France is also problematic. Regimes, governments, countries, and populations are not of single minds and do not possess intentions in the ways we might normally speak of them for individuals. Indeed, one of the most persistent debates in Holocaust Studies is about the degree to which the Final Solution *itself* was the product of a well-articulated and deliberate plan (the ‘Intentionalist’ perspective), as opposed to the largely unintended or at least unforeseen result of countless actions, developments, intentions, and interests in a complex bureaucracy over a huge expanse of territory and time (‘Functionalism’). Insofar as the Intentionalist–Functionalist debate remains an active one in Holocaust Studies, it is only to be expected that it continue in studies of the Holocaust in France. My suspicion is that Vichy’s actions were too complex—and the intentions of its personnel, too varied—to fit neatly within either conceptual category.

It remains the case that in Vichy France, high-ranking government officials participated in the German effort to administer their country. In so doing, they certainly served themselves, and they certainly served the Germans, both in France and around the world. France suffered less, it must be said, than many of the less cooperative countries in Germany’s realm; and the Jews of France—all of them, but especially the French citizens—shared in the fate of their country, suffering more, on the whole, than their fellow countrymen, but ‘benefiting’ to some degree from their leaders’ cooperative stance. I do not know what it would take to consider Vichy’s ‘shield’ part of a ‘consciously plotted strategy’, and I do not know if saving Jews would excuse collaboration, even if it was. But what this comparative research project suggests is that, without the collaboration of high-ranking French officials, Jewish survival would not have been possible. Survival under German occupation required dirty hands, and few regimes had dirtier hands than Vichy France.

CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER THREE

In each of the cases considered above, a collaborationist political institution has become the subject of intense moral scrutiny. The Dutch Jewish Council, the Belgian monarch, and the government of Vichy France itself have each been the subject of a fascinating literature, if not also a political or legal dispute. In each debate, the prosecution's indictment has been that the collaborating institution is guilty for furthering the policy of an illegal occupational regime, be it by legitimating that regime or by actively participating in its policies. The purpose of this chapter has not been to show that the charge is baseless, but rather to show that each institution is *also* responsible for bringing some good to a terrible and tragic situation. In many cases, the forums in which these institutions have been judged lack the capacity or willingness to recognize that good and evil—or innocence and guilt—are not mutually exclusive. In the context of an academic research project, written in the voice of a comparative science with the distance of a new generation, we have more freedom to make less Manichean judgments.

As is so often the case in moral discussions about collaboration, the actions of the Dutch Jewish Council often hinge on what its leaders intended to do. In the debate so ably summarized by Bob Moore (1997: 106–15, esp. 110), for example, assessments of the Council's leading 'realists', Asscher and Cohen, generally depend upon whether their failure can be characterized as a matter of poor judgment or, at worst, the selfish actions of Jewish elite. But such debates should not lose sight of the institutional context in which the Dutch Jewish Council operated. Asscher and Cohen might have come to personify the 'traditional deference' of Dutch society. But their deference might have had more to do with the nature of German rule than with their adherence to Dutch tradition.

In France, the institution of the state itself has been the subject of this moral scrutiny. Understandably and interestingly, much of the debate has focused on the motives of the regime—asking if Vichy protected Jews for 'altruistic' reasons or even if it was aware that its actions would have such an effect in the first place. (In most cases, the answer to both questions is 'No'.) I hope to have revealed two objections to this treatment of the Vichy State. First, the question itself, by shifting attention to motives rather than actions, has hidden the very real degree to which this rightly criticized regime actually hindered the efficient implementation of the Final Solution. Second, in answering that the regime's motives were

wholly impure or simply the unintended consequence of an evil policy (collaboration), many discussants have overlooked the true complexity of institutional or moral choice.

To accuse Vichy of ‘unlimited criminality’ is to argue that nobody in the regime at any point in its history acted for morally right (if practically mistaken) reasons. To say, with no qualification, that Vichy was unaware that its actions would save Jewish lives, is to argue that Vichy did not consciously and clearly value the lives of some Jews over others. In my assessment, and insofar as such assessments are even possible, Vichy rarely acted for the right reasons—and only then, when the war was all but done. But Vichy certainly, if only sometimes, consciously and intentionally protected its Jewish citizens, even if it did so rarely or while showing such callous indifference to Jews from other countries.

This chapter elaborates upon the observation that collaborationist governments interfered with the implementation of the Final Solution. For the most part, it is not concerned with matters of guilt or innocence; indeed, it proceeds from the assumption that the tendency to judge has itself interfered with historical scholarship.¹¹⁸ For the explanation to be valid, it does not have to posit that collaborators protected Jews as part of some conspiracy or ‘grand design’, although they certainly sometimes did. And it does not have to show that they did so for the ‘right’ reasons, especially as so many ‘wrong’ reasons prevailed. Whatever we decide regarding its intention or motivation, the fact remains that—knowingly, willingly, morally or not—governmental collaboration contributed to the survival of many local Jews. It is not for me to judge whether the practical benefit of this outcome was worth the moral cost.

NOTES

1. Aishwary Kumar, *Radical Equality: Ambedkar, Gandhi, and the Risk of Democracy* (Stanford University Press, 2015): p. 211.
2. Klaus Barbie, the notorious ‘Butcher of Lyon’, was a *German* official tried and convicted of similar crimes in France. Paul Touvier, the only French official convicted of crimes against humanity, was sentenced for his role in the anti-Resistance activities of the Milice (Vichy’s paramilitary militia) and was never directly linked to the implementation of the Final Solution. Jean Leguay and René Bousquet were the two highest-ranking Vichy officials to be charged with crimes related to the implementation of the Final Solution, but

both died (the latter, by assassination) before their trials reached completion. Some have argued that Papon was tried in place of the 'bigger fish' that got away.

3. Roger Samuel Bloch, the resistance fighter, came forward on Papon's behalf during the trial.
4. Marrus and Paxton 1981: pp. *vii* (my emphasis) and *xii*.
5. Thus, some scholars focus on why Jewish victimization was so thorough in the Netherlands, despite its democratic values and religious toleration (see Blom and Leopold). Others explain why it was so low in France, despite Vichy collaboration (Fox; Seibel 2002b). Still others explain Belgium's 'middle' position (Steinberg: 203; Dan Michman 2002: 407).
6. Many of the top civilian officials in Germany's occupational bureaucracy in the Netherlands were Austrian.
7. Nazi ideology and a perceived 'racial affinity' with Nordics in the Netherlands and Luxembourg might very well have led to Germany's establishment of SS dominance in these countries. In fact, Germany actually began the process of incorporating these territories into the Reich itself, a process for which SS ideologues would certainly come in handy. Insofar as Germany did not attempt the same in Denmark or Norway (countries it also wished would eventually be incorporated into the Reich), this convincing argument is, at best, incomplete.
8. Marrus and Paxton 1981: 357; see also Bauer 1989b: 'In Holland it is a very difficult to hide [*sic*], since the whole country is built on water, and there is no way of having basements. The problem was to find hiding places—but where? The country is flat, without forests and hills' (p. 152). Meanwhile, Blom contends that France had 'vast but thinly populated areas which could serve as hiding places' (341).
9. Marrus and Paxton tell us of a 'few thousand' Jews who survived in the wilds of Dordogne, in France. They go on to note, however, that geographic factors like terrain and dispersal 'were not decisive when the cards were stacked against the Jews for other reasons' (1981: 357). Indeed, given that well over 200,000 French Jews survived the war, those who did so 'in the wilderness' represent no more than a tiny fraction of the total.
10. Blom notes: 'In Belgium and France there existed a tradition of opposition to, or rather evasion and avoidance of, government authority; in the Netherlands, on the other hand, the predominant

feeling was one of respect and docility towards “Authority” with a capital “A” Dutch government administration was characterized by a thoroughness more closely resembling the German than the French or Belgian traditions’ (343–4). See also Moore: ‘Deference to authority clearly limited the development of resistance to German demands until later in the occupation—when it was too late to save the Jews from deportation’ (1997: 10).

11. In fact, according to Yad Vashem, only Poland has more citizens honored as ‘righteous gentiles’ than the Netherlands (see Lebor and Boyes: 311). Leopold notes that Dutch rescuers ‘ultimately saved more Jews than the Danes brought to Sweden’ (46).
12. In *Jewish Reactions to the Holocaust* (1989b), Yehuda Bauer writes: ‘If one can speak of submission even before there was any need for it, it is certainly true in this case. On some occasions, the leadership gave in to Nazi instructions even before they had been issued’ (p. 151). Hannah Arendt is particularly harsh in her assessment of Dutch Jewry, citing the high proportion of foreign Jews among those in hiding in the Netherlands at the end of the war as ‘test[ament] to the unwillingness of Dutch Jews to face reality’ (1963: 170). Moore sees the role of the Dutch Jewish Council as a ‘major contribution to the “success” of the Germans in identifying, isolating and then deporting the Jews from the Netherlands’ (1997: 256).
13. Blom partially anticipates this conclusion. He writes, ‘although [the Jewish Councils in all three countries] co-operated in similar ways..., the situation [in France] was made more complex by the existence of the Vichy regime’ (pp. 347–8).
14. Hirschfeld 1988: 16n; Murray and Millett: 68. Much controversy surrounds the bombing of Rotterdam, which occurred despite the fact that surrender negotiations were already under way. Technically, negotiations dragged on past the time stipulated in the German ultimatum. There were also reports of communication failure between German field commanders and their aircraft. However, there is some thought that high-ranking Nazis hoped to demonstrate their resolve to use ‘Eastern-front methods’ against recalcitrant enemies in the West. However one sees it, it seems plausible to conclude, as Warmbrunn does, that Göring was ‘more willing to take the risk of bombing Rotterdam “unnecessarily” than to pursue a more cautious policy which might have delayed the Dutch capitulation’ (1963: 10n).

15. The popular General Winkelman, with whom the Germans, no doubt, would have also liked to negotiate, refused to toe the German line. He was arrested on July 2, 1940, and treated as a POW.
16. From the 'Decree of the Führer concerning the Exercise of Governmental Authority in the Netherlands, May 18, 1940' (quoted in Lemkin: 446).
17. They were: Dr. Friedrich Wimmer (Administration and Justice), Dr. Hans Fischböck (Finance and Economy), Hanns Albin Rauter (Security), and Fritz Schmidt (Special Affairs). The Foreign Office also had a representative in the Reichskommissar's office, Otto Bene.
18. Schmidt fell from a train while on official business in France in June 1943. The death was so fortuitous for Rauter's standing in the Netherlands that many saw Himmler's fingerprint on the incident, which was eventually classified as a suicide.
19. The Directives (or *Aanwijzingen*) were the Dutch government's contingency plan for what to do in the event of a German invasion.
20. After the war, a Parliamentary Commission of Enquiry determined that the Secretaries-General had neglected their primary function and interpreted the boundaries of their official duties too widely. However, a number of historians take issue with this assessment, arguing that the Commission failed to consider the difficulty of the administration's task (see Hirschfeld 1988: 142). Clearly, judgments of what constitutes proper behavior under enemy occupation are no easier for us today than they were for politicians at the time.
21. Seyss-Inquart's directive included a resignation clause, which permitted each Secretary-General to resign if and when he saw a conflict between his duties and a request of the German administration. The Reichskommissar could thus operate under the assumption that all who remained in office would display complete loyalty; those who were not prepared to do so could, after all, just step down.
22. According to a German diplomat in Amsterdam at the time of the occupation, the continued cooperation of the Secretaries-General was contingent on the assumption that Germany would not subject them to an NSB government. (The Nationaal-Socialistische Beweging (NSB) was the Netherlands' fascist political party, founded in the 1930s.)
23. One of the architects of the Unie was Hendrik Colijn, a dominant figure from interwar Dutch politics who met with Seyss-Inquart soon after the German occupation. Colijn initially asked General Winkelman for his support in the formation of a provisional cabinet that could enter into negotiation with the Germans, but Winkelman refused.

24. See the Norway section in Chapter 2. Immediately following the occupation, Berlin rallied to Quisling's support—only to withdraw that support a few days later when it became apparent that Quisling's appointment did little to quell public anger. Quisling did not regain his official role in national government until almost two years after the initial occupation.
25. In a letter to Hitler, Seyss-Inquart spoke of Mussert's desire to form a *Grossdietsches* rather than a *Grossdeutsches* Reich (see Rich 1974: 154–5).
26. It should be added that anti-Jewish legislation might not have been high on NSB's agenda, even if it had been promoted to a position of political prominence. Before the war, Mussert's NSB explicitly repudiated antisemitism and even accepted a few hundred Jewish members. It was not until the imposition of German pressure that the NSB changed its tune (Paulsson 1995: 459, 464). Perhaps unsurprisingly, a small splinter group of Jewish fascists also failed to gain much traction in Dutch Jewish society (Warmbrunn 1963: 272).
27. In his defense after the war, Hirschfeld suggested that the chaos and famine that reigned at the very end of the war would have occurred much earlier and been of longer and more severe duration had the Directives of 1937 been 'followed 100 per cent', that is to say, had he resigned. After the war, H.M. Hirschfeld was dismissed from the civil service 'with honor' (G. Hirschfeld 1988: 211 & 325).
28. Hirschfeld 1988: 23; Rich 1974: 181.
29. Moore 1997: 201; Warmbrunn 1963: 109–10; Hirschfeld 1996: 142; Rich 1974: 161.
30. See: Hirschfeld 1988: 40, 100n, 109; Warmbrunn 1963: 45; and Gleditsch: *passim*.
31. Warmbrunn: 1963: 150–2.
32. Moore 1997: 93; Leopold: 44; Hilberg 1985: 585.
33. By 'foreign Jews', it should be noted that the original German deportation order specifically exempted citizens of Germany's allies, neutral countries, the USA, Britain, Mexico, and other Latin American countries.
34. Auschwitz was worked to capacity with the extermination of Jews from Salonika (March–May 1943) and, soon thereafter, hit by a typhus epidemic (June–July). For a timeline of deportations from Western Europe, see Blom 1989: 340.

35. Compare this to the 3000 German security personnel in France, a larger country with an armed resistance, five times as many people and almost twice as many Jews.
36. Hirschfeld summarizes the three policy spheres in which the regular Dutch police were asked to participate: (1) in the fight against subversive elements and the resistance, (2) in searches for 'wanted persons' such as communists and even Allied pilots who bailed out over the Netherlands, and (3) in the arrest and transfer of Dutch Jews to transport points (1988: 170).
37. The 'blood money' paid for the capture of individual Jews, for example, rose eightfold over the course of the operation, from 5 guilders per Jew at the start of mass arrests to 40 guilders in 1944. The bounty was financed from the assets of the Dutch Jewish community (Hirschfeld 1988: 177n).
38. Germany also increased the penalty for Dutch police refusing to participate in the operation.
39. The sterilization program was headed up by *SS-Sturmbannführer* Dr. E.W.P. Mayer, a man who was later to come under investigation for being too lenient in his procedures. It is estimated that, of the nearly 3000 Jews saved by having shown proof of sterilization, only about 600 actually had the operation carried out (Moore 1997: 125).
40. Here, the largest number were the so-called Calmeyer Jews, named for the 'totally incorruptible' German lawyer, Dr. Hans Georg Calmeyer, who knowingly designated Jews as 'pure' or 'partial Aryans' based on scant evidence (Moore 1997: 119; Jozeph Michman: 1054).
41. The Germans looked somewhat positively upon the Dutch Reformed Church, in part because of its large size and also because it alone refused to sermonize against the deportations. (Given their Church's outspoken protest of the same measures, Roman Catholic Jews faced the full wrath of German persecution.) But even in the Protestant churches, there were reports of counterfeit baptismal certificates and complaints of baptisms carried out 'too quickly' (see Moore 1997: 128; Henry Mason: 200).
42. Germany generally wished to avoid the diplomatic complications involved in deporting Jews from neutral countries. In this way, Swedish, Swiss, Spanish, Portuguese, Argentinean, and Turkish Jews found reprieve or were simply allowed to return home. Jews from

enemy countries were also often spared, in part so as to avoid reprisals against German citizens abroad and also, one might suspect, to leave open the option for a separate peace. (In this way, even Jews from unoccupied parts of the Soviet Union were temporarily spared.) Moore also mentions a lucrative passport business carried out in Paraguayan, Honduran, El Salvadorean, and Ecuadorian consulates in Switzerland and Sweden.

43. That Seyss-Inquart saw the trade-off in these terms is clear. In his first public appearance after the strikes, he 'vehemently denounced the Jews and called on the Dutch people to choose between sympathy for the Jews and collaboration with the Germans' (Jozeph Michman: 1048).
44. Henry Mason: 200; Moore 1997: 127–9; Warmbrunn 1963: 161–2. Even on this issue, however, there were shades of gray displayed by the various churches. Catholic and Reformed churches alike authorized the exclusion of NSB members from participating in the sacraments. The Catholic Church also ruled that Catholic policemen could participate in the apprehension of strikers (threats to public order and security); however, participation in hunting down student draft dodgers, veterans liable for reinternment, and Jews was forbidden. Presumably because its opposition was not absolute, the Catholic Church did manage to gain exemptions for many of its Jewish members who were *also* in mixed marriages.
45. One can imagine several reasons that Germany would keep the Netherlands on a tighter leash than Norway: the long and unprotected border, historical tensions between the two neighbors, and/or more opportunities for exploitation of the Netherlands' industrialized economy.
46. One hesitates to use the term, of course. But here I follow the practice of Moore (1997: 110) and others. It is, indeed, the case that Dutch Jews sent to Bergen-Belsen and Theresienstadt (the camps to which Asscher and Cohen were deported) had survival rates of 55% and 40%, respectively, compared to less than 5% at most other camps (Jozeph Michman: 1055).
47. Wever 1996: 73; Warmbrunn 1993: ix, 39–41; Conway: 15–6.
48. The debate centered on the king's simultaneous roles as commander-in-chief (which obligated him to remain with his troops) and as head of state (which obliged him to follow the (unanimous) advice of the government to which he was constitutionally sworn). There was also

debate as to whether the Belgian military was committed to the defense of Belgium (the king's position) or of the Allied cause (Parliament's); the latter would have obliged the Belgian military to fight on, even in France (Shirer 1990: 729; Warmbrunn 1993: 48–52).

49. Pierlot was under French pressure to distance himself from the king, whom the French were using as a scapegoat for their own military losses.
50. Unsurprisingly, judgments change with the tides of fortune. After the war, Belgians delayed in recalling their king from Switzerland (to which he was exiled following *Germany's* defeat). When he finally returned to the country, in July 1950, public sentiment was so divided that it threatened civil war; Leopold was forced to abdicate in favor of his son.
51. There were strategic reasons for division—since these departments were likely locations for any future Allied attack. But the ‘theft’ of the two French departments also allowed them to be used as a bargaining chip against the Vichy regime (Kroener, Müller, & Umbreit: 84).
52. The Allies considered Falkenhausen for the task of heading a future, anti-Nazi government in Germany, and Falkenhausen himself was later implicated in the attempted coup of July 20, 1944.
53. After the July 20, 1944, coup attempt, Falkenhausen was arrested and sent to a concentration camp. He was ‘liberated’ from the camp and sent to Belgium for trial after the war on charges of deporting Jews and organizing illegal executions. He was sentenced to 12 years in prison, but released after only a few weeks on evidence that he had also saved people from a worse fate.
54. For more on how the king influenced Germany's choice of occupational mode, see Kroener, Müller, and Umbreit: ‘As a symbol of the state's integrity and of the [*sic*] state power (albeit now dormant), as well as because of his kinship with the Italian royal house, [the Belgian king] made it difficult for Hitler to dispose arbitrarily over the conquered country. The military administration, as a relatively unobjectionable form of occupation regime, therefore helped to keep all options open for the future’ (84).
55. He also requested that Belgium be allowed to maintain a small and lightly armed military force of 10,000–15,000 men.
56. *Europa unterm Hackenkreuz* 1990 (p. 127): ‘*Er sie sich klar darüber, daß Belgien als Gegenleistung dafür gewisse Abkommen auf militärischem und außenpolitischem Gebiet abschließen müsse.*’

57. In the latter case, Burger reported that, 'in doing so, the king had apparently forgotten the mild form of his imprisonment'.
58. Three-quarters in Flanders, because assassinations by the resistance made Walloon replacements harder to find.
59. According to Norman Rich, Falkenhausen's staff had just over 200 'officials of all ranks' at the time of Germany's attack on Russia (1974: 181). Warmbrunn says it numbered 472 'professional administrators' in early 1941 (1993: 74). However we measure it, Falkenhausen's staff is miniscule when compared to Seyss-Inquart's staff of 2000 persons.
60. Dan Michman (1990: 161) makes note of the fact that 65,696 derives from data published in 1980. He notes that this statistic differs from the 90,000 mentioned in various other sources (e.g., Rich 1974: 187; Arendt 1963: 166; Hilberg 1985: 600).
61. See Arendt 1963: 165; NG-5209: 1; Hilberg 1985: 602; and Dan Michman 2002: 465 and 1990: 160.
62. In Belgium, this decree had the same affect that it had in the Netherlands, with many non-Jews showing their disfavor by donning yellow flowers, crosses, or even Jewish stars in ridicule of the German policy.
63. After consultations with the Secretaries-General and with Belgian Cardinal Joseph-Ernest van Roey, Belgium's newly appointed Chief Rabbi, Dr. Salomon Ullmann, was chosen to direct the AJB. Ullmann had remained in the country in his capacity as head of Jewish chaplains in the Belgian army (see Hilberg 1985: 605).
64. Following their imprisonment, the Queen Mother, the archbishop, and the Secretary-General for Justice all lobbied Reeder on behalf of the arrested AJB officials. After a week of internment, they were released (Warmbrunn 1993: 158). However, they were not reinstated as organization's leaders; and their very arrest must have gone some way to deter future acts of 'sabotage', in no small part because Belgian authorities already expended valuable political capital on their behalf.
65. In his own defense after the war, Falkenhausen pointed to his notable lack of enthusiasm for Nazi policy as evidence that he had committed the lesser of two evils. Consider Maxime Steinberg on the potential truth of this claim vis-à-vis Belgium's Jews: 'On their own initiative, and for local political considerations, the local German military authorities immediately intervened at a higher level ... when

they were informed of the preparations for wholesale deportation; at least this was the case in 1942. In France, just as in Belgium, the aim was to adopt, at least temporarily, the lesser of two evils in the anti-Jewish actions, in favor of the Jewish nationals of the occupied territory. In this situation the authorities in Brussels showed a sense of pragmatism' (p. 210).

66. Warmbrunn 1993: 16, 166; Yahil 1990a: 393; Dan Michman 1990: 165.
67. Though formally subordinate to Reeder's Military Administration, German police in Belgium ultimately took their orders directly from Berlin. This is how the anti-Jewish actions were ultimately possible, despite Falkenhausen and Reeder's hesitation. When it came to the arrest of Belgian Jews, as we shall see, authorities in Berlin completely bypassed the Military Administration, issuing orders directly to the police and doing everything possible to hide the operation from Belgium's 'legal' occupation authorities.
68. These included the Flemish SS and the Rex Security Forces. It should be added, however, that these organizations were in the hire of the Germans, and did not report in any official way to the Belgian Secretaries-General.
69. One such informant was the notorious Icek 'Jacques' Glogowski, a Jew who might have been among the deported had he not been so helpful to the occupying authorities.
70. Though operating in Belgium, the police were under SS command. Military authorities played no direct role in these actions.
71. In fact, Ernst Ehlers, the head of the German police, sent notification to the Military Administration, as per Reeder's request. However, the dispatch, though dated September 1, did not arrive on Reeder's desk until September 4, the day *after* the operation was complete.
72. Negligence or what some might call 'criminal negligence' is the characterization given by most scholars. Yahil suggests that the incident was 'deliberate' (1990a: 435), but offers no specific evidence for the charge nor reasoning for why the Germans would resort to such an inefficient and politically explosive method of extermination.
73. Wolfgang Seibel (2002a: 220) applies this argument to the case of Vichy France, where agencies in the occupational administration competed to *implement* anti-Jewish policies in order to impress their bosses in Berlin. In Belgium, it was more a matter of the German

military administration (not very committed to the persecution of Jews anyway) 'selling' leniency on Belgium's Jewish citizens in exchange for the cooperation of local bureaucrats and the non-intervention of the royal family.

74. See Steinberg (p. 212), as quoted (inset) above. See also Warmbrunn (1993: 163): In the aftermath of *Aktion Iltis*, when nine Jews 'accidentally' lost their lives, 'Belgian authorities, from the royal court to the Secretaries-General threatened the cessation of the system of political cooperation that had been in place since the beginning of the occupation.... [Reeder] ordered the immediate end to all large-scale actions and arranged the release of a number of Belgian Jews.... Belgian authorities were informed that mass arrests were suspended and nothing came of the threat to terminate cooperation'.
75. Numbering 600,000, the Jewish community in France today is much larger than it was before the war and is, in fact, one of the larger Jewish communities in the world. At about 30,000, the Jewish population of the Netherlands is but a fraction of its prewar level.
76. The scare quotes (' ') around 'protection' belie the author's argument. If Vichy's shield really 'worked' (as the author notes in the endnote), how was its protective quality only hypothetical or illusory?
77. France paid Germany 20 million marks per day for the costs of the occupation. The payment was calculated at the German-friendly exchange rate set by officials in Berlin.
78. In much of the literature, the term 'Vichy France' is used to refer to two different things simultaneously: In some contexts, it refers to the whole of France during the occupation. However, the term is sometimes used to refer only to the unoccupied zone (see Bauer 1982: 229). In this study, I use the term in the first sense—referring to the period of time during which (and the territory over which) the regime in Vichy had formal authority (i.e., the whole of France for the duration of the war). I will use the term 'unoccupied zone' to refer to Southern France before November 1942.
79. Jackson: 134–5; Paxton 1972: 30; Shirer 1971: 867–8, 922.
80. Jackson: 123–5; Paxton 1972: 35.
81. 'I have made a gift of my person to France', he said in a radio broadcast.
82. Laval was perfect for the job: Associated with the Third Republic but absent from politics for the past three years, Laval was experienced but also unsullied by France's recent defeat (Paxton 1972: 28).

83. There is an interesting debate about the Vichy regime and the degree to which its National Revolution constituted a shift toward fascism. Weighing in on this issue, Robert Paxton (in 1972) offers one possible definition of fascism as 'Hard measures by a frightened middle class'. He concludes: 'In that broader sense, Vichy was fascist. And in that sense, fascism has not yet run its course' (233). And in that sense, fascism has not yet run its course.
84. The Germans 'showed little interest in France's internal political arrangements..., providing public order was maintained'. In fact, as in other parts of its empire, Germany was suspicious of regional national movements, even when they were 'fascist' in character (see, e.g., its caution regarding Quisling's NS and Musset's NSB). 'Such pillars of the National revolution as the Legion of Veterans and the youth movements were prohibited in the Occupied Zone' (Jackson: 139).
85. Karl Heinrich von Stülpnagel's story is significantly tragic: He actually took over the top military job in France from his older cousin, General Otto von Stülpnagel, who, tormented by orders to shoot hostages, used the excuse of poor health to resign from his post in February 1942. The younger Stülpnagel was actually an integral part of the anti-Nazi resistance, eventually losing his life after the failed coup attempt of July 1944. But waiting for the right moment to resist actually put Stülpnagel in the most unspeakable of positions: Fearing that outright resistance would alert Nazi leaders to his disloyalty, Stülpnagel was forced to participate in some of the Nazi regime's most horrible crimes or merely to allow those measures to be carried out by more fanatical elements in the German administration.
86. A Vichy minister summed up Laval's thoughts on the matter as follows: 'No question of going to war against England; rather a matter of helping in the struggle against it, no doubt by making aircraft and by providing air and sea bases' (as quoted in Burrin 1996: 100).
87. An Anglo-Gaullist force set out for Dakar, Senegal, in September 1940, hoping to further an anti-Vichy revolt that had already taken hold in French Equatorial Africa (Chad and Cameroon). But forces loyal to Vichy repelled the attack, alerting Hitler to the potential importance of France in controlling North Africa, the Mediterranean, and the South Atlantic. Once again, France retaliated against the British attack by bombing Gibraltar (Burrin 1996: 98; Paxton 1972: 57, 116).

88. Germany's concessions were quite limited indeed. It was, in fact, only POWs with more than four children who had been released. But the fact that Vichy got *anything* out of the negotiations is significant. We can fault Vichy for being a poor negotiator; but it is unfair, strictly speaking, to say that Vichy's negotiation brought nothing at all.
89. In trying to appease Germany in the midst of the crisis, Flandin, the interim deputy prime minister, also agreed to manufacture war materials for the Germans in the unoccupied zone (Burrin 1996: 116).
90. Burrin 1996: 114–6; Rich 1974: 219; Paxton 1972: 108.
91. It should be noted, however, that all of the assassinations took place in the occupied zone. As we have seen in both Norway and the Netherlands, resistance was often more intense where foreign rule was more direct.
92. Burrin 1996: 187; Jackson: 182.
93. Jackson sums up the new situation as follows: 'Conditions had changed since Laval's first period in power. In 1940, his policy of collaboration had had little chance of success because the Germans hardly wanted anything France had to offer; in 1942 it had no chance of success because the Germans wanted so much that nothing the French offered would be enough' (p. 215).
94. Laval's words from that day would come back to haunt him after the war: 'I desire victory for Germany because, without it, bolshevism would become established everywhere. France cannot remain indifferent in the face of the immensity of the sacrifices made by Germany in order to build a Europe in which we must take our place' (as quoted in Burrin 1996: 151).
95. Gordon: 28; Jackson: 227.
96. Paxton 1972: 241; Burrin 1996: 167.
97. It is difficult to determine how much Vichy's disloyalty would have hurt the Axis cause. Hungary's switch of sides came late in the war, when the Russian advance was imminent anyway. Italy's was earlier and somewhat braver, but harder for the Allies to exploit. A Vichy turn to the Allied cause might have led to a total collapse of the Western front, right on Germany's doorstep. From the point of view of its role in the Final Solution, however, Vichy's loyalty to the German cause is understandable: Before their total occupation by the Germans, Vichy France had far more Jewish blood on its hands than either Italy or Hungary.

98. Wetzel 1996: 109; Marrus 1990: 509.
99. As quoted in Marrus and Paxton 1981: 145. See also Hoover Institution: 628.
100. While in prison after the war, Vallat wrote that the Statute 'owes nothing at all to Nazism.... [N]o trace has been found in either the German or the French archives of any conversation on the Jewish question previous to the first quarter of 1941' (Hoover Institution: 626–7).
101. Vallat took deep offense at Germany's 'racial' brand of antisemitism, holding to a more traditional antisemitism that distinguished between immigrant Jews and Jews who were established French citizens. In a turbulent row with Theodor Dannecker (Eichmann's deputy in France) just before his dismissal, an irate Vallat declared: 'I have been an antisemite far longer than you! What's more, I am old enough to be your father!' (Marrus and Paxton 1981: 90, 96, 115–8; see also Paxton 1972: 180).
102. Richard Cohen 1990: 515.
103. Marrus and Paxton 1981: 238–40. Of particular concern for Vichy authorities was the case of Madame Fernand de Brinon, the Jewish wife of Vichy's 'ambassador' to the occupied zone in Paris. Mme. de Brinon was given a special exemption.
104. Many scholars point to the shortage of German police in France as proof that the Final Solution could not have 'succeeded' in France without Vichy's help. They are correct, of course, but tell only half the story. Ultimately, Germany only had such a small police force in Vichy because Vichy had a police force of its own. Besides 'legitimizing' the occupation (and thereby quieting the opposition), the French government carried out (or continued to carry out) much of its own internal administration. This, in turn, allowed the Germans to get away with a 'merely supervisory' administration, as has already been noted. Had the Vichy government lent the Germans no quarter, Germany would have required—and thus had the disposal of—a stronger presence in occupied France.
105. As Oberg explained to Bousquet: 'The [French] police must help us or we shall do the arresting without any distinction between French Jews and others' (quoted in Hilberg 1985: 637).
106. As quoted in Fox (p. 201). In our eyes, of course, the notion that foreigners should die for the sake of citizens smacks of outright xenophobia. But in the provision of scarce public goods, all states must

distinguish between those who benefit from public expenditure and those who do not. And after somber reflection, even some contemporary observers may come to the conclusion that citizenship is no worse a basis for such distinctions than wealth, religion, or race.

107. The date of the operation had originally been set for July 14th, but this was changed at the last minute in order to avoid an 'embarrassing coincidence' with Bastille Day (Marrus and Paxton 1981: 249).
108. According to Hilberg, massive population transfers at the start of the war left 165,000 Jews in the occupied zone and 145,000 Jews in the unoccupied zone in October 1941 (1985: 615). By March 1943, due to migration, escape, and the relative 'success' of the Final Solution in the north, the Jewish population of the formerly unoccupied zone had swelled to 200,000 out of an approximate 270,000 Jews remaining in all of France (Marrus and Paxton 1981: 307). Though it is nearly impossible to document, it seems likely that the majority of Jewish migrants to the south would have been (the more vulnerable and less established) foreign Jews.
109. Raul Hilberg cites statistics to demonstrate the slow pace of deportations in France compared to its Western European neighbors. By December 31, 1942, 41,911 Jews had been deported from France and 38,511 from the Netherlands. Three months later, the figures were 49,906 and 52,343, respectively (1985: 653). Dutch Jews were being deported at a quicker rate; and the absolute numbers of Jews deported were similar, even though the Jewish population of the Netherlands was much smaller.
110. Marrus 1990: 512; Marrus and Paxton 1981: 335, 372. The number of Jews deported in 1942 alone (42,500) was higher than the number deported for the rest of the war.
111. Himmler responded sarcastically to Spanish and Swiss protestations: 'It is my opinion that France should collect these Jews and pass them over the frontiers to Switzerland and to Spain. I am convinced that, in that case, the present opinion of the two countries would be subjected to renewed examination' (NO-1893).
112. Italian-occupied France had 15,000–20,000 Jews before the war; by the end of summer of 1943, however, the Jewish population there had swelled to at least 30,000.
113. The Jewish community of Nice clearly appreciated Italy's help, going so far as to donate money to Italian victims of Allied bombing raids.

114. In the view of Julian Jackson, it is the very fact that Vichy France had things to lose (the fleet, its empire, the unoccupied status of nearly half its territory) that made it susceptible to German pressure (233).
115. We might remember that the Danish government stepped down upon Germany's demand that it help arrest and execute saboteurs. The action had nothing to do with the country's Jews.
116. We might also remember that the Danish government resigned in August 1943, by which time the tables had largely turned against Germany's favor.
117. Michael Marrus (1990: 513). In *Vichy France and the Jews*, Marrus and Paxton add that there is no evidence that Vichy's actions 'formed part of a well-articulated plan' (1981: 346). Even John Fox, who acknowledges that 'Vichy actions ... successfully "sabotaged" the Wannsee imperatives in France', is quick to add that '[Vichy's] "protection" of French Jews ... was undertaken more from concern to maintain certain principles of French sovereignty than for altruistic reasons' (206).
118. See Pierre Nora in Weill and Solé: 'The problem is that moral judgments imply a total Manicheanism in the way we look at the period.... The historians have too much of a tendency to act as judges, even supreme judges' (pp. 177–8); and David Fraser: '[M]emory and justice have been ill-served by law and jurisprudence' (p. 156).

Eastern Europe: The Benefits of Alliance

“When the cat and mouse agree, the grocer is ruined.”
—*Persian Proverb*¹

Eastern and Western Europe were fundamentally different from one another, both before and during World War II. The new states in Eastern Europe were anything but nation-states, and each one bore the legacy of fluid boundaries and inter-ethnic rivalry that had caused, but was never resolved by, World War I. With its insurmountable reparations and unenforceable regulations, the Treaty of Versailles contributed to the discontent and turmoil that led to Hitler’s political ascent. But the incomplete triumph of nationalist movements in Eastern Europe left gaping trenches between the boundaries of state and nation. These areas were to become yet another source of tension in the years leading up to World War II.

While most of the states in Eastern Europe had little history as nations, they also had little experience with democracy or even self-rule. In the wake of World War I, new countries, headed by new and precarious regimes, were cobbled out of the crumbling German, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman Empires, each one ill-prepared to deal with its new neighbors nor with the very nationality question that had led to the devolution of the Empires in the first place. Eastern Europe thus became fertile ground for the intrigues of the great powers around it, and every Soviet or German intervention disturbed the already delicate balance among the small countries in the region, each one as suspicious of its neighbors as of the restive minorities within.

The large Jewish populations of Eastern Europe figured prominently in this tragic dance. On Eastern Europe's irregular checkerboard of states and nations, Jews were vulnerable pawns, to be exploited, ignored, or abused as the dictates of political pragmatism required. There was, of course, little shortage of latent antisemitism to make the Jews of the region suitable targets for such maneuvering. But the dramatic rise of Nazi Germany on the hegemonic stage brought the Jewish Question into even starker relief, and Jews soon became a coordination point for political mobilization across the region, uniting disparate and even mutually antagonistic countries, classes, and ethnic groups in common cause against a common 'enemy'.² For many policymakers in Eastern Europe (and even, as we have seen, in Vichy France), anti-Jewish legislation was a signal of 'good intentions' toward the German Reich. In a region where virtually every country sought Germany's aid in 'favorable revision' of the Treaty of Versailles, Jews were a common currency³ and antisemitism, a *lingua franca*.

The fear of the Soviet Union and of communism in Eastern Europe also led to the persecution of Jews. Although the role of Jews in interwar Eastern European communism might sometimes be exaggerated, there was nonetheless a *perception* among many that Jews were disloyal agents of the Soviet Union. (Thus, Horthy's 'White Terror', which quashed the nascent socialist regime of Béla Kun, *also* targeted Jews.) Geopolitical developments in the interwar period and especially in the 1930s revealed that the relevant foreign policy choices for Eastern European governments were between Germany and the Soviet Union, and not between Germany and Britain or France. And so as Eastern European countries gradually gravitated into the German orbit for protection from the 'Bolshevik menace', they gradually adopted domestic policies (including anti-Jewish legislation) that would please their German patron.⁴

Even before the rise of Soviet communism and of German fascism, domestic factors contributed to the precarious position of Jews throughout the region. Even when tolerated, Jews were conspicuous in the pre-industrial and illiberal empires of Eastern Europe. Ever stateless and non-territorial, Jews found a certain equality among the ethnic minorities of the region, where their right to live as a distinct social corporation (and to be subject to their own laws) sometimes insulated them from the antisemitism of other social groups. Ironically then, liberalism, with its promise of individual (rather than corporate) rights, disturbed the stability that Jews had found as second-class citizens in a world where the masses were peasants. Jews soon found themselves at odds with the emergent

commercial classes (which saw them as competition) and with the peasantry (which, rightly or wrongly, saw them as representatives of the growing influence and wealth of the cities). In the old order of landowner and peasant, Jews were protected and patronized because they were useful (as well as harmless) to those in power. The nation-state, however, bestowed upon Jews a formal equality that meant ever less as their former allies in the aristocracy fell from grace.⁵

But the precarious position of Jews in interwar Eastern Europe also had an ethnic component. Among the vast array of peoples who lived in the great multi-ethnic empires of Eastern Europe and the Balkans, Jews were an important piece in the ever-delicate ethnic balance of power. Ruling elites in Budapest⁶ and Vienna, and even Constantinople and Moscow, saw Jews (especially assimilated ones) as potential allies in the battle against other (more restive) minorities. But the position of Jews was severely weakened in the aftermath of World War I. Incomplete though it was, the 'triumph' of the nation-state left Jews as even more visible minorities in states that now, for the first time, had clear majorities. 'With the transformation of Trianon Hungary into a basically homogenous state,' Randolph L. Braham observes, 'Jews lost their importance as statistical recruits to the cause of Magyardom.'⁷ Once one ethnic group among many, Jews in interwar Europe were isolated, conspicuous, and alone. Once potential allies in inter-ethnic rivalries, they were now seen as obstacles or as convenient scapegoats in societies that now had titular majorities.

The situation was no better in the smaller successor states or in areas where ethnic minorities were now in the majority. Here, the very factor that had protected Jews in the past—their alliance with the ruling elite—became their deepest liability. With the retreat of the Hungarians (and, to a lesser extent, the Austrians, Turks, Russians, and even Germans), isolated Jewish communities, shorn of their patrons, were remembered (once again, rightly or wrongly) as the weakened remnant of a (once-decided) foreign occupation. Assimilated Jews, once allied with the foreign, ruling elite, were now taken as the local representatives of that elite—and were thus targeted for oppression by the populist representatives of a vindictive and newly empowered public. 'In many a town inhabited principally by Slovaks, Romanians, or Germans,' István Deák observes, 'Jews became identified with Hungarian interests, as they had long been identified by the peasants with the interests of the landowning nobility.'⁸ Unassimilated, Jews were hated as Jews. Assimilated, they were hated as Hungarians.

In short, liberalism, emancipation, self-determination, and even the faint beginnings of democracy in Eastern Europe were, for many Jews, an empty promise. The political upheaval that followed World War I changed the socio-economic and ethnic dynamics of the region. In the cities, traditional political elites, who had once found Jews useful (or at least harmless), were replaced by a rising bourgeoisie, which saw them, at best, as competition. In the countryside, shifts in the ethnic balance of power left Jews a clear (and sometimes solitary) minority, in a world where they had once been one minority among many. The social and political context for persecution was already present when Germany reappeared as the region's dominant power. For Eastern Europe's new leaders, antisemitism was a useful foreign policy that was also popular at home.

Victimization Rates in Eastern Europe

With the grass-roots sentiment for persecution already in place, one would expect Jewish victimization rates to have been considerably higher in Eastern Europe than in the West. And to a certain extent, they were. What is striking, however, is the degree to which we also observe tremendous variation in victimization rates to Germany's east. Here, despite ubiquitous antisemitism at all levels of society, despite the absence of democratic traditions, despite the distance to neutral Sweden or even to Axis Italy, despite a prewar history of indigenous anti-Jewish legislation, despite living among Slavs rather than Nordics, despite huge Jewish populations, despite increased military pressures, more civilian carnage, and a near-complete breakdown in the laws of war, despite a whole host of factors that might be expected to lead to higher rates of Jewish victimization, Eastern Europe is home to a number of countries where large percentages of Jews *survived* the war, many of them legally. Whereas much of the foregoing has focused on the question of how democratic and historically tolerant societies could allow so many Jews to be killed, these chapters are burdened with the task of demonstrating how so many Jews survived among populations that hated them with comparable virulence to Nazi Germany itself.

This chapter will show that Jews in Eastern Europe did not survive the war *despite* their countries' close association with Nazi Germany, but because of it. Here, though the precise terms of Germany's ultimatum were seldom made explicit, many hundreds of thousands of Jews and many millions of their fellow citizens (who, we might add, also ranked relatively poorly in Nazi racial schema) owe their very survival to their governments'

allegiance to Germany's military cause. Even in Eastern Europe, low rates of Jewish victimization were the (sometimes unintentional, but sometimes quite explicit) by-product of government-level collaboration and the domestic autonomy it entailed.

Victimization rates were generally higher in Eastern Europe; however, despite this higher average, the dependent variable nonetheless shows significant variation across the region (see Table 1.1). On the one hand, of course, broad differences between East and West *can* be attributed to the various cultural and historical factors noted above. This project does not seek to deny the indisputable relevance of such things as history, political culture, and ethnic animosity to the implementation of Nazi policy, only to show that these factors exist 'alongside' or even 'as the result of' another basic determinative factor: namely, the mode of occupation and the nature of German hierarchy in each country. Indeed, it goes without saying that, where antisemitism is rampant, perpetrators are more available and the great mass of bystanders is more likely to be 'hostile' rather than indifferent or 'sympathetic'. It stands to reason, furthermore, that, where Jews lived among Slavs rather than 'Aryans', German Nazis would employ more intense measures to root them out and more draconian punishments against those who would help them. Larger Jewish populations in Eastern Europe might very well have intensified the Nazis' determination to 'solve' the 'Jewish Problem' in the region or even provided certain economies of scale in their effort to do so. But while important for explaining the implementation of the Final Solution in Eastern Europe, these factors do not exhaust the list of crucial independent variables. They may be necessary, but they are not alone sufficient, as explanations for Jewish victimization. Indeed, the very presence of so many 'unfavorable factors' in Eastern Europe makes the fact of Jewish *survival* in that region all the more surprising. If one of the challenges of the previous chapters was to show how Jewish victimization was possible despite long histories of religious tolerance, an important challenge of this chapter will be to show how Jewish *survival* was possible despite high levels of antisemitism and the precarious and vulnerable position of Jews throughout in the region.

Case Selection

In the selection of Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary as cases for this chapter, the aforementioned issues have been pivotal. As we have seen, Eastern Europe is a region where, for various reasons, high victimization

rates are entirely unsurprising. Thus, though it may seem strange, at first glance, for a chapter on Jewish victimization in Eastern Europe to say so little about Poland, the omission is actually quite sensible: As a 'racially inferior' country on the Eastern Front (and one with an interrupted history of self-rule), Poland was bound to be subjected to the most brutal of German occupation regimes; and as a country with rampant antisemitism, where Jews were often unassimilated and poor, the thorough victimization of Poland's Jews is tragic but unsurprising. Poland is a country where direct German occupation led to high rates of Jewish victimization; but it is also, just as importantly, a country where that outcome is anything but puzzling. The same may be said, with certain qualifications, of the Baltic States.⁹

The same may also be said of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. In both of these multi-national states, Germany exercised severe diplomatic pressure to replace the existing federal regimes with more decentralized ones, and then to ensure that the constituent political units were either abolished or put under the leadership of radical pro-German elements. In Czechoslovakia, for example, the Munich Agreement of September 1938 resulted in the ouster of Czechoslovak President Beneš and the creation of a much-weakened Czecho-Slovak Union. In March of 1939, further diplomatic meddling and a strategy to pursue diplomacy by other means led Germany to invade and virtually annex Bohemia and Moravia (the 'Czech' part of the Czecho-Slovak Union, which Nazi historians had long considered part of the German Reich itself¹⁰) and also to establish an 'independent' Slovakia under the leadership of the radical priest Jozef Tiso. The Final Solution was then carried out with relative ease in both parts of the former Czechoslovak state, not to mention in the Sudetenland, which had been annexed by Germany as part of the initial Munich Agreement.¹¹ In other words, the fact that the Final Solution was carried out so efficiently in both the Czech Protectorate and even Slovakia is unsurprising. As a virtually annexed territory (the Protectorate) and a client state that owed its very existence to Germany (Slovakia), the 'successful' implementation of the Final Solution in Czechoslovakia is methodologically uninteresting.

As in Poland, the Baltic States, and Czechoslovakia, victimization rates in Yugoslavia largely correspond to what we would expect. In March 1941, Hitler presented Yugoslavia with an ultimatum to join the Tripartite Pact.¹² The Yugoslav leadership assented to Germany's demand and signed the pact on March 25. Although the terms of the agreement were quite favorable with regard to Yugoslav sovereignty (Axis troops would not be

transported through Yugoslavia and Yugoslavia would be given control over Salonika in Greece), the populace was hostile to the move and staged massive demonstrations with slogans such as ‘Better War than the Pact’. Two days later, a cadre of military officers took advantage of the unrest and staged a coup. And although the new military government, eager to keep their country out of the war, assured Germany that they would remain neutral and abide by the terms of the treaty, Hitler decided that the Yugoslavs were not to be trusted. On April 6, 1941, German forces began the conquest of Yugoslavia¹³ with a furious bombing campaign that killed 20,000 people in Belgrade. The Yugoslav people had rejected Germany’s offer of peace for negotiation, and they were starting to pay the awful price.

Within a month, Croatia and Serbia were placed under the leadership of German appointees. Here too, Germany encountered little trouble in its effort to implement the Final Solution. (However, the victimization rate was slightly lower in Croatia, the more autonomous and more pro-German of the two successor states.) As it was in Czechoslovakia, the relatively efficient implementation of the Final Solution in Yugoslavia is unsurprising. In dismembered states of Germany’s creation, dominated by German officials or German appointees, the implementation of occupation policy was a virtual *fait accompli*.

The same *cannot* be said of Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary, Germany’s Eastern allies. These ‘satellite states’¹⁴ must be distinguished from Poland, Bohemia–Moravia, Serbia, and Greece because, though allies of Nazi Germany, they retained their formal sovereignty, and they must be distinguished from Slovakia and Croatia because they were not mere puppets who owed their very existence to Germany itself. Like France and Denmark in the West, Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary were formally sovereign entities, recognized as legitimate at home and in the international community. That said, the fact that *any* Jews fell victim to Germany’s Final Solution in these countries suggests that the slide from ‘Axis ally’ to subject state was a slippery one, especially among weak states of economic and strategic importance.

Like the groups of countries considered in Chapters 2 and 3, Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary exhibit similarities that allow us to control for various factors. The differences between these countries were, moreover, neither to a degree nor in a direction that would invalidate the hypothesized independent variable. For example, though the position of Jews in each of these countries was typically precarious, Jews were most assimilated in Hungary—the country with the highest victimization rate of the

three. All three countries were also governed by semi-fascist dictators,¹⁵ and each saw the implementation of anti-Jewish legislation long before the war began.¹⁶

A combination of economic, territorial, and military factors brought Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary deep into Germany's orbit in the decade that preceded World War II. Of course, the Great Depression had a tremendous impact throughout the European continent; however, its impact was particularly disastrous in the agrarian countries of the East, because the prices of agricultural goods fell even faster than those of industrial products. German industry provided a way out for many of the hardest hit. Over the course of the 1930s, Germany established, developed, and strengthened trading relationships throughout Eastern Europe (except, significantly, with industrialized Czechoslovakia), but especially with Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary. These relationships were mutually beneficial to be sure—providing Germany with a reliable supply of agricultural goods and raw materials while giving its eastern neighbors access to German industrial products, including arms.¹⁷ But while economic opportunity and favorable trade conditions in the late 1930s paved the way for such countries to escape the Depression, it also enhanced their dependence on Nazi Germany. In fact, Germany fostered economic dependence in the Balkans in the hopes that it would lead to political dependence; and its economic agreements with Romania, for example, reduced that country to what L.S. Stavrianos calls 'a semicolonial status vis-à-vis Germany'. In the throes of the Great Depression, Germany lent a helping hand to the people of Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary, but in the effort to escape quicksand, one has to allow his rescuer a firm grip.¹⁸

Territorial concerns also brought these countries closer to the German orbit. For Bulgaria and Hungary, the concern was a revisionist one—a quest for German sponsorship in reversing the territorial losses that followed World War I. For Romania, on the other hand (which had *gained* territory after the Great War), the initial effort was to play the great powers off one another, all the while, taking care to avoid German ire and to protect its previous gains. In that effort, Romania ultimately failed. (Romania was forced to cede Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina to the Soviet Union in 1939; it was later forced to cede territory to Hungary and Bulgaria.) But in the effort to avoid further losses, Romania, too, fell deeper into Germany's orbit. It is therefore no surprise that, in the war against the Soviet Union (which, of course, would lead to the recovery of Bessarabia and Bukovina), Romania made up for lost time and took a

leading role in its new alliance with Germany. Interlocking territorial disputes and the desire for international assistance bound Bulgaria, Hungary, and even Romania ever more tightly to the orbit of an ascendant Germany. In political, economic, and military terms, the three countries of this chapter all grew increasingly dependent upon Germany over the course of the 1930s and especially with the opening salvos of World War II.¹⁹

Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary were also all German allies and signatories of the Tripartite Pact. German military forces operated in all three countries; however, they did so, at least initially, with the consent of the host government. In March of 1944, armed with evidence of Hungarian disloyalty to the Axis cause, Germany compelled Hungary to accept a full German occupation. (Significantly, it was only then that Hungarian Jews were deported in large numbers.) Germany maintained forces in Bulgaria and Romania, as well. However, despite what some scholars call a 'de facto occupation', Bulgaria retained a greater degree of autonomy than most other countries in the region. German troops in Romania, on the other hand, constituted 'a garrison force'; and German ambassador to Romania, Milfred von Killinger, 'came to wield great influence on Romanian policy' (Popisteanu: 1291). Formal autonomy and status as fellow Axis partners are clearly things that Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary shared in common with one another. However, insofar as the nature of Germany's military presence can be considered an indicator of informal German hierarchy, victimization rates for these three cases are in accordance with the predictions of this study.²⁰

Thus, despite the clear similarities between Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary, the three countries also exhibit dramatic differences that help us understand and 'predict' the fate of the Jewish population in each. Though they shared many institutional features in common, and though Germany maintained its authority through formal, diplomatic channels, Romania was clearly held on a tighter leash than Bulgaria. The German troop presence in Romania was substantial—comprising well over 300,000 troops who maintained a close eye on Romanian oil fields and the government of Marshal Antonescu. The German presence in Bulgaria, on the other hand, was smaller, less invasive, and mostly limited to troops on their way to other battlefields in Yugoslavia and Greece. Bulgaria was also able to maintain its neutrality vis-à-vis the Soviet Union; Romania was compelled to take an active role in Germany's war against the 'Bolshevist Menace', a move that, to be sure, provided Romania with handsome-but-temporary territorial rewards. In the meantime, Hungary spent most of the war in a

uniquely autonomous position as the only country in the German alliance where no German troops were stationed. But all that was to change in March 1944, when Admiral Horthy's government was caught trying to abandon the German alliance and join the Soviet cause. Hungary quickly went from being the most to the least autonomous country of the three, and its victimization rate skyrocketed accordingly. In fact, of the 681,000 Jews who perished in the Hungarian Holocaust, over 90% were murdered in the last year of the war. In the assessment of Michael Mann, the 'Axis allies [had] real though varying freedom of action—Hungary [after March 1944] least, then Romania, then Bulgaria' (2005: 298).

BULGARIA

Regarding the Final Solution, Bulgaria was the Denmark of the East. In the introduction to *The Fragility of Goodness*, Tzvetan Todorov summarizes this 'heroic chapter' in Bulgarian history, noting that Bulgaria is one of only 'two countries that can recall [its wartime] history with pride' (pp. 1–2). The parallel is noteworthy, especially in terms of the spontaneity of the rescue action and the fact that, in both countries, it included massive numbers of ordinary citizens. And Hannah Arendt is ultimately correct when she called it 'unique in the belt of mixed populations' of Eastern Europe. Still, the parallel goes one step further than many observers recognize: Despite being a German ally and subject to de facto occupation, Bulgaria retained more autonomy over its own affairs than any other country in Eastern Europe. By demonstrating that these factors (Jewish survival and local autonomy) were ultimately related to one another, I will to show that, though indeed unique in many respects, the Bulgarian case also fits a more general pattern.

Bulgarian Politics and the Sofia–Berlin Axis

Before and during World War II, the most powerful figure in Bulgarian politics was King (or *Czar*) Boris III. In the political chaos that followed World War I, the king emerged as an able and respected leader in Bulgaria, capable of uniting the country's diverse political and ethnic factions. The king solidified his grip on power following the tumultuous intrigues of 1934 and 1935. His rule was personalistic and authoritarian, but not fascist; and his subjects were governed by a strong cabinet of ministers who were loyal to the king, in no small part because the king himself appointed

them. Parliament, the *Sabranie*, was dominated by the government faction, but it was, nevertheless, something more than a rubber-stamp body: Localized concerns found a national (if somewhat muted) voice through the body of the Sabranie, and lobbying efforts by its constituents often had a real chance of affecting government policy.²¹ Bulgaria's fascists, the *Ratnitsi*, were small in number and politically insignificant. In some respects, the most salient domestic political issues in Bulgaria were those that were clearly impacted by international affairs.²²

With his domestic flank thus secure, Boris turned his attention to the international realm, where the threat of a second Great War was increasingly ominous but where Bulgaria had the most to gain. To be sure, Boris was, at heart, a neutral in this sphere. He knew that Bulgaria stood to gain nothing (and risked losing all) in a confrontation between the great powers; and it has even been suggested that his personal mediation in the Sudeten Crisis convinced Hitler (temporarily, at least) that negotiation was better than confrontation. Still, diplomatic developments in the second half of the 1930s convinced the king and his ministers that Bulgaria's geopolitical interests resonated with those of the Third Reich: the Munich Agreement and Germany's subsequent invasion of Czechoslovakia demonstrated to small countries that France and Britain could not be relied upon as guarantors of territorial integrity; the USA seemed little more than vaguely aware of Bulgaria's mere existence; and German-Soviet *rapprochement* neutralized the Soviet threat while simultaneously quieting the anti-German rhetoric of those whose sympathies lay with their fellow Slavs to the east. Western and Soviet inaction left Bulgaria free to fall into Germany's orbit while Germany's proactive brinkmanship on the continent convinced many Bulgarians that an alliance with the Third Reich was the surest path to the realization of territorial and irredentist aspirations.

The outbreak of actual hostilities in September 1939 made Bulgaria's neutrality impossible to maintain. In February 1940, Boris appointed the pro-German Bogdan Filov as prime minister.²³ In September of that year, with France and Britain all but defeated, Germany and Italy pressured Romania to hand over Dobrudzha, a relatively small parcel of land on the Black Sea with about 1000 Jews. (Another stipulation of the agreement forced Romania to give Northern Transylvania to the Hungarians.) The realization of Bulgaria's primary irredentist aim was cause for national celebration and signified German ascendancy in the region. (It also pulled the rug from under the feet of the Soviets, who had theretofore supported Bulgarian aspirations in Dobrudzha but now had nothing to offer.)

Germany 'confirmed' the agreement with force, stationing 12 military divisions in Romania and sending a legion of 'advisors' to Bulgaria in October 1940.²⁴

But it was Italy, not Germany, that started the hot war in the Balkans. Envious of Hitler's success and worried that his influence in Southeastern Europe would be eclipsed, Mussolini directed Italian forces to attack Greece from their bases in Albania. With British help, Greece fought Italy to a standstill, and Hitler found himself obliged to help his beleaguered ally. In preparation for the invasion of Greece, Hitler convinced Yugoslavia and Bulgaria to join the Tripartite Pact (Germany, Italy, and Japan), holding out the promise of territorial reward at Greek expense. Initially at least, both countries took the bait (Bulgaria, on March 1, 1941, and Yugoslavia, on March 25). But before the ink on the agreement had fully dried, a cadre of Yugoslav military officers sponsored a *coup d'état* which found immediate and enthusiastic support in the Yugoslav masses. As a result of this very public intransigence, Hitler decided that, in addition to Greece, Yugoslavia too would have to be destroyed. Yugoslavia's defection also allowed Germany to sweeten the deal for Bulgaria, which could now be promised Greek *as well as Yugoslav* territory for its continued loyalty to the Axis cause.

The minutes of a March 27 meeting between Hitler and the German High Command foretell of Yugoslavia's imminent destruction and Bulgaria's likely fidelity. They suggest, furthermore, that German policy-makers explicitly used the threat of violent occupation to insure the obedience of 'neutrals' and would-be combatants. 'Politically, it is especially important that the blow against Yugoslavia is carried out with unmerciful harshness.' This, the minutes note, will frighten Turkey (which had since moved closer to the British camp) into remaining neutral. Discussion then turned to the diplomatic sentiments that would likely accompany a successful campaign:

It can be assumed that the Croats will come to our side when we attack. A corresponding political treatment (autonomy later on) will be assured to them. The war against Yugoslavia should be very popular in Italy, Hungary, and Bulgaria, as territorial acquisitions are to be promised to these states; the Adria coast for Italy, the Banat for Hungary, and Macedonia for Bulgaria. (PS-1746)

The meeting concluded with discussion of the crucial role that Bulgarian and Hungarian bases would play in the attack. The minutes of this meeting

make clear that rejecting Germany's friendship would have disastrous consequences. However, they also show that German leaders were willing to reward good behavior—in this case, with the territory of those countries that were less prudent in their decisions. In the making of alliances, German policymakers were clearly willing to use carrots as well as sticks.

In fact, the benefits of alliance were anticipated on the Bulgarian side long before the Yugoslav crisis came to a head. By the first weeks of 1941, the German invasion of Greece was already inevitable. After a January 1941 meeting with Hitler and Ribbentrop, where Filov authorized the passage of German troops through Bulgaria, the Bulgarian prime minister noted the importance of choosing sides wisely and taking a proactive role in the coming hostilities. 'War is unavoidable,' he wrote in his diary:

If, however, we realize this, it is best that we follow it under conditions that are the least complicated for us. If we allow the Germans simply to pass through our country, they will treat us as an occupied land, like Rumania, and this will be much worse than if we ally with them. (As quoted in Chary: 21)

Two weeks later, Filov secured cabinet approval for the passage of German troops through Bulgaria. On March 1, Bulgaria joined the Tripartite Pact.

The prime minister's words are enlightening in a number of respects. First, as we shall see in a moment, Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary (until March 1944) were all German allies, and thus subjected to indistinguishable degrees of *formal* German hierarchy. In the Romanian section of this study, however, it will be important to observe that, its formal status in the German Reich notwithstanding, Romania was actually subjected to intense *informal* hegemonic pressure, such that we might rightly consider it German-occupied, at least in certain respects. German troops in Romania constituted a significant force and were deployed there on account of great German pressure; German troops were stationed in Bulgaria in anticipation of the invasion of Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria was handsomely paid for this concession. Filov's diary entry shows us that, though formally autonomous, Romania was, at least in the eyes of one contemporary observer, 'occupied'. And given his understanding of German priorities, Filov was sure to make subsequent overtures to Germany's cause that would spare his country a similar fate.

The simultaneous, and private, writings of German and Bulgarian officials also suggest that German occupation regimes in Southeastern Europe were often the outcome of bargaining between German occupiers

and local governments. Unlike most of the countries in Western Europe and Scandinavia, Bulgaria was never explicitly assured of softer treatment for good behavior. The writings of government officials on both sides of the negotiating table indicate, however, that such assurances existed *implicitly*. Bulgarian leaders *knew* that good behavior toward the German Reich—allowing for the passage of German troops, signing the Tripartite Pact, and so on—would result in better treatment. And they understood, implicitly at least, that rejecting Germany's demands would lead to their subjugation. Their morally questionable decision to join the German alliance was therefore made with the understanding that *not* joining the alliance might have even more disastrous consequences. In taking the 'moral high ground' and resisting Germany's (diplomatic or military) assault, leaders imperiled the lives of the very people they were appointed to serve.

Bulgaria, Germany, and the Occupation of Yugoslavia and Greece

Yugoslavia, as it turns out, was the manifestation of a Bulgarian counterfactual. On April 6, 1941, less than two weeks after a popular coup resulted in Yugoslavia's rejection of the Axis alliance, Germany launched a massive invasion of Yugoslavia and Greece. Bulgarian Prime Minister Filov turns out to have been right when, following his cabinet's authorization of German troop movements through Bulgaria, he noted: 'This was without doubt the most important meeting which we have had to date' (as quoted in Chary: 21).

Though Bulgaria played no direct role in the attacks, its indirect contribution was significant. Aside from providing Germany with a crucial launching pad for the operation, Bulgarian troops reinforced the German front line by guarding its flank along the Bulgarian-Turkish border. Most importantly, Bulgarian forces swept into Macedonia (including Pirot) and Thrace following the German conquest, thus freeing German troops to be redeployed along the anticipated Soviet front.

Although the question of formal annexation was postponed until after the war, Bulgaria soon subjected these 'recently liberated territories' to a fairly invasive military occupation: Local mayors, civil servants, and even members of the clergy were appointed from Sofia with little reference to the wishes of local inhabitants. Bulgaria's anti-Jewish legislation was also extended to the new territories²⁵; and a government decree, which granted citizenship to Yugoslav and Greek subjects in these areas,

specifically excluded individuals of Jewish origin.²⁶ (Crucially, the decree did not apply to the Jews of Dobrudzha, who had become Bulgarian citizens upon their territory's incorporation.) Bulgaria's 'recovery' of Macedonia and Thrace was, of course, very popular on the home front; however, its invasive administration met with fierce resistance: Guerrilla activity against the Bulgarian government was strongest in the occupied territories.²⁷ However, the direct form of occupation was also to play an important role in *Bulgaria's* efficient implementation of the Final Solution in the territories it now administered.

Meanwhile, in formal terms, German relations with Bulgaria remained diplomatic. Since joining the Tripartite Pact, there were, of course, German troops stationed in the country; however, the Germans did not get directly involved in domestic issues and German interests continued to be represented through regular diplomatic channels. The head of the German diplomatic corps in Sofia was SA Obergruppenführer Adolf Heinz Beckerle,²⁸ a former Frankfurt chief of police who had good relations with the SS. The German delegation also included a Police (Gestapo) Attaché, Karl Hoffmann, and Eichmann's Representative for Jewish Affairs, Theodor Dannecker, who was brought over from France in January 1943 to prepare for the deportations from Bulgaria. As we shall see, German authorities were quite effective in pressuring Bulgaria to implement the Final Solution *when and where it was allowed*. However, they were powerless in overcoming their ally's opposition to deporting Jews from within Bulgaria's pre-1941 borders.

Jewish Life in Bulgaria

Jewish life in Bulgaria was peculiar for Eastern Europe, but in many respects old-fashioned. Unlike in Poland, Hungary, and Romania, Jews in Bulgaria had never really been major associates of an elite noble class, in part because of their small numbers (there were only 51,000 Jews in all of Bulgaria, with an additional 700 in Dobrudzha, 7400 in Macedonia, and 4300 in Thrace), their concentration in the major cities (97% of Bulgaria's Jews lived in cities, more than half of them in Sofia), and the fact that the largely Turkish landowning nobility had been expelled after Bulgaria achieved independence in 1878. Jews also never became major competitors for Bulgaria's rising bourgeoisie (as they had in other parts of Europe), because there were so few Jews in the country and so many opportunities by proportion. As a consequence of the aforementioned factors (and

also contributing to them), Jewish life in Bulgaria was marked by its conspicuous anonymity: There were few Jews in Bulgaria's civil, military, and professional classes, and Bulgarian Jewry as a whole had few noteworthy individuals. That said, Jewish invisibility in Bulgaria was not absolute: The overwhelming tendency for Jews to live in urban areas meant that they sometimes appeared more numerous than their population would suggest. In the cosmopolitan mix of an urban center like Sofia, for example, Jews accounted for almost 10% of the population.

The history of Ottoman rule in Bulgaria also left its mark on the Jewish community in that country. Of the 63,400 Jews in Bulgaria and its acquired territories, the great majority were Sephardic, although there was a Jewish presence in the country dating back to Roman times. The organization of Jewish life in Bulgaria also showed a legacy of the Ottoman millet system, whereby the community was largely responsible for its own, intra-communal affairs. The chief rabbi's salary was paid by the Bulgarian government; and the Jewish Consistory (the Jewish Council or *Konsistoriia*) levied taxes, maintained systems for education and welfare, and established courts for matters affecting the Jewish community. This meant that Bulgaria's Jewish community was one of the most unified and best organized in Europe. Bulgarian Jews were also among the least assimilated in Europe: Conversion was rare, but not unheard of; and according to the census of 1934, all but 1200 individuals of Jewish descent ascribed to the Jewish religious community.²⁹

Jews in Bulgaria also benefited from the mentality of their fellow citizens, who, according to the analysis of German Ambassador Beckerle, were 'lacking in the ideological enlightenment which [the German] people enjoy' (NG-2357: p. 2). In many respects, the lack of antisemitism in Bulgaria can be attributed to the numerical and social irrelevance of Jews in the country. But Bulgarian antisemitism was also 'imported' from Europe's great capitals (Vienna, St. Petersburg, Berlin, and Paris), and thus represented a petit bourgeois, urban attitude rather than an indigenous, peasant one. In fact, in Bulgaria's rural areas, anti-Jewish attitudes found their expression in a more encompassing and politically salient urban-rural divide, and thus reflected a *volkish* nationalism or xenophobia directed against the many Turks, Armenians, Greeks, and also Jews who lived in the cities. The presence of so many ethnic minorities in Bulgaria—Bulgaria's ethnic minorities constituted about 20% of the country's total population—also had the effect of diluting the specifically Jewish animosity of many Bulgarians. Although there was, without a doubt, some lasting

resentment over the ‘failure’ of Bulgarian Jewry to take a clear side in the 1878 war of independence, Bulgarian Jews suffered less than Bulgarians of Greek or Turkish descent. German policymakers were well aware of this mentality. ‘Having lived all their lives with Armenians, Greeks and gipsies [*sic*],’ Beckerle wrote, ‘the Bulgarians see no harm in the Jew to justify special measures against him.’ In the same letter, Beckerle informed his superiors that, though the prime minister and cabinet shared Germany’s desire to ‘solve the Jewish question once and for all’, he would ‘consider it a tactical error to exert direct pressure’. He concludes with a warning that the ‘endeavor to expedite the [final] solution ... is closely linked’ with German military success (NG-2357: pp. 2–3).

In this sense, our analysis of the ‘unique mentality’ of the Bulgarian people should foreshadow things to come. The lack of antisemitism in Bulgarian society—and, more precisely, the specific *type* of antisemitism in that society—will, without a doubt, play an important role in that country’s response to Germany’s Final Solution. (As in Denmark and the Netherlands, anti-Jewish policy will ignite a massive backlash among the general public; and as in France, Bulgarians will show a particular concern for the Jews they consider fellow citizens, namely those in ‘Old Bulgaria’.) However, public opposition to the deportation of Bulgarian Jewry would mean nothing, in statistical terms, if it were not ‘filtered through’ the institution of the existing Bulgarian government. Prominent Bulgarians (MPs, clergymen, prominent businessmen, and cultural icons) all took a courageous stand against Germany’s Final Solution (which, it must be said, was only applied to Bulgaria in early 1943 rather than mid-1942). They achieved their aim, however, by lobbying a governmental institution that would not have existed in any meaningful sense had it not participated in some of Germany’s equally heinous crimes. Bulgaria became an Axis power to the benefit of those Jews who lived within its historic boundaries, and to the detriment of those who lived in less cooperative countries such as Yugoslavia and Greece.

The Three-Stage Attack on the Jews of Bulgaria and the Occupied Territories

Bulgarian and German officials conducted a three-pronged attack on the Jews of Bulgaria and its occupied territories. As we shall see, the first step consisted of a series of **anti-Jewish laws** and policies, which were intended to disenfranchise the Jews, expropriate their property, eliminate

their influence, and lay the groundwork for their ultimate deportation. The second step was to consist of the **deportation** of Jews from Thrace and Macedonia, as well as for the deportation of certain ‘undesirable’ Jews from within the boundaries of Old Bulgaria itself. Finally, given the ‘unsuccessful’ completion of step two,³⁰ King Boris III agreed to the **expulsion** of Jews from Sofia to the provinces. While the Germans hoped this last step would be preparatory for the Jews’ eventual deportation, the expulsions (perhaps unwittingly) exposed public hostility to the policy and made further attacks on Bulgarian Jewry virtually impossible. As we shall see, the attempted execution of each of these steps reveals the now-familiar pattern of collaborationist opportunism, opposition, and agenda-setting in the implementation of German occupational policy.

Anti-Jewish Legislation

For the first full year of World War II, the Bulgarian government tried to steer clear of the Jewish Question and even the war itself. Still, though it remained officially neutral in both of these respects, the Bulgarian government could not help but reveal its pro-German leanings. In October 1939, Petur Gabrovski, a prominent antisemite, was brought into the government, first as the Minister of Railroads and later (February 1940) as Minister of the Interior. He was followed by Aleksandur Belev, who came to head the Ministry’s judicial section as an expert on Jewish affairs.³¹ Both men had been members of the *Ratnitsi*, a Bulgarian fascist organization that gained some prominence in the 1930s and maintained relations with the German government. Thus, though the department had yet to enact any specifically anti-Jewish legislation, Bulgarian Jews had reason to be nervous.

Late 1940 saw the first attempted expulsion of Bulgaria’s Greek and Turkish Jews to Palestine, with the initial cooperation of Bulgaria’s Zionist organizations. These Jews were but a minority of Bulgaria’s foreign Jews, most of whom had fled Eastern Europe in the wake of German expansion. But the expulsion was, nevertheless, an attempt to please the Germans, with whom Bulgaria sought even closer relations. In December 1940, an overcrowded ship (the *Salvator*) of Bulgarian, Greek, and Turkish Jews departed Bulgaria, headed for Palestine. After passing through the Bosphorus, the ship sank, killing over 200 people. The tragedy caused an international uproar, and Bulgaria’s program of ‘encouraged emigration’ came to a halt. In any case, the Germans had slowly come to change their

position on such policies, and no longer encouraged Jewish emigration to Palestine.

The concerted attack on the Jews of Bulgaria began in January 1941, with the passage of the Law for the Protection of the Nation (*Zakon za zashchitata na natsiata*, or ZZN). Though explicitly modeled on Germany's 'Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honor', the ZZN contained a wide array of anti-Jewish provisions, including the expropriation of Jewish property, the dismissal of Jewish civil servants, and the establishment of a *numerus clausus* (quota legislation). The law also provided for the definition of Jews and prohibited further intermarriage. Initial discussion of the legislation provoked heated debate in the Bulgarian Subranie as early as October 1940. (In fact, discussion of the issue was further 'complicated' by the sinking of the *Salvator* in December.) Jewish organizations, the Medical and Bar Associations, as well as the Holy Synod (the governing body of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church) lodged formal protests against the legislation and various church officials (including Metropolitans Stefan (of Sofia) and Cyril (of Plovdiv)) personally intervened; however, the law also found the support of right-wing and military organizations, as well as certain business groups. For the most part, the Bulgarian public opposed the legislation. But the government was determined to signal its loyalty to an even more powerful audience in Berlin. The measure passed.

Though formally comparable to German legislation on the subject, the ZZN was watered down during its implementation. For example, Bulgarian lawmakers originally set the *numerus clausus* at 1% to reflect the proportion of Jews in the general population. However, it was eventually determined to set the quota according to the Jewish population *in each individual community*, thus ensuring that the great majority of Jews concentrated in Bulgaria's urban centers could actually keep their jobs and businesses. The legislation also provided for a number of privileged categories of Jews, including some veterans, baptized Jews,³² and Jews who were married to Christians. A Bulgarian court later ordered that these privileged Jews be omitted from *numerus clausus* calculations altogether. The legislation's 'small print' and its less-than-resolute application must have further disappointed the Germans, who were already dissatisfied with the ZZN's explicit provisions.

In fact, there is some indication that Bulgarian officials anticipated the benefits that 'pre-emptive' implementation of such legislation would bring. Confiding in one of his closest advisors, the king mentioned that, since the introduction of an anti-Jewish law was inevitable, the 'Bulgarians should initiate it themselves, rather than let the Germans

dictate a harsher one'.³³ In the end, agency slack and agenda-setting meant that this loud signal of Bulgarian resolve was little more than 'cheap talk'.

A second wave of persecutory legislation hit the Jews of Bulgaria in August 1942, at the peak of Germany's success on the Eastern Front. Having obtained wider discretion on Jewish matters from the Sabranie, the Minister of the Interior, Petur Gabrovski, went about creating a Commissariat for Jewish Questions (*Komisarstvo za evreiskite vuprosi*, or KEV), responsible for enforcing the aforementioned legislation. Unsurprisingly, Gabrovski appointed Aleksandur Belev, his existing deputy and expert on Jewish affairs, to head the Commissariat. Aside from establishing the KEV, the decree of August 1942 also expanded the definition of 'Jew' while reducing the number of privileged categories. The decree also paved the way for legislation requiring Jews to wear a Star of David on their lapels and to mark their property accordingly.³⁴

Not long after the passage of these 'improvements' to Bulgaria's anti-Jewish legislation, Bulgarian officials *again* interfered with their implementation. In November 1942, the RSHA Chief of Counterintelligence in Bulgaria, Walter Schellenberg, complained to the Foreign Office in Berlin that 'the Czar himself has intervened through various people of his intimate circle directly in various cases in favor of the Jews' (NG-5351).³⁵ In the face of this and other high-profile interventions, the attitude of Minister Gabrovski 'became extremely moderate'. Schellenberg also mentions that, following the persistent lobbying of Metropolitan Stefan, Prime Minister Filov went over the head of Commissar Belev to reinstate various exemptions to the Jewish star decree.

In fact, enforcement of the Jewish star decree was particularly emblematic of Bulgaria's unenthusiastic implementation of anti-Jewish legislation. Schellenberg complained that the Jewish star required by the legislation was 'small' (see Fig. 4.1) and that, in any case, only about 20% of the Jews in Bulgaria had received them. Despite the shortage, the manufacturing plant where the Jewish stars were produced was temporarily shut down 'under the pretext' of electricity shortages.³⁶ Adding insult to injury, Bulgaria's 'misled population' showed such sympathy for the Jews that the latter 'are now actually proud of their badges'. Schellenberg concluded that the 'arrogant demeanour of the Jews and their non-observance of State instructions are to a considerable degree encouraged by the completely indifferent attitude of the majority of the Bulgarian population'.

To be sure, the attitude of this 'misled population' was a crucial factor in the 'sloppy' implementation of Bulgaria's anti-Jewish legislation.



Fig. 4.1 Jewish youth stroll a street in Razgrad, Bulgaria. Note the small Jewish stars on their lapels (Photo Credit: US Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Marcel Confino. Record No. 38761)

However, it is worth observing the ways in which the population encouraged and was, in turn, *encouraged by* the actions of their governing officials. On September 27, 1942, 350 Jews assembled in the courtyard of the Ministry of the Interior to protest the anti-Jewish legislation. To the ‘great amazement’ of his staff—who, according to Schellenberg, watched the entire scene unfold—Gabrovski personally accepted the Jews’ petition and assured them that the worst was over. In the days that followed, Gabrovski forbade the press from reporting on the Jewish Question and reminded Commissar Belev that king and cabinet alike desired moderation in measures against the Jews. Schellenberg himself speculates as to the possible effect of Gabrovski’s actions:

The result of this conduct on the part of the Ministers is that the Jews, who until then had put up with their lot and had complied with the decrees of the Commissioner for Jews, have taken courage again and ... are behaving considerably more arrogantly and improperly. (NG-5351: pp. 2–3)

The people of Bulgaria, Jewish and otherwise, deserve credit for their courageous opposition to anti-Jewish policy. But it must be remembered that their actions would have had the opposite effect had they not been directed *through the institution* of a standing government that had already shown its loyalty to Germany's military cause. In the Netherlands, protests against anti-Jewish legislation were crushed with ruthless severity despite the 'Aryan' background of the protestors. Such open non-compliance with anti-Jewish legislation would have been inconceivable in Yugoslavia and Greece.

This investigation of German hegemony in Bulgaria also shows the degree to which policy implementation in the context of international hierarchy is not a 'top-down' phenomenon, but, rather, a fragile equilibrium reached by negotiation among three major actors: the hegemon, the subject state, and the population at large. As an Axis partner, Bulgaria was expected to enact legislation at Germany's behest. Given its status as an Axis partner, however, Bulgaria could also expect rewards for its cooperation. Thus, when it came to matters of the military alliance, Bulgarian cooperation was assured as a 'win-win' situation: In granting transit rights to German troops, for example, the Bulgarian government recovered the 'lost' territories of Thrace and Macedonia and, at the same time, won the appreciation of its people.

But policy implementation is very different when the hegemon and the general public see things differently. Here, officials in the subject state are put in the difficult position of implementing hegemonic policy without incurring the sanction of the population at large. Collaborationist governments are, in this sense, the agents of two competing principals—the hegemon and the general public. Germany's anti-Jewish policy put Bulgarian leaders in just such a situation. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that Bulgarian officials would treat Germany to such loud protestations of loyalty while, at the same time, quietly seeing to it that their policies were of limited effect. Moreover, German occupational policy can now be seen as a *response* to the expediencies of an otherwise cooperative collaborator, rather than the exogenous dictate of a powerful empire. Because it valued the assistance of capable allies, Germany avoided the forceful implementation of policies that would put the alliance (or, for that matter, the leaders of the allied state) at risk. Imperial policy is not simply a matter of contracting between a hegemon and its local partners, but between the hegemon, the subject state, and a potentially troublesome population that both must govern.

Planning for the Deportation

In carrying out the deportation of Bulgarian Jewry, as in implementing its anti-Jewish policy, Germany would have to rely on the cooperation of domestic institutions. Germany would not play an active role in deportations, as it did in Poland, Yugoslavia, and Greece. Rather, it would play an advisory role to local officials who, as we have already seen, were understandably hesitant to implement controversial policies at the behest of a foreign power. Like Romania and Hungary, Bulgaria would remain somewhat insulated from the Final Solution because it maintained its formal independence; however, Bulgaria was even more insulated because its autonomy from Germany was more real and its cooperation, more enduring.

Germany might well have anticipated the trouble it would face in Bulgaria. As early as July 1942, Bulgaria agreed to allow its Jewish citizens living in Greater Germany to be treated as German Jews; however, the agreement came with the proviso that German Jews in Bulgaria would be treated as Bulgarians. In fact, just a few months later (September 1942), the Bulgarian government reproached Germany for its treatment of Bulgarian Jews in France and Yugoslavia—indicating that the aforementioned agreement was not tantamount to a renunciation of Bulgarian Jews in countries that were ‘merely’ occupied by Germany. Bulgaria was clearly willing to make some allowances on the Jewish issue, but only with credible assurances that its cooperation would be met with analogous concessions on the other side.

In fact, talks regarding the ultimate fate of Bulgarian Jewry got off to a relatively late start. It was not until October 1942 that Beckerle received instructions to broach the subject with the Bulgarians, and it was not until January 1943 that Eichmann finally sent Theodor Dannecker from Paris to Sofia to ‘advise’ Bulgarian authorities on the issue. Talks regarding the deportation of Bulgaria’s Jews were, thus, just getting started when deportations from other countries were well under way. The delay might very well have been the result of Bulgaria’s lackluster implementation of previous anti-Jewish decrees, but matters were made even more complicated by Sofia’s continual bickering about the precise conditions of any future deportation. For example, on November 2, 1942, the Bulgarian Foreign Office informed Berlin that Bulgaria’s Jews were still needed for public labor. Expressing the view (sincerely held or otherwise) that ‘International Jewry’ was behind the Allied cause, Bulgarian officials also

expressed their concern that Great Britain would bomb Bulgaria in retaliation for any move against its Jewish population. Especially tedious for Germany was Bulgaria's constant haggling about the price it would have to pay Germany for relieving Bulgaria of its Jews. In his initial instructions to Beckerle, Luther had suggested charging the Bulgarians 250 RM per deported person to cover German expenses. But the Bulgarians found that price too high, causing the Germans to privately consider fees as low as 100 RM per person. On the face of it, the hard bargaining of Bulgaria's leadership is difficult to understand. The funds would, in any case, have been garnered from the assets of Bulgaria's Jewish community. But Bulgarian officials seemed very concerned that they, too, see something of their Jews' confiscated wealth.

As in France, but not Italy, Romania, or Hungary, the mass arrest and deportation of Jews from Greater Bulgaria would begin with a formal agreement. Much less hesitant than his superiors, Belev, the Bulgarian Commissar for Jewish Affairs, met with Dannecker in Sofia on February 22, 1943. There, they concluded the Dannecker–Belev Agreement, which provided 'for the deportation of the first 20,000 Jews from the new Bulgarian lands Thrace and Macedonia into the German eastern regions'. As stipulated in the agreement, Bulgaria would be responsible for paying the expenses associated with the transports; but as if to underscore the aforementioned difficulties of arriving at an acceptable price, the Agreement simply stated that the 'amount of monetary compensation payable by Bulgaria ... will be decided with a special agreement'. The Agreement also provided for a myriad of specifics relating to the upcoming action, including the exclusion of Jews in mixed marriages, Jews with contagious diseases, the provision of food and water for the deportees, and the fact that Jews with Bulgarian citizenship would lose that status at the point of their departure from Bulgarian territory.

By far the most enigmatic aspect of the accord was the phrase '20,000 Jews from the new Bulgarian lands Thrace and Macedonia [my emphasis]', stated in the title of the Agreement and reiterated in Article 1.³⁷ The phrase is puzzling in a number of respects: First of all, it was common knowledge at the time, especially among the likes of Dannecker and Belev, that the number of Jews in Thrace and Macedonia could not have been more than 14,000. For this reason, it seems clear that the signatories to the Agreement planned (or simply hoped) to include up to 6000 leading Jews from Bulgaria's prewar boundaries—as Belev proposed to his staff at the KEV³⁸ and as Dannecker informed Eichmann just after the Agreement was

signed. But even more puzzling is an unorthodox, handwritten amendment to be found on the original document in the Bulgarian archives.³⁹ It would appear as if someone—and probably Belev himself—crossed out the qualifying phrase by hand, using the same green ink that was used to sign the document itself. The question as to whether the deportations were to be limited to Bulgaria's newly acquired territories seems to have been a matter of contention from the moment the document was signed.

The implementation of the Agreement took another puzzling turn after its ratification by the Bulgarian Cabinet on March 2, 1943. In a series of warrants [*postanovleniia*] to various government departments meant to enact the provisions of the Agreement, Gabrovski, with the Cabinet's approval, instructed the KEV 'to deport from the borders of the country in agreement with the German authorities up to 20,000 Jews, *inhabiting the recently liberated territories* [my emphasis]'. In other words, the Bulgarian Cabinet issued an implementation order that was consistent with the original (typed) wording of the Agreement—and thus apparently ignorant of Belev's handwritten deletion. It is impossible to determine whether the wording of the implementation order constituted an oversight on the part of Gabrovski and the Cabinet or whether Belev simply changed the Agreement at some point after it was submitted for approval.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, the confusion did not bode well for those hoping for an efficient implementation of the Final Solution in Bulgaria.

As we shall see, the events of March 9, 1943, would settle the issue in practice. Following an unexpectedly loud public protest to the initial arrest of Jews in Thrace, Filov and Gabrovski would be forced to postpone the deportation of Jews from Old Bulgaria indefinitely. The Bulgarian leadership would, in effect, 'trade' Jews in the newly acquired territories for an indefinite postponement of such operations in Old Bulgaria. There is no evidence that such a 'deal' was the result of an explicit agreement between Bulgarian and German officials; however, it seems clear that no such protection would ever have resulted were it not for the existence of autonomous, governmental institutions in Bulgaria.

Implementing the Final Solution in Thrace and Macedonia

At Belev's order, the deportations began in Thrace on March 4, 1943. In the dark of night, towns were blockaded, curfews imposed, and detachments of Bulgarian police deployed to arrest the Thracian Jews in their homes. The strict secrecy of the action was evidently preserved, as the

round-ups proceeded without major incident. (Jews had been told that they were merely being transported to the interior of the country, and that they would be allowed to return to their homes shortly.) Much to the chagrin of German and Bulgarian officials, however, many non-Jews in the area (Greek and Bulgarian alike⁴¹) showed great sympathy for their Jewish neighbors, giving them food and agreeing to watch over their property in the meantime. But the KEV eventually confiscated Jewish property, whereby it was sold either (officially) in KEV-sponsored auctions or (privately) by corrupt officials, policemen, and possibly even the regional governor of Thrace.

Round-ups began in Macedonia a week later, on March 11. Because of the delay, a somewhat greater number of Jews were capable of avoiding arrest, over 100 by escaping into Italian-controlled Albania. The next day, almost all of the 186 Jews living in Pirot, a tiny portion of Serbia also occupied by Bulgaria in 1941, were arrested.

By almost any account, the round-up operations in Thrace, Macedonia, and Pirot were very efficient. Of the 11,840 Jews living in these areas before the operation, 11,393 (about 96%) were deported. In fact, a much higher number than that were arrested in the initial operation; however, in a story to be told below, a few hundred Jews with Bulgarian citizenship living in the occupied territories were arrested and later released.⁴² There were, of course, some Jews who escaped arrest altogether and others who perished while in detention.⁴³

As we shall see below, the attempted deportation of Jews from Old Bulgaria tells a very different story. In fact, not a single Jew was deported from the kingdom's pre-1941 borders. However, the arrest and deportation figures for Thrace, Macedonia, and Pirot demonstrate that collaborators and German allies were *capable* of implementing the Final Solution efficiently, if and when they were willing to do so. The high victimization of Jews in Thrace and Macedonia is explained, I would argue, by the relatively invasive mode of occupation imposed on those regions by the government in Sofia. But the Jews in Bulgaria itself were to remain relatively unharmed, in large part because of the significant autonomy given to Bulgaria as a whole by officials in Berlin.

The Aborted Deportation of Jews from Old Bulgaria

Events in Bulgaria itself provide a powerful contrast with the thorough decimation of Jewish communities in the newly acquired territories.

Since 'only' 6000 of the nearly 52,000 Jews in Old Bulgaria were to be deported, the KEV was forced into the messy business of selecting who would stay and who would go. Hoping to realize the greatest initial profit from the operation and to decimate the Jewish leadership, Belev and his deputy, Pencho Lukov (chief of the KEV's economic division), instructed local KEV delegates to compile lists of all Jews who were 'rich, prominent, and generally well known'. The local delegates collected about 9000 names, from which Belev then selected 8400.⁴⁴ Arrests were set to begin on March 9, two days before the operation in Macedonia.

But things did not go as planned for the KEV in Old Bulgaria. A few days before the operation was to begin, word of the impending action was leaked to members of Bulgaria's Jewish community. The source of the leak was Liliana Panitsa, Belev's personal secretary who, unbeknownst to Belev, was acquainted with one of the families on the list of deportees. The leak made its way to several prominent members of the community and eventually to Dimitur Peshev, vice-president of the Subranie and representative from the district of Kiustendil. Late in the afternoon, on March 9, 1943, Peshev and a number of prominent MPs summoned Gabrovski to his office and demanded that the cabinet minister put a halt to the deportations. (They also presented him with proof that they knew of the coming operations and, also, that they knew the cabinet's orders were explicitly limited to Jews in the recently reacquired territories.) After threatening Gabrovski with a variety of sanctions, both political and personal,⁴⁵ Gabrovski agreed to confer with Prime Minister Filov. Within hours, Gabrovski returned to Peshev's office and informed the MPs that the deportation of Jews from Old Bulgaria would be postponed.

This occurred at 7:00 p.m. The operation was to begin at midnight.

The MPs and Gabrovski sprang into action, passing on the message to their local representatives throughout Old Bulgaria that the deportations had been reversed. In some places, word of the reversal did not reach local officials until the next day, in which case Jews who had already been arrested and assembled were released. One of the largest Jewish rescue operations of the war was underway. As in Denmark, the rescue was ultimately inspired by public opposition to anti-Jewish policies. In the case of Bulgaria, however, the operation was being conducted by the sitting government itself.

In other places, local leaders did not wait for Sofia's approval to oppose the operation. Metropolitan Kiril, the Bulgarian Orthodox bishop of Plovdiv, sent a telegram to the king wherein he threatened to lie on

railroad tracks to prevent the deportation trains from leaving. A number of prominent writers also lobbied the king and prime minister on behalf of Bulgarian Jews.

Knowing that he had only achieved a *postponement* of the deportations, Peshev continued his activities. On March 17, 1943, Peshev and 42 other deputies of the Subranie submitted a letter of protest to Prime Minister Filov, calling the deportation of Bulgarian Jews ‘unacceptable’ and ‘disastrous’, and warning that it would have ‘grave consequences for the country’. To be sure, the parliamentarians outlined ‘pragmatic’ reasons for opposing the deportation: They intimated, for example, that such an action would weaken Bulgaria’s standing in any future negotiation with the Allies—who now appeared more likely to win the war than lose it. But the parliamentarians were also careful to note that such an action would have ‘serious ... moral repercussions’, adding that it was a matter of Bulgarian ‘honour’ (see Todorov: 78-80).

With its list of illustrious signatories,⁴⁶ the letter came close to provoking a government crisis. Filov, who noted in his diary that the protest underscored the ‘harmful influence’ of Jews in Bulgaria, put the matter before the parliament—making rejection of the letter and Peshev’s dismissal a matter of confidence. In the end, the government prevailed: The letter was withdrawn and Peshev was forced to resign. But it was a Pyrrhic victory for those who still hoped to deport the Jews of Bulgaria. Deep opposition to the deportations had been revealed and publically aired at all levels of Bulgarian society, from the general population, to the clergy, to parliament, and even the king himself. Though this was certainly not the last Bulgarians would hear of the issue, it did galvanize public opinion in such a way that any future moves against Bulgarian Jews would be almost impossible.

Combined with a reversal in Germany’s fortunes on the battlefield, the aborted deportation and subsequent upheaval in the Bulgarian parliament hardened the resolve of those who opposed the deportations and made opponents of those who had previously been indifferent. On April 15, 1943, the three highest clergymen in Bulgaria (Metropolitans Stefan and Kiril, and Bishop Neofit of Vidin) lobbied King Boris and Prime Minister Filov on behalf of Bulgaria’s Jews, especially (but not exclusively) those who had converted to Christianity. Later that month, Boris visited Hitler in Berlin, where he also made Ribbentrop aware of his hope that deportations would remain limited to Jews in Macedonia and Thrace and ‘only a small number of Bolshevist-Communist elements’ (NG-062: p. 3).

German Police Attaché Hoffmann even went so far as to suggest that the king himself had given his nod of approval to Gabrovski's reversal of the deportation order. Whether based in fact or otherwise (Chary: 141, 95), the mere suggestion goes some way to describe the attitude that prevailed in Bulgaria after the failed attempt to deport the Jews.

Expulsions from Sofia

Bulgaria's new and more recalcitrant attitude was confirmed and, indeed, reinforced with the effort to expel the Jews from Sofia in May 1943. Hoping to finally achieve the deportation of Jews from Old Bulgaria, Belev, on the suggestion of Dannecker, presented the king with two 'possibilities' as to how to proceed with the Jewish Question: In plan A, the Jews would be deported to Poland; in Plan B, the Jews would 'simply' be expelled from Sofia, and relocated in the provinces of Old Bulgaria. Of course, the Germans (and Belev) hoped that the expulsion of Jews from Sofia would be a prelude to their eventual deportation. But in the meantime, the king became even more ambivalent about deportations than he had been in March.

On May 23, 1943, the Jews of Sofia received their orders to vacate the capital 'voluntarily' or face forced expulsion. Once again, the Germans (this time L.R. Wagner, Luther's successor) complained that 'the theoretically very strict regulations concerning Jews in Bulgaria [were] frequently weakened and even violated in practice' (NG-4180). The next day, while many Jews prepared to leave the capital, a sizeable group convened outside the central synagogue with plans to march to the palace. The streets of Sofia were already teeming with people, as it was the eve of a national holiday (The Day of Saints Cyril and Methodius). In what must have been a very busy day, Metropolitan Stefan met with Jewish leaders, lodged a protest with the king's advisor, and spoke to a crowd assembled for the national holiday, lamenting the absence of Bulgarian Jews in festivities that had generally been celebrated by all Bulgarians. (Jewish leaders also met with the Papal nuncio in Sofia and with the advisors to Queen Giovanna, who was Catholic.) Later on, it would become evident that the king and Filov took a hardened stance against the deportations because of this outpouring of public support.

Meanwhile, Belev's forces and the Bulgarian police moved in to break up the demonstration. Despite the protests, however, the forced expulsions began. While many prominent Jews were taken to the Bulgarian

concentration camp at Samovit,⁴⁷ the vast majority were thrown upon the meager resources of Jewish consistories and welfare agencies in the country's rural areas (but not near the border, where they were considered a security threat). Once again, Bulgaria's large-scale anti-Jewish action resulted in a mitigated tragedy; and once again, public protests engendered a powerful government response that made further deportations impossible.

Denmark of the East?

In the end, the Bulgarian case mirrors the Danish case, but only distantly. Of the 63,400 Jews living within the boundaries of the country at the time of the Holocaust, a 'mere' 11,393 (or 17.9%) were deported—all of them within the newly occupied territories of Thrace, Macedonia, and Pirot. Of course, escaping deportation is not the same as escaping the horrors of Holocaust itself: As in Denmark, many of the Bulgarian Jews who survived the initial onslaught were nonetheless forced from their homes⁴⁸ and exposed to hardships that their fellow citizens were spared; but as in Denmark, the great majority of Bulgarians (Jewish and otherwise) fared better than those in countries that were less cooperative with Nazi Germany.

Bulgaria was certainly a helpful ally to Germany. It contributed more and more directly to Germany's war effort than did Denmark. (It also had more to gain.) Nonetheless, Bulgaria displayed a remarkably reluctant attitude toward the Germans, the fact of its alliance notwithstanding. Bulgarian troops never contributed to Axis might on the Soviet front; and the Bulgarian government usually found ways to mitigate the force of German-inspired policy, even and especially when it related to the country's Jews. For a formal German ally in Slavic Eastern Europe, Bulgaria's reluctant approach to German policy was remarkable indeed.

In fact, the most striking difference between Bulgaria and Denmark has nothing to do with the countries' attitude vis-à-vis Germany or their treatment of the Jews. After the war, Bulgaria, which (unlike Denmark) maintained its pro-German stance for the duration of the war and which had the bad fortune to be 'liberated' by the Soviet Union, was taken to task for its wartime activities. In a series of postwar trials, Filov, his successors, and his entire cabinet were sentenced to death and executed. A total of 68 members of the Subranie met the same fate. Unfortunately for people such as Peshev and Ivan Petrov (another MP who consistently spoke

up for Bulgarian Jews), pro-Jewish activities played little to no part in these proceedings.⁴⁹ To the Soviets and Bulgaria's new government, even indirect contributions to Axis aggression were severely punished, regardless of the consequences such policies had for local Jews. In some ways, the most important difference between Bulgaria and Denmark is that, after the war, Bulgarian leaders were held accountable for their collaboration while Danish leaders were not.

Reflections on the Bulgarian Case

The Bulgarian case confirms a number of our notions regarding the war, collaboration, and the Final Solution. As with many collaborationist countries and German allies, Bulgaria's attitude toward the Final Solution was related, inversely, to German success on the battlefield. While it was still in the preparatory stages, Filov, Gabrovski, and even King Boris were content giving Belev the green light regarding Jewish deportations. Only later, with mounting German losses and a remarkable public outcry, did their support for such policies evaporate.

Critical to this process, of course, were the Bulgarian people—who, in foreign affairs, largely supported their government but opposed German meddling in matters domestic. We must remember, however, that public opposition to the Final Solution in Bulgaria was only effective because it was directed through the institution of an existing, legitimate government. It does not stretch the imagination to suggest that, had the Netherlands had a government like Bulgaria's, public opposition to Nazi-inspired anti-Jewish measures would have resulted in a postponement or cancellation of deportations rather than a brutal crackdown. A general populace, sympathetic to the plight of local Jews, could, and sometimes did, succeed in foiling Germany's genocidal plans. But such efforts were generally doomed when there was not an existing institution to represent the general will.

By virtue of their small scope and (relatively) positive outcome, this investigation of Bulgaria also sheds light on one of the central debates in the academic study of the Holocaust. Much of the discussion in the extant literature regarding the rescue of Bulgarian Jewry centers on the intentions of the major actors—whether or not, or at what point, the king or Filov or Gabrovski launched a deliberate plan to foil Germany's genocidal efforts. This discussion, as we have seen, parallels a discussion that could be applied to Vichy France⁵⁰ and, in my view, parallels an even older,

Intentionalist–Functionalist debate in the literature on the Holocaust more generally.⁵¹ I do not take issue with the effort to assign blame (or credit) for the implementation (or failure) of Final Solution in any particular case. Courts of law (and also historians) have tackled this issue time and again, and it is probably in the interest of a better and more just world that they do so. This investigation will remind us, however, of the difficulty and perhaps the senselessness of reaching conclusions that portend to locate blame too precisely, with any particular institution or individual or at any particular point in time. The mysterious green ink on the Dannecker–Belev agreement illustrates that this caution is equally warranted in the case of Germany’s collaborators. Far from being the product of a specific plan, low victimization rates in Bulgaria can indeed be attributed to historical ‘accident’ and what Frederick Chary calls the complex dynamics of ‘political forces at work’ (p. 199). But such caution should come with the reminder that governmental legislation is, in the end, the political aggregate of individual human actions.

In a related sense, though there is no record of an actual ‘scheme’ to trade Macedonian Jews for Bulgarian ones, such coincidences should be seen in the more general context of informal political hierarchy within the German sphere of influence. Germany did not, it would appear, spare the Bulgarian Jews *because* Bulgarian officials were forthcoming with those from the newly acquired territories. Nonetheless, it is virtually inconceivable that Germany would have tolerated such hesitation from a less reliable or less important ally. Germany did not *grant* political leniency to Bulgaria as part of an explicit policy of negotiation. But it seems fair to conclude that Bulgarian Jews and non-Jews alike benefited from their country’s close association with the German Reich.

ROMANIA

On first glance, Romania is one of the most mysterious cases in this study. Like the Netherlands, it is a country where the victimization rate we observe runs counter to our expectations regarding domestic levels of antisemitism and sympathy for Germany’s cause. (Only in Romania, we observe a relatively low victimization rate coincide with very high levels of antisemitism and general sympathy for the German alliance.) In the eyes of some, Romania was Germany’s most important ally in the Eastern Europe; and, according to Hitler himself, Romanian leader Ion Antonescu proceeded in Jewish matters with considerably more zeal than the Germans

themselves. Nonetheless, like Bulgaria, Romania was to have one of the lowest victimization rates in Eastern Europe, and the persecution of Jews by that country was (largely) limited to those in the 'newly recovered' territories. The Romanian case will demonstrate, however, that Jews did not survive in Romania despite local antisemitism, but, ironically, because of it: Romania was a corrupt, antisemitic country where the urge to exploit and even enslave local Jews exceeded the urge to kill them.

Romania and Its Neighbors

Romania demonstrated a remarkable fickleness in its international relations, both before and during World War II. Without much regard for history or ideology, Romania attempted to 'cozy up' to the countries that could help it most in any given movement of Europe's diplomatic concert; however, its leaders were sometimes just a half-step behind, joining the dominant force just as it was being eclipsed by another.

In the aftermath of World War I, Romania's alliance with Britain and France allowed it to make considerable territorial gains. Having already acquired Dobrudzha from Bulgaria in 1913, Romania acquired Transylvania (from Hungary), Bukovina (from Austria), and Bessarabia (from Russia) in 1918. Each of these regions was already home to a considerable number of ethnic Romanians at the time of its acquisition; however, even after coming under Romanian rule, the regions retained significant minorities of Hungarians, Germans, Ukrainians, and, of course, Jews. By acquiring these territories, Romania increased its landmass by about 50%; the number of Jews in Romania nearly tripled to over 700,000, the third largest Jewish population in interwar Europe.

But Romania's fortune in the region was short-lived, to be sure. Having nourished an alliance with its neighbors in the Little Entente (Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia) and with Poland in the years after World War I, Romania had also come to rely on the backing of the French, whose lack of resolve in the region became apparent when Germany invaded Czechoslovakia in March 1939. With the conclusion of the Nazi-Soviet Pact, the collapse of Poland, and the conquest of France, it became increasingly clear that Romania had backed the wrong horse. In the territorial revision that was to follow, Romania would pay dearly for taking sides against an ascendant Germany: In the three months that followed Germany's victory in the West (June 20, 1940), Romania would be forced to cede Northern Bukovina and Bessarabia to the Soviet Union (June 28),

Northern Transylvania to Hungary (August 30), and Dobrudzha to Bulgaria (September 12), all with German approval. Those who remained in the much truncated Romanian rump (which included ‘the Regat’ (Wallachia and Moldavia), Southern Transylvania, Southern Bukovina, and northern Dobrudzha⁵²) would soon realize that there was more to be gained by working *with* Nazi Germany than against it.⁵³

Politics in the Rump State

The sudden loss of so much territory and of so many ethnic Romanians had serious repercussions in Bucharest. King Carol II, who had ruled as a virtual dictator since February 1938, was forced to abdicate the throne and cede power to General (later Marshal) Ion Antonescu, who abolished the last vestiges of democracy. To rule the country, Antonescu appointed a cabinet of political cronies and members of the Iron Guard, a home-grown, fascist organization with a long-standing record of antisemitism, but relatively newfound ties to Berlin.⁵⁴ The new cabinet quickly made Romania an Axis power and allowed Germany to station troops in the country, ostensibly to protect Romania’s vast oil fields. But the 12 German army divisions (about 120,000 troops) that entered Romania soon came to constitute a force of occupation that kept a watchful eye on Antonescu and his government. Formally speaking, Romania was autonomous. But Romania’s autonomy only extended as far as the 12 German divisions stationed there would allow.

The power-sharing arrangement between Antonescu and the Iron Guard was certainly to Germany’s advantage, with Antonescu and his fascist cabinet continually trying to outbid one another for German favor. Indeed, in its four-month life, the Antonescu–Sima (Sima was the Iron Guardist prime minister in Antonescu’s cabinet) regime built upon Carol’s legacy of anti-Jewish legislation, and the Iron Guard launched a campaign of terror and intimidation against Jewish interests. But throughout the period, the central pillar of Antonescu’s administration was to reverse the territorial losses that had hurdled him to power in the first place. For most people in the country, this endeavor obscured the Jewish Question and refocused national attention on Romania’s traditional enemies: Hungary and Soviet Russia. In this political climate, the sober Antonescu actually gained credit for his relative moderation and ability to counterbalance the more radical Iron Guard. In Hitler’s (if not Himmler’s) eyes, Germany’s focus had to be on the coming invasion of the Soviet Union, for which

Antonescu's military and anti-communist credentials were more valuable than Sima's antisemitism.⁵⁵

Owing to these considerations, Germany actually sided *against* the Iron Guard in its attempted coup of January 1941. Considering its take-over to be incomplete (its members constituted, in fact, less than half of Antonescu's cabinet), the Iron Guard rose in revolt and attempted to seize control of the government in Bucharest. Abiding by promises made to Antonescu a week earlier in Berlin, the Germans largely sat out of the struggle, allowing Antonescu's still-loyal military to crush the rebellion. Always wary to keep an ace in the hole, however, the German legation was careful to rescue the Iron Guard's top leaders, giving them safe passage to Germany. From then on, Antonescu, who owed a debt to Hitler for his help against the Iron Guard, lived under constant fear that Germany would unleash his former rivals for any act of insubordination. By March 1941, the size of the German military mission in Romania had increased to 330,000, and Antonescu became increasingly dependent upon his sponsors in Berlin.

Purged of its more radical elements, Antonescu's stabilized cabinet reflected his own military background and was, in fact, more representative of 'mainstream' political sentiment in the country. To be sure, the new cabinet had its antisemites; chief among them was Radu Lecca, the General Commissar for Jewish Affairs. But Antonescu was a 'principled' antisemite, not a Nazi ideologue; and his partners in power tended to reflect Romania's traditional antisemitism, which favored exclusion and even expulsion to outright extermination. Antonescu would go on to enact a harsh regimen of anti-Jewish legislation. But to the end, his policies would promote economic exploitation and even Zionism as alternatives to the Final Solution. To old-school antisemites such as Antonescu, such policies also provided a crucial hedge against Germany's eventual defeat, since 'International Jewry' would presumably look favorably upon his effort to provide Romanian Jews with a viable alternative to Nazi-style persecution.⁵⁶

Shadowing Antonescu's government was the German diplomatic mission in Bucharest, headed by Obergruppenführer Manfred von Killinger, a member of the SA. He was aided by Hauptsturmführer Gustav Richter, the legation's special advisor for Jewish Questions and, quite possibly, Himmler's designee to keep tabs on Killinger. Richter enjoyed a professional and personal relationship with Lecca, his Romanian counterpart. This gave the Germans a direct line of influence into Romania's significant

anti-Jewish program. The lines of communication were backed up by Killinger himself, who visited Lecca's office 'at least once a week'.⁵⁷ The German legation also maintained a hold on the Romanian government through various *informal* mechanisms of control: Ethnic Germans in Romania and Iron Guardists in Germany were German marionettes who could be kept in reserve or unleashed in the event that Antonescu's replacement ever became necessary.

That said, it is important to remember that Romania was an ally of the Germans, and an independent country.

Unlike Albania, Greece, and Yugoslavia, and like Hungary (until March 1944), Bulgaria and Finland, Romania was not an occupied country, but rather a partner [*Vertragspartner*], 'a satellite'. Antonescu was 'no Quisling'. (Zach: 381n2)

In other words, the aforementioned discussion is necessary for seeing the important *informal* differences that existed between German hierarchy in Romania, on the one hand, and in Bulgaria and Hungary, on the other. Like Bulgaria and Hungary, Romania was formally independent and subjected 'only' to diplomatic pressure from officials in Berlin. However, whereas Bulgaria retained more autonomy than any other country in southeastern Europe and whereas Hungary lost its formal independence toward the end of the war, Romania was subject to a whole host of informal pressures—from German control of the main opposition group to a resident population of (over 500,000) ethnic Germans, who could be manipulated at Germany's will. In addition to high levels of domestic anti-semitism (which, as we have seen, was predominantly 'traditional' rather than 'racist'), these pressures combined to push Romania's victimization rate higher than that of otherwise comparable countries. Like Boris and Horthy, Antonescu was a free agent, but the Sword of Damocles hanging above his head was fastened by even finer thread.

*'Cleansing the Ground' in Bessarabia,
Bukovina, and Transnistria*

More than anywhere else in Europe, anti-Jewish legislation and even outright extermination in Romania were the deeds of domestic officials, working independently of their German masters. Romanian soldiers, paramilitaries, and even ordinary citizens needed little prompting from the

Germans to commit some of World War II's most heinous atrocities; and, as we shall soon see, the Germans themselves occasionally had to step in to *protect* Jews from Romania's 'uncivilized' brand of butchery. The zeal of Romanian officials to persecute Jews—and to persecute Jews outside of the Regat, especially—contributed, no doubt, to Romania's relatively high victimization rate compared to Bulgaria and Hungary (before March 1944). But compared to other countries in Europe (countries subjected to direct German rule or to the rule of German appointees), the attack against Romanian Jewry was mercifully incomplete. Most of Romania's Jews would survive the war; and, in a country as antisemitic as Romania, this had everything to do with the autonomy of their government.

In fact, the massacre of Jews under Romanian dominion began well before German troops even entered the country. During the June 1940 withdrawal from Bessarabia and Bukovina, Romanian army units engaged in and encouraged the wholesale massacre of Jews, who were accused of being communists and Soviet sympathizers. The Iron Guard uprising of January 1941 was also associated with anti-Jewish riots that killed hundreds. And just days after the attack on the Soviet Union (discussed below), Romanian army units carried out a massive pogrom in Iași, where over 4000 Jews died. In many respects, these atrocities were unprecedented: Nowhere did such a massive attack on Jews occur earlier; and nowhere were they perpetrated by such a 'professional' organization as the military. But in Romania, the Iași pogrom merely foreshadowed events to come in the lost provinces of Bessarabia and Bukovina, and in the newly acquired Soviet territory Transnistria.

On June 22, 1941, almost a year after the Soviet annexation of Bessarabia and Bukovina, German, Italian, and Romanian troops launched Operation Barbarossa, a massive attack on the Soviet Union.⁵⁸ In return for its participation in the offensive, the 'liberated' territories of Bessarabia and Bukovina—along with their massive and maligned Jewish populations—were returned to Romanian control. But Axis forces pushed still further into Soviet territory; and the Germans soon sought Romanian partnership, not just in attacking Soviet forces, but in administering the vast Soviet territory that was rapidly falling under Axis control. On August 30, 1941, Romania and Germany signed an agreement (at Tighina in Bessarabia) whereby Romania was given control over the newly created territory of Transnistria—a considerable swath of Ukrainian territory between the Dniester and Bug rivers, just 'beyond' the recently recovered territory of Bessarabia. Transnistria, already home to about 120,000

indigenous Jews,⁵⁹ was soon to become a 'Romanian East', where Jews from the existing parts of Romania could be deported, concentrated, and eventually exterminated.

In the first weeks of July 1941, Romanian leaders enunciated their very own 'Final Solution' to the Jewish Question in Romania. In a plan that came to be known by a different euphemism, 'cleansing the ground' [*curatirea terenului*], Marshal Antonescu and his deputy, Mihai Antonescu, gave the go-ahead for the forceful removal of Jews from the recently recovered territories of Bessarabia and Bukovina. Both men saw the reoccupation of these territories as a fortuitous moment in history, uniquely suited for 'ethnic purification and national revision'. The marshal then added an important clarification to Mihai's directive: 'If need be, shoot with machine guns.... I take full legal responsibility and I tell you, there is no law!' (quoted in Ancel 1988: 189–190). The floodgates had been opened for a uniquely Romanian way of perpetrating the Holocaust.

Within a very short period of time, the Romanian leaders' directive became an open secret among the military forces operating in the area and among the general population. Indeed, in the chaos that prevailed before the arrival of Romanian and German troops (a phase known as 'the interregnum'), roving bands of militants and profiteers raped, pillaged, and murdered their way through the countryside; these actions alone must have cost the lives of tens of thousands. The arrival of Romanian troops, and of German troops under Romanian command, did little to change the situation, at least initially. In fact, regular combat units from both countries (although more from Romania) actively participated in the atrocities, under the pretext that these Jews had collaborated with the Soviets or simply to take part in the plunder. The situation took on a more 'regular' appearance when authority was transferred to a Romanian civilian administration; but Romanian gendarmes, regular police, and the 'Special Echelon' (*Eşalon Special*, a formation of the Romanian secret service with similarities to the *Einsatzgruppen*) largely continued the process, often killing the Jews that the military, for professional reasons,⁶⁰ had left alone.

As 'normal' as the process may have become, it retained a certain 'Romanian' hue. Across the recovered provinces of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, as well as in Southern Bukovina and Dorohoi (a district that had been attached to Bukovina in 1938),⁶¹ Jews were concentrated in squalid conditions, marched to the Transnistrian border, or crowded on trains that drove aimlessly through the Romanian countryside. It is estimated that of the 160,000 Jews who had been seized for deportation in Bessarabia,

Bukovina, and Dorohoi, 25,000 perished before reaching the eastern shore of the Dniester. The vast majority of those who survived the ordeal would later be killed in Transnistria. Protests were raised by Dr. Wilhelm Filderman (president of the Federation of Jewish Communities in Romania) and by various commanders in the German Wehrmacht (who, it must be added, were more horrified by the Romanians' lack of organization than by the crimes themselves), but these appeals were largely⁶² ignored.

Precise victimization figures for these actions are difficult to establish. The problem is exacerbated by the sheer scale of the operation, the lack of organization, the (much disputed) number of Jews who fled the deportation area with the retreating Soviet forces, imprecise wording in much of the secondary literature, and the often-bizarre 'volleys' of expulsion and counter-expulsion carried on by Romanian and German troops.⁶³ All told, of the (approximately) 185,000 Jews who lived in the deportation area⁶⁴ at the start of July 1941, only about 14,000 remained by mid-1942; the rest (92.9%) had been killed on Romanian soil, deported to Transnistria, or died along the way.⁶⁵ Statistics for the victimization of *indigenous* Transnistrian Jews during the occupation are even less precise (estimates for the number of Jews who remained in the region after the Soviet retreat start from 100,000 to 120,000, although the actual number could have been much higher⁶⁶; for the total number of victims, estimates cited in the literature range from 110,000 to 185,000⁶⁷), although my guess is that nearly all of the Transnistrian Jews perished. With the exception of those in Southern Bukovina and the region around Dorohoi (where Romanian troops acted alone), all of these atrocities were carried out by Romanian troops or by German troops under Romanian command—although Romanian forces played the greater role,⁶⁸ and they did so without German prompting.

Anti-Jewish Legislation and the Reaction of the Jewish Community

As in Bulgaria, the situation differed greatly in the 'old' region versus the newly acquired (or reacquired) territories. In most of 'Old Romania' (the Regat, Southern Transylvania, Southern Bukovina, and Northern Dobrudzha), massive deportations never came to fruition; and, with the exception of a few thousand Jews living in the northern part of the country (Southern Bukovina and the nearby region of Dorohoi), most of the Jews in the Regat survived the war.

This is not to say that they were not persecuted. In fact, Jews in Romania were subjected to the strictest regimen of anti-Jewish legislation in Europe, Germany *included*. Moreover, anti-Jewish legislation in Romania was entirely home-grown: It preceded German hegemony on the continent and even preceded the Nazi rise to power—and thus cannot be confused with an attempt to please the Germans, much less to placate them. In fact, far from pressuring Romania into accepting anti-Jewish legislation, Germany's rise to power 'freed' the Romanians to ignore the minorities treaties that were imposed upon it after World War I, much as Germany itself was ignoring the Treaty of Versailles. In January 1938, the antisemitic Goga-Cuza government 'reviewed' the citizenship of Romania's Jews; as a result of this 'review', hundreds of thousands of Jews (those who could not prove citizenship dating back to before 1918) were declared stateless.

Still, anti-Jewish legislation in Romania had a distinctly Romanian 'hue'. It usually aimed to exploit Jews rather than humiliate them (as the German laws did). And it was usually 'tempered' so as to avoid the complete destruction of Jewish economic power, on which the Romanian economy and the profitability of economic exploitation were based. A series of laws in late 1940 provided for the confiscation of Jewish property. In 1941, Jews were subjected to forced labor. However, here too, the effort was largely incomplete. According to Raul Hilberg, 'There were as yet no sufficient resources ... for a complete replacement of the Jews' in Romania.⁶⁹

Jews in Romania were represented by the Federation of Jewish Communities, headed by Dr. Wilhelm Filderman. Filderman, along with Chief Rabbi Dr. Alexander Shafran, had been active figures in Romanian politics throughout the second half of 1941. They petitioned Antonescu regarding the yellow badge decree, the construction of Jewish ghettos, and the deportations from Bessarabia and Bukovina—securing reversals on the first two orders and a (small) number of exemptions on the last. Unhappy with the direction of anti-Jewish legislation in the country, Richter consulted with Lecca to produce anti-Jewish legislation that was more in line with Nazi policy. In December 1941, they abolished the Federation of Jewish Communities and replaced it with the Center for Romanian Jews [*Centrala Evreilor din Romania*], a unified agency authorized to represent Romania's entire Jewish community. Filderman was replaced by Dr. Nandor Gringold, a puppet who could be expected to acquiesce to the Commissar's demands. Through their contacts in the Romanian office for

Jewish affairs, Richter and Killinger had played an active role in the creation of a unified Jewish council, and the stage seemed set for the efficient implementation of a German-style Final Solution in Romania.

But unlike the Dutch Jewish Council, the Center for Romanian Jews was not to become an administrative office for the implementation of Romanian (or German) demands. In fact, the hand of German intervention was seen so clearly in the newly created Center that it never gained the trust of the Jewish population more generally. No longer the official leaders of the Jewish community, Filderman and his former colleagues from the Federation continued to operate underground, maintaining contact with Antonescu and his government, with which they had long-established ties. In fact, throughout the effort to extend the Final Solution to the Regat, there was, according to Leni Yahil, a 'constant hidden conflict between Lecca's henchmen and the unofficial Jewish leadership' (1990a: 346). Jewish leaders were even able to infiltrate the Center for Romanian Jews, foiling its efforts, leaking word of its activities, and, of course, lobbying Lecca's superiors with the concerns of their community.

The comparative approach of this project allows us to see that Jewish organizations reflected the conditions of their creation. Without a government toward which to direct its concerns, it is perhaps unsurprising that the Dutch Jewish Council would act upon the wishes of the Germans who created it. In relatively autonomous Romania, the real voice of the Jewish community was free to be heard, if only by Antonescu's sometimes unsympathetic ear.

The Attempted Final Solution in the Regat

Like the Bulgarians, the Romanians turned out to be very efficient at eliminating Jews from the specific deportation areas. (Thrace and Macedonia, in the Bulgarian case; Bessarabia, Bukovina, and a few surrounding districts in Romania.) But German plans for the Final Solution took an unexpected turn when they were applied to the Regat.

According to a May 1942 census, about 292,000 Jews remained in Romania after the vast upheavals in the reacquired territories. This number included some 41,000 (mostly Hungarian-speaking) Jews in Southern Transylvania (the portion of that territory *not* ceded to Hungary in August 1940). On the whole, Jews in the Regat were more assimilated to Romanian culture than those of Transylvania, Bessarabia, or Bukovina. They were also wealthier, engaged in more modern professions, and, as a

result, played an important role in the economy of Romania, which was, at that point, an essential supplier of German oil, raw material, and industrial products. Given their more prominent position in Romanian society and their important function in Romania's (and hence Germany's) wartime economy, the Jews of 'Old Romania' would certainly be harder to extract.

Germany's progress on this front reflected both eagerness and hesitation, caused by Romania's antisemitism, on the one hand, and its status as a German ally on the other. Berlin had already given its sanction, encouragement, and assistance to the elimination of hundreds of thousands of Jews in the reacquired territories. That operation alone rivaled in scale any anti-Jewish operation in the war up to that point. However in November 1941, German officials in Bucharest presented the Romanian government with a formal request to deport Romanian Jews who were living in the Reich; and although the Romanian government quickly agreed, it soon clarified that its definition of 'the Reich' was a strict one, and did *not* include Romanian Jews living in German-occupied areas or even the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. The issue of Romanian Jews living in German-occupied areas soon became the subject of protracted negotiations between Romanian and German officials—negotiations which did not conclude until August 17, 1942, when Jews living in German-occupied areas and in the Reich itself were deported. However, the fact that Germany approached Romania *for permission* to deport Romanian Jews—and that it engaged in the diplomatic game for so long—indicates that, despite home-grown antisemitism, Romania was still to be treated as an ally. Indeed, a Romanian diplomat in Berlin pointed out that Jewish citizens of Germany's other ally, Hungary, had not been subjected to such measures, and that the matter was therefore one of Romanian national pride and standing in the German alliance (Hilberg 1985: 783).

German hesitation was also evident in the great care it took when broaching the issue of deporting Jews from Romania itself. In July of 1942, after protracted negotiations, Gustav Richter (Eichmann's representative in the German embassy in Bucharest) obtained Mihai Antonescu's *written consent* for the deportation of Romania's Jews. Indeed, the mere existence of a 'Richter–Antonescu Accord'—like the Oberg-Bousquet Accord in France or the Dannecker–Belev Agreement in Bulgaria—indicates that Germany generally treaded more lightly in countries that were governed by sympathetic regimes. In Romania's case, the Antonescu's consent was merely a starting point for further negotiation, chronic procrastination, and the eventual cancellation of large-scale deportations from the Regat.

Following Richter's announcement of Antonescu's consent, Richter and his Romanian counterpart, Radu Lecca (the Romanian government's Commissar for Jewish Affairs), each submitted plans for the deportation of Jews from the remaining parts of Romania. Though similar in broad outline, the German and Romanian plans reflected the differing interests and priorities of the two countries. In addition to a whole string of exemptions missing from the German plan (Jewish converts to Orthodox Christianity, Jews married to Christians, Jews over 65, veterans, foreign nationals, directors of the Center for Romanian Jews, etc.), Lecca's plan provided for:

the right of stay to those Jews who with their deeds proved that they form a part of the spirit of the Rumanian nation, as well as to those useful for the economy and trade. (Lecca's plan quoted in Ancel 1989: pp. 349–351)

The Romanian plan also allowed for the emigration of 3000 Jews to Palestine, in exchange for an extortion payment of 2,000,000 lei, which would be used to establish Romanian business enterprises in place of Jewish ones. Like many aspects of the Final Solution in this country, Lecca's proposal definitely bore a Romanian stamp.

In the end, the German plan was accepted, but it is another matter entirely as to which plan was actually put into practice.⁷⁰ In October 1942, Picky Vasiliu, the Romanian Police Minister, leaked word of the impending deportations to one of the leaders of Transylvania's Jewish community. The underground leadership of Romanian Jewry soon rallied into action, obtaining the support of several prominent members of the Romanian opposition.⁷¹ They were soon joined by a chorus of powerful voices, including Queen Mother Helena, Metropolitan Nicolai Bălan (a close friend of Antonescu's), the Swiss diplomat René de Weck, and the Papal nuncio, Archbishop Andrea Cassulo. The aforementioned figures joined in sending a petition to Antonescu, demanding a reversal of the order and noting that such a step would 'symbolize ... Rumania's complete enslavement to Germany'. The protest memorandum further noted that such anti-Jewish measures had been taken 'only in satellite countries like Croatia and occupied Poland, and not in sovereign countries like Hungary and Italy' (Ancel 1989: 340). The comparison, and the list of luminaries who signed to it, evidently had a great impact on Ion Antonescu. Delay followed delay. And in March 1943, while on a visit to Berlin, Antonescu rejected Ribbentrop's pressure to reopen the issue. The vast majority of Romanian Jewry had been saved.⁷²

One particularly interesting appeal on behalf of Romanian Jewry came from far away. In September 1942, US Secretary of State Cordell Hull submitted a 'very forcefully worded letter' to Mihai Antonescu via the Swiss embassy in Bucharest. In that letter, according to Richter, the American government threatened 'reprisals' against Romanians living the USA if the Romanian government did not stop deportations that were already underway (quoted in Ancel 1989: 352). Although the letter clearly arrived too late to affect the hundreds of thousands of Jews who had already been deported from the reacquired territories, it had a strong impact on the Romanian ruling elite. In fact, the force of Hull's letter might have been amplified by Romanian antisemitism, which held that Jews were behind the Allied cause in the first place! When Vasile Mares turned down a cabinet post in September 1942, he explained to Antonescu that the moment was simply not 'right ... for a clash with the Jews' (quoted in Ancel 1989: 341).

As if to confirm the sheer intensity, paranoia, and irony of Romanian antisemitism, Antonescu not only put a halt to the deportation plans, he actually tried to find 'less dangerous' alternatives. In the winter of 1942–1943, Antonescu considered a plan that would allow up to 80,000 Jews to emigrate to Palestine in return for a payment of 200,000 lei (about \$1300) per emigrant. A large-scale plan of this nature was almost certainly doomed to failure, especially since Germany controlled most of the routes to Palestine and because the British would have opposed it anyway. Nonetheless, in May 1943, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem complained to the German Foreign Office that 5000 Jews (most of them children) had found their way from Romania to Palestine. With the threat of German defeat ever more likely, Antonescu was increasingly willing to override German concerns for the sake of placating 'Judeo-Bolsheviks' in the Soviet Union.

Indeed, Romanian preparations for the next world order took an even more bizarre twist in late 1943. Fearful that the Germans would renew the slaughter of Transnistrian Jews during their retreat from the Soviet front, Romanian officials actually embarked upon a relatively well-articulated plan to *save* Jews from the Romanian East. In November 1943, Antonescu met with the governor of Bukovina and an official from the Ministry of the Interior to discuss the possibility of transporting up to 60,000 surviving Jews in Transnistria *back* to their regions of origin, and even into the Regat. And in the summer of 1944, Mihai Antonescu and Lecca met with German officials to re-explore the possibility of Jewish emigration

to Palestine. It is impossible to determine precisely how many Jews were repatriated from Transnistria in the closing months of the war; however, it seems possible that over 15,000 Jewish repatriates from Transnistria—many of them destitute and enslaved—were living in Romania by the time the area was reconquered by the Soviets in March 1944 (Shechtman: 391). To the extent that massive slaughter at German hands was likely in the event of a German retreat, Romania might be the unique country with the ironic distinction of being so directly responsible for *both* the mass murder *and the rescue* of so many Jews.

There are various factors that explain Romania's dramatic reversal on the Jewish Question. At the individual level, explanations range from the pragmatic antisemitism of Ion Antonescu (who, as his country's sole ruler, had the power to reverse the policy when it no longer appeared prudent) to the vindictiveness of Radu Lecca (who felt that he was snubbed by German officials during a visit to Berlin in August 1942). Lobbying and political pandering were also at work, be it in the temptation for Romanian officials to bow to domestic pressure or even—amazingly—in the incredible notion that helping Jews would somehow mitigate Soviet rage. As in other countries (including and especially Denmark), Jewish people in Romania (despite the antisemitism of their countrymen) also took on a *symbolic* quality, coming to represent their country's enduring autonomy from German hegemony. And, of course, Jews were saved by rampant corruption in the Romanian political system, which allowed them to buy their safety from government officials eager to realize the financial rewards of political power.⁷³ In *Jews for Sale?*, Yehuda Bauer tells the story of the many (failed) attempts that Jews made to buy their survival in countries under German occupation; it is quite surprising that his work includes hardly a mention of Romania.

Reflections on the Romanian Case

In the end, the Jews of Romania—and especially those from Romania's core territories—fared far better than those of other countries in occupied Europe. Precise measures of this fact are difficult to come by due to disagreements about which territories should be included and what 'counts' as victimization, not to mention disagreements about the precise statistics in the first place. Asher Cohen, who is keenly aware of these issues, provides a death rate for Romania of 24%. Other sources list victimization rates for Romania as high as 50%.⁷⁴

Using the chart provided in Hilberg and the ‘demographic deficit’ method of calculation,⁷⁵ I have constructed Table 4.1 on Jewish victimization in Romania by region.

Clearly, the victimization rate for Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina (and hence, for All Romania) would be somewhat lower if we counted the approximately 30,000 repatriated Jews as non-victims rather than as victimized survivors.⁷⁶ The victimization rate for native Transnistrian Jews was almost certainly very high; however, I cannot locate precise statistics, and have therefore assumed it to be complete. If any number of Transnistrian Jews survived the war (and the actual number could very well have been in the low tens of thousands), that, too, would have the effect of lowering the final victimization tally for Romania and Transnistria. It should be remembered that victimization statistics for Bessarabia, Northern Bukovina, and Transnistria also reflect tens of thousands of Jews killed by *German* forces in these areas.

In many respects, events in Romania should seem to echo those in Bulgaria. Both countries were definitely in the German orbit; however, we have seen several indications that Romania’s autonomy—though significant—was more illusory than Bulgaria’s. In both countries, the vast majority of victimized Jews were to be found in the newly acquired (or reacquired) territories—though, in the Romanian case, the number of Jews residing in these areas constituted a higher proportion of the total (see below). In the ‘home’ territory, Romania’s Jews—like Bulgaria’s—largely survived the onslaught due to the quick mobilization of political pressure in its various forms (from lobbying, to bribery, to outright

Table 4.1 Victimization rates in Romania by region

| <i>Region</i> | <i>Original Jewish Population</i> | <i>Number of Victims</i> | <i>Victimization Rate(%)</i> |
|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| All Romania | 447,313 | 175,505 | 39.2% |
| Old Romania | 292,000 | 34,192 | 11.7% |
| The Regat | 221,313 | 7000 | 3.2% |
| So. Bukovina & Dorohoi | 29,687 | 27,192 | 91.6% |
| So. Transylvania | 41,000 | — | — |
| Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina | 155,313 | 141,313 | 91.0% |
| Transnistria | 110,000 | 110,000 (?) | 100.0% (?) |
| Total | | | |
| All Romania and Transnistria | 557,313 | 285,505 (?) | 51.2% (?) |

threats against government officials). In both countries, the willingness of local officials to participate in the Final Solution waxed and waned with Germany's wartime fortune. The 'style' of Jewish victimization and rescue could not have differed more in these two cases—with Romanian actors showing spontaneous zeal for their task as compared with Bulgaria's fickle legalism; however, the ultimate result of large-scale Jewish survival would have been impossible in *either* country were it not for the existence of local institutions of government that were complete, legitimate, and, for the most part, autonomous.

Indeed, a deep parallel between the two cases is worth further reflection. Looking at the statistics for the *total* proportion of Jews killed in each country, we have concluded that Romania's victimization rate was significantly higher than Bulgaria's. This is indeed true and consistent with the observation of many scholars. However, there is a way in which the victimization rates in these two countries are actually very similar. Both Romania and Bulgaria demonstrate near-complete losses of Jews (above 90%) in the newly acquired territories and near-complete survival in the 'home' territory. The difference is that almost (or even over⁷⁷) half of the Jews living in areas controlled by the Romanians during the war lived in areas *outside* the Romanian home territory, whereas that great majority of Jews living under Bulgarian control lived within the traditional boundaries of Bulgaria itself. Thus, in Romania's case, the 155,000 Jews living in Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina constituted about 35% of the total Romanian Jewish population. When the 12,000 Jews living in Thrace, Macedonia, and Pirot are included in the Bulgarian total, on the other hand, they constitute less than 20% of that country's entire Jewish population. Thus, the near-complete destruction of these sub-communities affect Romania's total victimization rate more than it does Bulgaria's. Had Jewish populations in Romania and Bulgaria been similarly distributed, the two countries might very well have had near-identical rates of Jewish victimization. Broken down in this respect, the key difference between Romania and Bulgaria may not be the proportion of their own Jews that they killed *per se*, but the proportions of their total Jewish populations that lived in their newly acquired territories.⁷⁸

Finally, in the chronic haggling between occupier and occupied over who should be responsible for arresting which Jews and from where, we might note a more general and striking parallel between Romania and Bulgaria, on the one hand, and France, on the other. In France, at least initially, German forces would participate in the arrest of Jews from the

occupied territory, but not south of the demarcation line—where Vichy officials carefully guarded their autonomy (and, presumably, their right to treat their Jews as they pleased). Likewise, German troops would participate in Romania's 'ground cleansing' operations in the newly acquired territories, but not in the Romanian homeland.⁷⁹ And just as Jews in Romania and Bulgaria would find (or not find) protection based on what territory they lived in, the fate of Jews in France would be, at least partially, determined by their status as citizens. In other words, in Romania and Bulgaria, the distinction was geographic; in France, it was institutional; but in all cases, we observe states protecting Jews who were more central to the body politic at the expense of those who were more distant.

HUNGARY

Hungary presents us with one of the most vivid illustrations of the relationship between German hierarchy and the implementation of the Final Solution. Until March of 1944, the vast majority of Hungarian Jews remained in a sort of tense purgatory, fully aware of the Holocaust around them but confident (or merely hopeful) that their continued loyalty to a crumbling regime would help them survive. The expectation was not unreasonable: Since the summer of 1942, the Hungarian regent, Miklós Horthy, and his moderate prime minister, Miklós Kállay, had resisted intense German pressure to deport the largest surviving Jewish community in Europe. (And in one of the few theaters of war where German Nazis saw an integral connection between their war against the Jews and their war against the Allies, this was a notable accomplishment!) But in March of 1944 (and again in October), the Hungarian regent found himself on the hot seat for a series of desperate bids to abandon the Axis alliance. In the last year of the war, Hungary's citizens, and especially its Jews, would learn that disloyalty to Nazi Germany came at a very heavy price.

The very late—but very thorough—destruction of Hungarian Jewry displays the mark of nearly every sort of compromise, judgment, and tragedy that we have seen in this investigation so far. Like Bulgaria, Hungary forged an alliance with Germany in order to steal the territory of its neighbors. Like in Romania, Hungary's Jews formed an integral part of the domestic economy—and enjoyed the benefits (as well as the costs) of paternalistic influence on a corrupt elite that would tolerate 'Jewish parasites' so long as they were useful. Like both of these countries, Hungary would come to acquire (or reacquire) substantial Jewish

populations in the territories that were the fruit of its aggression. And like Boris and even Antonescu, Hungary's authoritarian Horthy would take proactive steps—and *also* drag his feet—so as to ensure that Jews in the metropole would be protected while those in the periphery would be the first to go. Until the last year of the war, Hungary's diplomatic and military dance was sufficiently adept to win most of the benefits of alliance—from vast territory to relative safety for its own citizens. But the long, stable, and sometimes 'Golden' history of Jews in Hungary would be of little consequence when, fearing treachery at such a sensitive point along the Eastern Front, Germany imposed upon its erstwhile ally the full force of direct occupational hierarchy. No 'Golden Age' and no diplomatic dance could save Hungarian Jewry from such a direct extension of German hegemony.

Hungary in International Context

The Trianon Treaty (1920)—Hungary's Treaty of Versailles—reduced the former kingdom to a mere fraction of what it had once been. With the stroke of a pen, Hungary lost more than two-thirds of its territory and about 60% of its people to neighboring Czechoslovakia, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Austria, and even to Poland and Italy (Rijeka/Fiume). Most of these territories were home to substantial Hungarian minorities—so much so, in fact, that, as a result of the Treaty, one-third of the Hungarian nation came to reside *outside* of the Hungarian state. And, as will become significant later, some of these territories were also home to substantial Jewish populations—populations that were sometimes (but only sometimes) Magyar-speaking and assimilated into the formerly dominant Hungarian remnant.

With such substantial losses, the ruling elite in the Hungarian 'rump state' faced overwhelming incentives for territorial revision.⁸⁰ These concerns, combined with economic opportunity and a pervasive fear of Soviet communism, compelled Hungary to forge ever-tighter military agreements with Nazi Germany: In early 1939, Hungary signed on to the Anti-Comintern Pact; in November of the next year, it joined the Tripartite Pact, formally becoming an Axis power. By the summer of 1941, Hungary had become an active participant in the Axis war against Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. With these bold advances, Hungary committed itself firmly to the Axis cause at a very early stage; but these commitments were to hang like an albatross from Horthy's neck as he and a succession of

Hungarian governments later attempted (ultimately unsuccessfully) to jump from the sinking ship of Germany's new world order.

For the time being, however, *voluntary* association with the victorious Axis alliance allowed Hungary to set the terms of its participation. Until the German occupation of March 1944, Hungary was the only Axis power where no German troops were stationed. Since September 1939, German troops had enjoyed the right of transit *through* the Hungarian state. (German troops first made use of this right in October 1940, when they were deployed to 'guarantee the safety' of Romania's oil fields (Rich 1974: 242).) But, for the most part,⁸¹ German military personnel were only allowed to leave the trains in two cities (Budapest and Szolnok), and German military formations were not allowed to disembark at all. German troop transports, which were thus confined to the Hungarian railway system, also had to be previously announced. By *joining* the German alliance rather than being strong-armed into it, Hungary was given the opportunity to set the terms of its participation. This was to have an important effect on Hungarian politics at the time, as well as on Hungarian Jewish life.

But by far, the most important consequence of Hungary's shrewd diplomacy was its reacquisition of at least *some* of the territory it had previously lost. With German diplomatic assistance, Hungary recovered the lost regions of Felvidék and Transcarpathian Ukraine⁸² from Czechoslovakia, Northern Transylvania from Romania, and Bačka (Délvidék) from Yugoslavia. The timing of these territorial victories was clearly tied to German diplomatic success and to Hungary's increasingly active role in the German alliance.⁸³ The acquisitions renewed Hungary's dominion over millions of people, more than two million Hungarians and over 300,000 Jews. Most of the Jews in Hungary's reacquired territories, like the Jews in Trianon Hungary itself, would only survive the war so long as their country remained loyal to Germany's cause.

Domestic Politics in Hungary

As was the case in Bulgaria and Romania, domestic politics in Hungary were deeply shaped by German hegemony and events in the international realm. This influence was most apparent in the office of the Hungarian prime minister, where an alternating succession of pro-German personages and reluctant collaborators (appointed, according to Hilberg, 'when the Germans were not looking' (1985: 799)) came in and out of office, reflecting the ebb and flow of German hegemony in Hungary and Axis

dominance on the battlefield. To a much greater degree than in Romania, the head of state, Horthy, shared power with his government; and, as we shall see, his prime ministers were to have an important say on the conduct of affairs in Hungary both before and after the German occupation. Nonetheless, Horthy retained (and often used) his powers of appointment and dismissal to tweak the government as he and his (distant) German patrons saw fit. Thus, though Hungary may have been the most democratic country in Eastern Europe (Janos: 306), Horthy's active role in appointing and dismissing cabinet ministers meant that a great deal of political power in the country resided with the (unelected) regent. He was an admiral without a navy, and a regent for a non-existent king. Ultimately, suggests Hannah Arendt, 'only Admiral Horthy knew' what his regime actually was in terms of recognized forms of government.⁸⁴

In addition to pressuring Horthy to appoint sympathetic governments, officials in Berlin maintained three important levers of influence over the regime in Budapest. First, like Romania, Hungary was home to a large population of ethnic Germans, numbering almost half a million persons (5.5% of the country's total population) in 1930. As part of the deal that awarded Northern Transylvania to Hungary in August 1940, Hungary was forced to allow the Nazi *Volksbund* sole representation of this potentially restive minority. The Hungarian government was thus virtually powerless in its effort to establish authority over hundreds of thousands of potential German sympathizers within its own borders.

Moreover, since his release from prison in September 1940, Ferenc Szálasi, leader of the fascist Arrow Cross Party, remained in Hungary, nipping at the heels of Horthy's government and constituting a threat to successive Hungarian regimes that Germany had viable replacements in reserve. Szálasi's Arrow Cross thus assumed a position in Hungary similar to that of Sima's Iron Guard, only Szálasi was resident and active within the boundaries of Hungary itself.⁸⁵ (As we shall see, the Germans were to execute this threat in October 1944, leading to a reign of terror and a resumption of deportations.)

Finally, Hungary's economic dependence on Nazi Germany constituted a third lever of power for officials in Berlin.⁸⁶ Over the course of the 1930s, a series of tariff agreements and quota adjustments increased Hungarian dependence on German agricultural markets and German capital investment. By 1937, Germany was Hungary's most important trade partner. 'By means of political pressure, promises, and blackmail,' Iván Berend observes, 'Germany drew the countries already linked to it

by economic ties ever more into its alliance system.’ German policymakers might not have had formal authority in Hungary; and they were even less influential in that country than they were in Romania (and perhaps Bulgaria); but *informal* hierarchy was a fact of political life throughout the German sphere of influence, especially in the ‘satellite states’.⁸⁷

Jewish Life in Hungary Before the War

Jewish life in prewar Hungary reveals all the apparent contradictions of acceptance and segregation, antisemitism, toleration, and even privilege. Among the Hungarian elite, wealthy, Magyar-speaking Jews were as assimilated to the local culture as were the most tolerated Jews in democratic Western Europe. Indeed, of the 250,000 Jews living in Budapest in 1941, over 62,000 (about 25%) were Baptized Jews or Christians of Jewish origin. During the Golden Age of Hungarian Jewry (1867–1914), Jews had risen to positions of political and economic prominence, and had come to be loyal allies of the ruling Magyars in a multi-ethnic Hungarian Kingdom. But irony and fate were to play a cruel trick on this assimilated community: When the Treaty of Trianon left Hungary a homogenous and humiliated remnant of its former glory, the fiercely nationalistic Magyar population came to see the Jews as parasitic aliens rather than loyal allies.

In the interwar period, Jews occupied a prominent place in the Hungarian economy. Though just over 5% of the total population, Jews accounted for 55% of Hungary’s doctors, almost half of its lawyers, and nearly a third of its journalists and engineers; in villages, the term ‘shop-keeper’ had become synonymous with the word ‘Jew’; and in Budapest, where Jews constituted 20% of the population, 18,000 of the city’s 30,000 stores (i.e., 60%) were owned by Jews. The economic standing of Jews in Hungary was to become both a blessing and a curse: Their position and prominence made Hungarian Jews an attractive and vulnerable target for exploitation by the country’s teeming masses; on the other hand, Hungarian elites (and even their German advisors) knew that Jewish wealth could not be tapped without risk of disturbing the Hungarian economy more generally.⁸⁸

The situation was somewhat different for Jews in Hungary’s (re)acquired territories. Here, Jewish communities tended to be more orthodox, less assimilated, and less urbanized, a stark contrast with the assimilated and wealthy Jews of the Hungarian center. In the nineteenth century, Transcarpathian Ukraine and Northern Transylvania both became home to thousands of

Ostjuden from Poland, Romania, and the Russian Pale. Many of these Jews were Hasidic, few spoke the local language, and almost all of them were poor. By 1930, over half of the Jews in Transcarpathian Ukraine lived in rural areas; and at 18%, the proportion of Transcarpathian Jews who were farmers was higher than anywhere else in the world. It should be added that the non-Hungarian minorities in these regions often bore a particular resentment toward the Jews because of their *perceived* loyalty to Hungary's renewed hegemony.⁸⁹

These stark demographic differences led to a certain degree of tension between Hungary's various Jewish communities. According to István Deák,

Wealthy and assimilated Jews in Budapest tended to share Admiral Horthy's own view that there were good Jews and bad Jews, and that the good Jews were mostly in the capital whereas the bad Jews were to be found generally among the unassimilated, teeming masses of northeast Hungary. (1989: 656)

As a result, Jews in the reacquired territories found themselves to be particularly vulnerable targets of Hungarian and German persecution. They were shunned by the Hungarian elite for being the 'wrong kind' of Jew, hated by the Hungarian masses for their perceived wealth, and despised by the local population as representatives of Hungarian hegemony. These distinctions and perceptions were to have an important influence on the implementation of the Final Solution in Hungary. As we shall see, however, even the Jews in Hungary's reacquired territories were protected while Hungary remained a reliable German ally; plans for their deportation were drawn up just weeks after the German occupation, simultaneous with plans to deport *all* of Hungary's Jews. But despite their vulnerability, even these Jews would remain safe so long as Hungary remained loyal to the Germans.

Germany Hegemony and Anti-Jewish Policy in Hungary

The attack on Hungarian Jewry began⁹⁰ with a series of anti-Jewish laws in the late 1930s. Passed in May of 1938, just two months after the *Anschluss*, the first anti-Jewish law (a *numerus clausus* act, or quota) bore the stamp of rising German hegemony, if not formal influence. Touted by its sponsors as an effort to 'more effective[ly] balance ... the social and economic life' of the country (Braham 1981: 287), the law restricted the number

of Jews in various professions to 20%—a level that allowed for significant ‘over-representation’ but one that, nonetheless, resulted in massive disenfranchisement. A second anti-Jewish law soon followed (in May 1939), placing ever more stringent restrictions (usually around 6%) on Jewish representation and modifying the definition of a ‘Jew’. A third sequence of measures, passed in 1941, defined ‘Jew’ in even stricter (‘racial’) terms and, in some ways, surpassed Nazi formulations from Nuremberg. In stages, the various laws also ordered the removal of Jews from the upper house of Hungary’s parliament—first by dissolving the representation of Jews as a public corporation and later, in 1941, by moving against representatives of other corporations who were Jewish.⁹¹

In many ways, Hungary’s anti-Jewish legislation paralleled similar legislation in Bulgaria, Romania, Italy, and France. But the precise nature of the Hungarian legal effort is interesting for two reasons. First, the various laws reflect a constant struggle between pro-Nazi elements in the Hungarian administration and the Catholic Church—with the Church continually trying to shield its converts and Nazi elements pushing for ‘racial’ definitions that included Jewish Christians. The struggle had huge practical implications, because the 787,000 people affected by the 1941 law included up to 62,000 persons who had *not* been classified as Jews in previous legislation. As if reflecting Germany’s increased hegemony in the region, Hungary’s successive anti-Jewish laws came to approximate (and even surpass) the laws in Germany itself.

But the timing of the Hungarian legislation also illustrates an undeniable connection between German international hierarchy and Hungary’s domestic legislation. According to Randolph Braham, Hungary’s anti-Jewish legislation reflected the country’s ‘symbolic gratitude’ and ‘indebtedness’ to the Third Reich for its diplomatic and military assistance in the reacquisition of Felvidék, Transcarpathian Ukraine, Northern Transylvania, and the Bačka region (1981: 194; see also Janos: 290, 292). In fact, earlier drafts of the anti-Jewish legislation were often presented to German officials at the very meetings where Hungarian representatives approached Germany for help in the recovery of territory. Other countries undoubtedly used similar negotiation tactics in the dealings with the Germans, but they were seldom so explicit as in the Hungarian case. Informal hierarchy was clearly at work throughout the German sphere of influence. Local leaders could implement German-inspired domestic policies in return for German assistance in the realm of international security and the economy.

The Deportation of 'Alien' Jews and the Massacre in Bačka

Until the formal German occupation in March 1944, most of the Jews in Hungary remained physically unharmed, despite the aforementioned persecution. Two very early and brutal events, however, threatened to change that situation and gave the Germans (false) hope that the Final Solution in Hungary would go smoothly.

The lot of Jews in Hungary worsened considerably with Hungary's entry into the war against the Soviet Union. Jews who, as elsewhere, were associated with the evils of Bolshevism were also, in Hungary, associated with the material shortages, hoarding, and consequent price increases of wartime. (When Operation Barbarossa failed to end as decisively as previous German operations in Western Europe and the Balkans, Hungarian Jews were also blamed for their country's involvement in the war.) The situation was particularly precarious for the 15,000–35,000⁹² foreign Jews who had taken refuge in Hungary after Germany's acquisition of Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland. For this rootless and vulnerable population, sympathy among the local population was short; and plans for 'resettlement' were, thus, well received both by opportunist politicians in Budapest and even by 'well-intentioned' Hungarian elites, who, at this early stage in the Final Solution, still believed that resettlement would allow foreign Jews to start anew in the vast territories to Germany's east.

With Horthy's approval in late June 1941, Hungary's pro-German Prime Minister László Bárdossy convened a meeting of his cabinet (the Council of Ministers) to discuss the expulsion of 'all persons of dubious citizenship' to German-controlled Eastern Galicia. (Extreme nationalist demands for the expulsion of Romanian and Slav 'aliens', even only those without citizenship, had been rejected as logistically impossible.) The decree was to apply to 'alien' Jews throughout the country; however, it was to have its most disastrous effects in Transcarpathian Ukraine, since Jewish families there who could not prove residence in the region since 1867 had been denied citizenship by the anti-Jewish legislation of 1939. By the end of August 1941, approximately 18,000 Jews had been rounded up and handed over ('repatriated') to German troops in Kőrömező, near the Polish border. From there, they were taken to Kamenets-Podolsk, a Ukrainian town that had been vacated by the Soviets just weeks earlier, and shot. Included in the massacre were as many as 9600 Jews from outside of Hungary, several thousand of whom came from Kamenets-Podolsk itself. Also included were a few Jews who *were* Hungarian citizens, but

who simply could not provide the necessary documentation to prove their status.

There is little evidence of Hungarian troops being involved in the massacre, which was carried out by German *Einsatzgruppen* and Ukrainian militias; however, Hungarian forces operating in the region certainly witnessed the operation, and various German reports from the scene complain that Hungarian troops actually intervened on behalf of both Hungarian and Soviet Jews. Reports of the atrocities soon filtered back to Hungary, where the Minister of the Interior put a stop to the deportations which were still underway, and even recalled several trains which were already en route to the border. While clearly willing to demonstrate its allegiance to Nazi principles, the Hungarian government was also concerned about the domestic implications of that alliance.

Half a year after the Kamenets-Podolsk Massacre and the subsequent scandal, Hungarian leaders found themselves even more directly implicated in yet another wartime atrocity. Since the German invasion of the Soviet Union, Hungarian forces faced a mounting insurgency in Bačka, the region Hungary had wrested from Yugoslavia with German help in April 1941. In January 1942, Hungarian forces in Bačka embarked upon a campaign to clear the territory of 'hostile' elements and to establish order. House-to-house clearing operations and raids resulted in the detention of thousands of 'suspects', many of whom were summarily executed. Alleged counterattacks by partisan units resulted in massive Hungarian reprisals, especially in the city of Novi Sad (Újvidék) where victims were shot and thrown into the Danube. News of the civilian toll and of 'excesses' committed by Hungarian forces reached Budapest by the end of the month, whereupon the Minister of the Interior, Keresztes-Fischer, once again found himself compelled to put an immediate stop to the operation. Nonetheless, by the time his orders reached the besieged territory, over 3300 people lay dead, including 2550 Serbs and 700 Jews.⁹³

The Minister's swift action, however, was not enough to quell the outcry of a furious Hungarian public. Horrifying accounts of the massacre filtered back to Budapest, this time of atrocities carried out by Hungarian soldiers, officers, and gendarmes. Protests reached a fevered pitch in the spring, when the melting waters of the Danube revealed the full extent of the tragedy. By that time, a commission of inquiry demanded by both houses of parliament and dispatched by the pro-German government of Bárdossy had resulted in a whitewash, with Hungarian officials accepting the military's account of events and, of course, accusing the opposition of

trying to sully the Army's image. But renewed protests led to Bárdossy's resignation and his replacement by a reluctant collaborator, Miklós Kállay, on March 9, 1942.⁹⁴ Hoping to establish better relations with Serbs⁹⁵ in his country, Kállay reopened the investigation, which resulted, amazingly, in the indictment and trial of 15 high-ranking Hungarian officers for the murder of Serbs and Jews.⁹⁶

The inquiry, trial, and conviction of major war criminals by a German ally *during* World War II are unprecedented. However, it illustrates the degree to which Hungary was an autonomous country—with independent interests and even a 'fair' system of justice. Hungary's treatment of its own war criminals during World War II gives us insight into the complex workings of its regime, which had to 'pay' Germany for the benefits of alliance but that, nonetheless, had to remain keenly aware of its citizens' potential opposition to wartime policies and practices. Hungary's wartime regime was authoritarian and even 'fascist', as were the governments of Antonescu in Romania and King Carol in Bulgaria; but no regime, no matter how authoritarian, can remain completely insulated from the demands of its public. Kállay's resistance to the Final Solution (discussed below), like that of his Romanian and Bulgarian counterparts, only makes sense when we understand that political power has strict limits. Hitler's authoritarian henchmen, and even Hitler himself, had always to remain wary of public opinion.

Jews in Military and Labor Service Before the German Occupation

While the massacres in Kamenets-Podolsk and in Bačka were tragic and dramatic sources of Jewish victimization in Hungary, their death toll, in numerical terms, was quite moderate. In fact, more Jews died in military and labor service than in these two incidents combined.

In 1939, the Hungarian armed forces included few Jews, only 2292 persons or just over 2% of the entire force. Concerned that Hungary's Jews were not pulling their proportional weight and inspired by the second anti-Jewish law, the Hungarian Minister of Defense ordered, on September 23, 1939, that Jews capable of military service be entered into the military until their presence there was proportional to their representation in society at large. Many of these Jewish Hungarians were to serve in their country's armed forces until the German occupation of March 1944. The remaining military-aged Jewish men, along with other 'unreliable'

persons (such as Romanians, Serbs, Slovaks, and communists), were to be drafted into the labor service system and employed in the construction of roads and fortifications.

Jewish labor servicemen worked throughout Hungary and in parts of occupied Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. Though originally developed in 1920s as an outlet for national service for Hungary's various 'unreliable' elements, the labor service system increasingly came to be used as an anti-Jewish measure. In fact, conditions in the labor battalions remained acceptable throughout much of 1940; after the annexation of Northern Transylvania and the initiation of active hostilities, however, conditions changed dramatically for the worse. As Hungary gravitated ever more closely into the German alliance, Jews in the labor service battalions increasingly found themselves deprived of rights and rations, stripped of their military uniforms and insignia, and segregated into 'mixed' (i.e., exclusively Jewish) labor companies, separated from their fellow citizens.

Soon, Jewish labor companies were disproportionately deployed to the Soviet front and disproportionately engaged in such harrowing tasks as trench building and mine removal. The situation was obviously not improved by the fact that Jewish labor companies in these areas worked in such close proximity to German troops, nor was it helped by Hungary's staggering military losses in the field. During the slow and steady retreat (which began with the Hungarian and German defeats at Voronezh (January 12, 1943) and Stalingrad (February 2, 1943), respectively), helpless and beleaguered Jewish laborers were subjected to any manner of plunder and mistreatment by demoralized and vindictive Axis troops. By the time of the German occupation, sickness, disease, and sheer brutality had taken the lives of about 42,000 Jewish labor servicemen.

Clearly, the increasingly brutal labor system led to the deaths of many thousands of Hungarian Jews, both before and during the German occupation. However, it should be mentioned that the system also prevented many people from falling into German hands. In the fall of 1942, as Hungary came under increased German pressure to implement the Final Solution, Prime Minister Kállay raised the maximum age for which Jews could be called into labor service. This move forced (or diverted) even more Jews into the labor system. However, it was politically shrewd, since it allowed Kállay to relieve older Hungarians of the need to do hard labor while simultaneously 'satisfying' Germany that he was doing his part to 'contain the Jewish menace'. While increasingly hazardous, service in the Jewish labor battalions continued to 'protect' Jews from the Final

Solution, *even after* the German occupation of March 1944. To the very end, some of Hungary's most ardent (but pragmatic) antisemites must have remained convinced that Jews were more valuable as slave laborers than as deportees.

The Kállay Years (March 9, 1942–March 19, 1944)

After taking office as prime minister in March of 1942, Miklós Kállay was the first Hungarian leader to face a concerted effort by Nazi Germany for a systematic solution to the 'Jewish problem' in Hungary. As the Hungarian leader during the great military reversals of January–February 1943, however, he was also the first Hungarian leader to face such persistent calls by his own population to extract Hungary from its ill-fated alliance. For over two years, Kállay walked a narrow line, as he resisted German pressure regarding the Jewish Question and attempted to free Hungary from its foreign entanglements. In the end, however, Germany's effort to keep Hungary within the fold failed: Hungary was subjected to a direct German occupation and Kállay was thrown out of office.

Indeed, Hungary was one of the few countries in Europe where German war aims and Nazi demands regarding the Final Solution were so closely related. According to István Deák:

The Final solution of the Hungarian Jewish question was the alpha and the omega of the Germans' policy toward Hungary, one which they saw as closely tied to their other policy goal, the reactivation of Hungary's participation in the war. Quite mistakenly, the Germans thought of the Jews as spies and saboteurs.... Thus, in the opinion of [Edmund Veesenmayer, a German spy sent to assess the political situation in Hungary], the killing of Jews was a strategic imperative. (Deák 1989: 655–6)

Clearly, Hungary is a country where the observer cannot clearly distinguish between the war and the Final Solution because the Germans themselves made no such distinction. Germany's military and genocidal demands were, in the Hungarian case, intricately connected to one another; and, according to Randolph Braham, this makes Kállay's persistent effort to resist *both* elements of German pressure one of the 'greatest achievements' of his administration (Braham 1989: 596).

As with other Axis countries, discussion of the Jewish Question began with quibbling over the treatment of Hungarian Jews elsewhere in Europe.

In Hungary's case, Döme Sztójay, the ambassador in Berlin, took issue with the fact that Hungarian Jews in German-occupied France had been forced to wear yellow stars. To be sure, Sztójay's objection was not based on the persecution of his Jewish countrymen *per se*⁹⁷; rather, Sztójay's superiors seemed troubled by the fact that Romanian and Italian Jews had not been subjected to similar treatment. The right to issue their *own* anti-Jewish policy was a matter of pride for Hungary and Romania alike, and neither of these countries was willing to give in to the Germans on that front unless the other did first. Even for antisemitic countries, Jews could become symbols of national sovereignty.

In fact, the same was true for the issue of deportation. Following the initial 'feeler' regarding the marking of Hungarian Jews abroad, the Germans presented Sztójay with a number of new 'proposals' concerning the treatment of Hungarian Jews, especially those living in German-occupied areas or within the Reich itself. At each stage, the Hungarians delayed—seeking clarification that Jewish nationals of other Axis countries would be treated similarly or citing concern over 'disturbing rumors' about the treatment of Jews in the East. (Hungary, it will be recalled, had already had to cancel the 'evacuation' of foreign Jews after reports of their fate in Kamenets-Podolsk surfaced in Budapest.)

The treatment of Jews within Hungary itself was fraught with even greater concern. When he was reminded by German officials that Jews constituted a security threat to the Axis, Sztójay simply pointed to the importance of Jews in the Hungarian economy—including the armaments industry—and noted the logistical difficulties of marking or resettling close to a million Hungarian Jews. At one point, Sztójay recommended that Germany take its concerns directly to the Hungarian government, via the German legation in Budapest. But in his dealings with Dietrich von Jagow, Kállay was similarly unhelpful, reminding the German ambassador that the treatment of Jews in Hungary was a purely internal affair. Discussion followed delay for almost a year, but on every front, the Hungarians refused to budge. Even after witnessing the removal of Bulgarian and Romanian Jews from the Reich, Hungarian Jews in Germany remained unharmed.

German policymakers attempted to cut through the red tape at Schloss Klessheim in April 1943. At high-level talks with Admiral Horthy himself, Hitler and Ribbentrop upped the diplomatic ante, complaining of Hungary's lackluster contribution to the war effort and accusing Prime Minister Kállay of defending Hungarian Jewry. To Horthy's question about what should be done with the Jews—'he could not, after all, kill them all'—Ribbentrop

answered that the Jews would have to be annihilated [*vernichtet*] or sent to concentration camps; no other alternative existed (Hilberg 1985: 817). Horthy went on to cite the oft-repeated Hungarian concerns regarding logistical difficulties and the economy. He returned to Budapest, having given the Germans very little in terms of concrete guarantees. Follow-up efforts (directed, once again, through Sztójay) came to nothing. From the German point of view, the meeting at Klessheim was a failure.

In fact, the diplomatic offensive that culminated in the Klessheim conference was ill-timed. In January and February 1943, Hungary and Germany had both seen dramatic losses on the Eastern Front,⁹⁸ forcing the Hungarians to reconsider their contribution to the war and alerting them to the possibility that Germany might lose. In fact, by the end of March of that year, Hungary rejected German demands to deploy more troops to the Balkans and had even requested the withdrawal of Hungarian forces from the Eastern Front. Finally, by the time he met Hitler at Klessheim, Horthy had witnessed aborted deportation initiatives in both Romania (October 1942) and Bulgaria (March 1943). With their insistence on being the ‘most-favored’ of Germany’s eastern partners, the Hungarians were not about to make concessions in a realm of policy where the Romanians and Bulgarians had stood firm.

Indeed, if the Germans had any lingering hope that the Final Solution could be applied under the current regime in Hungary, those hopes were soundly dashed by Kállay himself in May 1943. In a public speech, the increasingly recalcitrant prime minister declared:

In Hungary live more Jews than in all of western Europe.... It is self-explanatory that we must attempt to solve this problem; hence the necessity for temporary measures and an appropriate regulation.... But I cannot bring myself to keep this problem on the agenda so long as the basic prerequisite of the solution, namely the answer to the question where the Jews are to be resettled is not given. Hungary will never deviate from those precepts of humanity which, in the course of its history, it has always maintained in racial and religious questions. (Quoted in Hilberg 1985: 819)

In the ‘shrouded terminology’ of the Axis world, Hilberg remarks, ‘a man could not have said “no” more clearly than Kállay had done in this speech’. In fact, Hilberg adds, ‘the speech marked the close of the diplomatic struggle over the Hungarian Jews’ (1985: 819). For the time being, anyway, the Final Solution to the Jewish Question in Hungary was a non-starter.

Regarding the effort to pull Hungary out of the war, however, Kállay's diplomatic initiative was well under way. In February–March 1943, Kállay dispatched representatives to establish contact with the Western Allies in Istanbul. There, he reached a preliminary agreement that Hungary would switch sides if British or American forces reached the Hungarian border. The Germans, for their part, sensed that something was up. In a series of reports from Hungary in 1943, Edmund Veessenmayer (a German spy in Budapest, sent to keep tabs on the situation in Hungary) warned his superiors of Hungarian duplicity and notified them that Admiral Horthy was under 'nefarious influence' (presumably, Jewish).⁹⁹ Following Italy's surrender in September 1943, Hitler drew up contingency plans for the occupation of Hungary and Romania.¹⁰⁰ Not long thereafter, Göbbels wrote in his diary that 'If the English were to attempt an invasion of the Balkans, Hungary would be the first country to desert us'. By February 1944, Soviet troops were making a push into the Carpathian Mountains and the Germans had received Veessenmayer's report on recommended replacements for Prime Minister Kállay. Hitler instructed the Wehrmacht to draw up final plans for Operation Margarethe I, the 'restricted' occupation of Hungary.¹⁰¹

On March 15, 1944, Hitler summoned Horthy for another meeting at Schloss Klessheim. (The meeting took place on March 18.) This time, however, the mood was decidedly less cordial. Hitler presented Horthy and his staff with evidence of Hungarian duplicity and, in a manner distantly reminiscent of offers made to the small nations of Western Europe, made the Hungarians an offer they could not refuse. Holding out the carrot of a 'limited' occupation and the stick of a reconstituted government headed by the fanatical Arrow Cross, Hitler explained that it was his responsibility to the German people to prevent Hungary from following Italy's 'treacherous' example. He also complained, in this context, of Hungary's lack of initiative regarding the Jewish problem. The Hungarian delegation returned to Hungary that evening with little more than Hitler's verbal assurance (1) that only German troops would be involved in the limited occupation¹⁰² and (2) that the occupation would end as soon as an 'acceptable' government had been formed. German occupation forces followed close behind the Hungarian delegation.¹⁰³

Horthy convened a meeting of the Crown Council upon his return to Budapest on March 19. After hearing the summary of Horthy's meeting with Hitler, Kállay submitted his resignation. Meanwhile, Horthy presented his own justification for staying in office as head of state: By remaining at his

post, Horthy argued, he could maintain the integrity of the Hungarian army and thereby prevent the Germans from imposing an Arrow Cross government that would ‘do [the Germans’] dirty work of murdering Hungarian patriots [and] of exterminating the 800,000 Hungarian Jews and tens of thousands of refugees who sought sanctuary in Hungary’ (quoted in Braham 1981: 371). We know nothing, of course, regarding the sincerity of Horthy’s concern nor of the purity of his intention. He would eventually put a halt to deportations and attempt to extract Hungary from the war, but only after the majority of Hungary’s Jews had been killed.¹⁰⁴

The German Occupation of Hungary

Horthy’s acceptance of the German ultimatum and Kállay’s subsequent resignation paved the way for the appointment of a new Hungarian government and, therewith, for the imposition of new tools for German domination. Dr. Edmund Veesenmayer, the former German spy who now returned as Plenipotentiary of German-occupied Hungary, met with Horthy to discuss the appointment of the next prime minister. The German official proposed Béla Imrédy, the former prime minister (May 1938–February 1939) who had overseen the Hungarian occupation of Felvidék and who was one of the architects of the first two anti-Jewish laws; but Horthy nominated Sztójay, the former ambassador to Germany—a man with German sympathies to be sure, but neither an Imrédy nor a member of the Arrow Cross. (Imrédy himself would have to make do with being the Minister of Economics.) Over the next few days, Sztójay and Veesenmayer ironed out the details of the new Hungarian cabinet, one that would include various individuals from the Arrow Cross Party, but one where the Arrow Cross was not, in fact, the dominant force. On March 22, 1944, Horthy gave his signature to a compromise cabinet, one that reflected German ascendancy but also limited the control of Hungary’s more radical elements.

For its part, Germany set up fairly invasive institutions for occupational administration—institutions that reflected the importance they attached to Hungarian loyalty. The eight German divisions that swept into the country on March 19 were joined by legions of supervisors and advisors. As Plenipotentiary of the Greater German Reich, Veesenmayer was responsible for keeping an eye on Hungarian affairs; and since Hungary remained a formally independent country, the German legation in Budapest constituted the most important institution in his domain.

However, Germany's shadow government in Hungary included so many SS and Police agencies that the Germans appointed a Higher SS and Police Leader, Otto von Winkelmann, to coordinate and direct them. With time, Winkelmann's agencies became even more important than the diplomatic wing of the German mission. The Germans also left a deep mark on Hungarian civil society, replacing two-thirds of the country's mayors (including the Lord Mayor of Budapest), closing hundreds of associations, and placing the national bank and public media under new leadership. In the end, Hungary retained a head of state¹⁰⁵ and the trappings of formal sovereignty, much like a Denmark or a France. In practice, however, its government was German-appointed¹⁰⁶ and the SS became the dominant supervising agency; in these respects, it bore a closer resemblance to Norway or the Netherlands.

Reflecting the importance that the Germans attached to the Jewish Question in Hungary, the imposition of direct rule in that country included explicit reference to the deportation of Hungarian Jewry and resulted in the creation of occupational institutions geared specifically to the accomplishment of that aim. Although Horthy's meeting at Klessheim ended without the signing of a formal agreement, Randolph Braham argues that there is:

absolutely no doubt that the question of the treatment of the Jews of Hungary was also discussed and that Horthy made certain concessions that proved disastrous for Hungarian Jewry.... The evidence ... reveals that Horthy in fact did agree—perhaps reluctantly and unwillingly—to the delivery of a considerable number of 'Jewish workers for German war production purposes'. (Braham 1981: 372; see also Cesarani 1997: 16)

Later, in what he refers to as 'the Hitler–Horthy agreement', Braham states unequivocally that:

Horthy consented at Schloss Klessheim (March 18, 1944) to the delivery of at least 100,000 'Jewish workers' for the German war effort. (1981: 597)

The existence of an explicit agreement regarding the deportation of a country's Jews would not, in itself, be surprising. In France, Bulgaria, and even Romania, major deportation actions were preceded by high-level, formal agreements that determined who would do the arresting, where, and of whom. But in France and Bulgaria alike, local representatives were careful to *limit* the deportations to relatively small subsets of the Jewish

population—to groups of Jews who somehow fell outside the traditional body politic, be it by virtue of citizenship or geography. In Hungary, Admiral Horthy gave his approval to an agreement that was ambiguous and general in scope. In its very ambiguity, Horthy's agreement opened the door for what István Deák was to call 'the smoothest administrative operation in Holocaust history' (1989: 647). Ultimately, Horthy's seemingly 'minor' concession at Klessheim would lead to the destruction of the largest surviving Jewish community in Europe.

To oversee, organize, and implement this operation, the army of German advisors that swept into Hungary included a *Sondereinsatzkommando* which specialized in the liquidation of Jews. Under the personal command of Adolf Eichmann himself, this unit included the top deportation specialists of the RSHA—easily assembled, since their task had been completed everywhere else.¹⁰⁷ In Hungary, the speed and efficiency of Eichmann's unit would demonstrate the accumulated wisdom of years of deportation experience. And with a Hungarian administration staffed by the likes of Döme Sztójay,¹⁰⁸ Andor Jaross,¹⁰⁹ László Endre,¹¹⁰ László Baký,¹¹¹ and László Ferenczy,¹¹² they would find willing and able accomplices for an operation that, despite its short and late chronology, would become the single largest collaborator-negotiated deportation in the history of the Holocaust.

The Reaction of Hungary's Jewish Community

With the arrival of German troops and Kállay's resignation, any German hesitation to implement the Final Solution in the territory of a trusted Axis ally was quickly swept away. Sztójay's government unleashed a flood of anti-Jewish decrees aimed toward the identification, isolation, and concentration of Hungary's Jewish community. Within mere weeks of the regime change, Jews had been forced to wear yellow stars,¹¹³ to give up their radios, and to hand over their businesses. Concentration and ghettoization—methods that had proven their efficiency elsewhere in Eastern Europe—followed suit. The Hungarian Jews were vulnerable; but with a mentality that only hindsight renders absurd, most continued to believe that Hungary would remain an island in the eye of the storm.¹¹⁴

As Eichmann must have known from experience, one of the most important steps in organizing the Final Solution in a given community was the establishment of a Jewish council. Indeed, on the very afternoon of their arrival (March 19), officials from Eichmann's office paid a personal

visit to the Jewish community center in Budapest, hoping to find the community's leaders. Within two days, they had established the Central Council of Hungarian Jews (*Magyar Zsidók Köponti Tanácsa*) under the presidency of Samu Stern. German wish lists for the 'donation' of household goods started pouring in, resulting in the delivery of everything from blankets and typewriters to women's lingerie and pianos.¹¹⁵

Eichmann himself took a great interest in Jewish culture, visiting the Jewish Museum and Library. Then, on March 31, he called a meeting with the new leaders of the Central Council. There, he explained their responsibilities (managing communal finances, drawing up a list of community institutions, transmitting German orders, etc.) and assured them that they would be compensated for the aforementioned deliveries. When asked if the Orthodox Jews (a minority in the community) could have their own newspaper, Eichmann said no—although a compromise was discussed whereby a page or two of the community paper could be devoted to Orthodox news. And then, Eichmann launched into a series of promises meant to assure those assembled that their cooperation would be rewarded. Eichmann explained that violent reprisals had only been visited upon those who took up resistance. ('[O]ne could not proceed otherwise in a war', he explained.) If the community obeyed his commands, however, Eichmann would see to it that Hungarian Jews were protected from all harm and paid equally for their work. He requested that complaints of exploitation, corruption, and mistreatment be reported to him, even if the mistreatment came at the hands of German soldiers! And he promised to 'deal harshly' with the perpetrators.¹¹⁶

Eichmann's performance—'one of the greatest shows of his career'—had the effect of calming the Jewish community. Following his speech, the Jews were 'relieved' and began '[f]alling over each other' as they consolidated final plans for the Council's organization (Hilberg 1985: 824–5). As if to underscore the normality of the situation, conflicting approaches to state authority mapped onto existing cleavages in the Jewish community—with Neolog representatives generally urging strict compliance with government directives and Orthodox or Zionist leaders maintaining a more circumspect stance. But by and large, in the words of Yehuda Bauer, the Hungarian Jews reacted like a 'patient with a terminal illness who refuses to admit his or her condition', refusing to believe what they did not want to hear and refusing to admit that what happened in Poland could also happen in Hungary (1997: 197).

The reaction of Hungary's Jewish community tells us the degree to which attitude, rather than timing alone, played a role in the Final Solution. More than any other Jews in Europe, the Jews in Hungary knew the true meaning of words like 'evacuation' and 'resettlement'.¹¹⁷ But their reaction seems to belie this knowledge, suggesting that the traditional deference to authority that we saw (or did not see) in the Dutch case could apply in a variety of cultural contexts. This realization should not only influence our judgment of the Dutch Jewish Council, which, as we now see, was not uniquely deferential to state authority—if even it ever was. Rather, complacency and the late start of deportations in the Hungarian case should cause us to reconsider the centrality of these factors in explanations of victimization rate variation.

There can be no doubt, of course, that factors such as timing and national attitudes helped determine the 'climate' that prevailed in a given country during the implementation of the Final Solution. But climate describes the likelihood of rain in any given season, not the amount that will fall in any given storm. According to Yehuda Bauer, the attitude of deference and denial in Hungary's Jewish community was itself a reaction to the fact that there was little that could be done. (Complacency thus played a role in the victimization of Hungary's Jews, but it was not, itself, a cause.) In the context of direct German occupation, the Hungarian Jews and the surrounding community were left with no other choice¹¹⁸ but to comply. And this, I shall argue, make both the reaction and the victimization of Hungarian Jewry 'so tragically understandable, almost inevitable' (Bauer 1997: 197).

The Final Solution in Hungary, Phase I (March 1944–October 1944)

With the institutional bases of destruction in place, Eichmann set about planning for the Final Solution. With the full resources of the Hungarian state at his disposal, his work would 'benefit' from the ideal combination of domestic institutions and German oversight.¹¹⁹ As early as April 4, Eichmann and his staff met with key officials from the Hungarian Ministry of the Interior, including Baky, Endre, and Ferenczy. There, they ironed out the details of the 'dejewification' process: Ghettoization and concentration would be organized by the Hungarian police and gendarmerie; information as to the Jews' whereabouts would be supplied by the Jewish Councils by order of the Minister of Supply (so as to substantiate the

ploy that the information was needed for rationing and food distribution); meanwhile, Eichmann and his staff were to remain in the background, supervising, consulting, and arranging for transport from the ghettos to Auschwitz.¹²⁰

The process of concentration and deportation was to make its way around the country through six geographic zones, starting with those that were in the periphery of the country and proceeding to those in the center. So, for example, Zone I consisted primarily of the Transcarpathian Ukraine but also included parts of northeastern Hungary. Ghettoization and deportation would begin there, and proceed inward to Zone VI, Budapest and its environs. The whole process was scheduled to begin on April 16 and reach completion by the end of July.

The plan reflected a definite logic. By starting with the newly acquired territories, the planners of the Final Solution in Hungary insured that the bulk of the initial deportees would be foreign or 'Galician' Jews, those considered 'alien' even by many in Hungary's assimilated Jewish community. Indeed, even many of the Jews in these regions seemed to understand the rationale, something which may have contributed to their further compliance with Nazi directives. Such a view made sense in the logic of the time and place because many considered the foreign Jews to be a Bolshevik vanguard and the Red Army was expected to push into Hungary from the northeastern frontier. Finally, by starting from the outside quietly progressing in, the planners could foster the rumor that the 'Magyar Jews' would indeed be treated differently.¹²¹

Realization of the 'ultimate goal' in each zone was to begin with concentration and ghettoization. On April 16, 1944, the first day of Passover, police and gendarmerie officers fanned out into the smaller villages of Transcarpathian Ukraine and northeastern Hungary. There, in accordance with a plan worked out a few days earlier by the mayors, police chiefs, and gendarmerie commanders of the affected areas, Jews were awakened from their homes and brought (usually by foot) to one of 13 concentration centers in the larger cities of the region.¹²² They were thrown into already-established ghettos and joined by Jews from other parts of the cities. Conditions were deplorable, with Jews packed into apartments (several families to a unit), lodged in community buildings, and sometimes forced to sleep under an open sky. Sanitary facilities were inadequate and disease was rampant. With food provided by the Jewish Council, the affected Jews remained in these conditions for a month or so, until final transport from the ghetto could be arranged. The first transports departed from Zone I

on May 15. The process was repeated in Zones II–V, largely on schedule. By July 7, less than two months after the first deportations, 437,402 Jews had been deported. With the exception of Zone VI (Budapest), Hungary was virtually *judenrein* ('cleansed of Jews').¹²³

Despite the lightning speed of the operation, murmurs of opposition could be heard as early as May 15.¹²⁴ These murmurs grew in intensity after the concentration of Jews in Zone III (June 7), when it became painfully obvious, even to the willfully oblivious, that the action would not stop at the 'military operational zones' of Northern Transylvania and Transcarpathian Ukraine.¹²⁵ By the first week in July, the Papal nuncio had lodged numerous complaints and the Hungarian government was flooded with protests from the King of Sweden, the Turkish, Swiss, and Spanish governments, and a host of influential Hungarians (including Horthy's son). Horthy also heard from President Roosevelt (on June 26), who threatened armed reprisals if the deportations were not put to a halt. (Less than a week later, the President 'reinforced' his message with an unusually heavy air raid on Budapest.¹²⁶) Military events also played a role, with the landing of the Western Allies on Normandy on June 6.¹²⁷ Soon, even Sztójay was nervous about the military turn of events and the ongoing deportations. On July 7, 1944, Horthy issued a dramatic about-face: He cancelled all further deportations and ordered the arrest of Endre and Baky, the two chief Hungarian architects of the deportation program.

The cancellation interrupted a few small rescue attempts that were already under way during the concentration phase. In April 1944, Rudolf Kastner and Joel Brand of the Jewish Council initiated a series of meetings with the Eichmann's *Sondereinsatzkommando*. (It is an indication of who really held sway over the deportation process that Kastner and Brand went to the Germans rather than the Hungarians. In Bulgaria and Romania, we shall remember, Jews went directly to their own governments.) Eventually, a deal was worked out by which 1600 would be allowed to escape (to Palestine via Switzerland) in return for 6.5 million *pengö* (about \$1.6 million). Eichmann considered the deal 'a good bargain'. The rescued Jews eventually made their way to Switzerland.¹²⁸

On May 8, Eichmann approached Brand with yet another offer, this time, an exchange of Jewish lives in return for 10,000 trucks, supplies, and other war material. The supplies would be used on the Eastern Front, and, if Brand could convince them, obtained from the Western Allies. Negotiations dragged on for weeks—it was no easy task to convince the Allies to supply the German war machine.¹²⁹ But deportations continued

at a rate of 10,000–12,000 a day. It was not until the second half of July that the Allies ‘indignant[ly]’ rejected the offer; and by this time, Horthy had already cancelled the deportations.¹³⁰

After the cancellation, the Germans embarked upon a large-scale diplomatic effort aimed at resuming the deportations. By this point, however, the Soviet advance was well under way. On August 23, 1944, Romania dropped out of the German alliance and joined the Soviet side. Taking this as inspiration that the time was right, Horthy dismissed Prime Minister Sztójay and replaced him with a reluctant collaborator, General Géza Lakatos (on August 25). With Lakatos by his side, Horthy restarted his effort to remove his country from the war. For the Jews of Budapest, it looked as if the worst was over.¹³¹

Hungary Under Szálasi: The Final Solution, Phase II (October 1944 to the End)

By the first week of October, Horthy had concluded the secret diplomatic arrangements for Hungary’s withdrawal from the war. The Germans, once again, were well informed of his plans. What followed, according to Randolph Braham, had ‘all the ingredients of a tragicomedy’ (1981: 824). On October 15, Horthy made a surprise announcement that Hungary would pull out of the war. Tipped off in advance, however, the Germans and their Arrow Cross allies had already taken control of strategic locations around the country, including the radio station from which Horthy broadcast his message. In the meantime, a German commando unit¹³² succeeded in kidnapping Miklós Horthy, the regent’s only living son. The Germans then confronted a red-faced Horthy with his own treachery. Under threats that his son would be killed, Horthy—visibly anguished—was forced to appoint a new prime minister, Ferenc Szálasi, the leader of the fascist Arrow Cross. For the second time in seven months, the Germans had punished Horthy—and Hungary—for attempted insubordination. The deportations would be resumed after all.

The German occupation regime under which Szálasi governed differed greatly from the formal independence Hungary enjoyed at the start of the war and even from the period of the occupation since March 1944. Though signed into office by a terrified, threatened, and even ‘totally deranged’ (Hilberg 1985: 856) Horthy, Szálasi was a quisling in the true sense of the word—a political fanatic, a brutal sycophant, and little more than a tool of the Germans who appointed him.¹³³ Horthy’s forced resignation opened

the way for the offices of prime minister and regent to be combined in the person of Szálasi, the new Hungarian *Führer*. Backed up by a new tank division, which had rolled into Budapest to put down the attempted coup, the German occupiers extended their influence even deeper into the Hungarian executive—replacing secretaries of state, government commissioners, and local leaders, and promoting those who remained loyal during Horthy's botched defection. The larger, more independent units in the Hungarian army were disbanded; and the more 'employable' formations were simply attached to existing German divisions. The Germans were prepared to use their new political resources to defend the Fatherland, to extract Hungary's material wealth, and to 'complete' the Final Solution in Europe's largest remaining Jewish community.

The massive deportations of the Sztójay era had claimed about 437,000 Jewish lives. This left about 200,000 Jews still living in Budapest¹³⁴ and almost as many still working in the labor service. Since Horthy called a halt to the deportations, the Jews in Budapest had been living in hellish limbo. In preparation for their deportation, Budapest's Jews had been confined to overcrowded apartment buildings throughout the city,¹³⁵ where conditions grew steadily worse despite the short-lived reforms of the Lakatos regime. Amazingly, many of these Jews still harbored hopes that, as well-connected, assimilated Hungarians, they would be spared the fate of their Jewish countrymen.

But Szálasi's operation would be a race against time. On the day he took office, Soviet troops were less than 100 miles from the capital. The transportation system presented yet another obstacle in that trains were no longer available and Jews would have to be marched out on foot. Nevertheless (on October 18), just three days after taking office, Gábor Vajna (Szálasi's new Interior Minister) and Eichmann reached an agreement whereby 50,000 Jewish workers would be sent to the Reich 'to replace the worn-out Russian and other POW's' (quoted in Braham 1981: 834). In fact, the German order was never filled; on November 21, 1944, Veessenmayer lamented that, although 30,000 Jews had been marched out so far, it would 'hardly be possible to reach the figure of 50,000' (quoted in Hilberg 1985: 858).

Despite his personal hostility to Jews, a few factors weighed on Szálasi to stop the delivery of Jewish workers. Chief among them was the possibility of diplomatic recognition for the Szálasi regime by a few key neutral states (Sweden, Portugal, Switzerland, Spain, and the Vatican). According to István Deák, the 'possibility of diplomatic recognition [dangled] before

the glazed eyes of the Arrow Cross butchers' (1989: 649), and amazingly (given the late stage of the war and the crimes he had already committed), this possibility might have played a hand in making an ideological fanatic like Szálasi think twice.¹³⁶ On November 21, 1944, Szálasi called a halt to all further deliveries of Jewish 'workers'.

By that time, however, things were largely out of Szálasi's control. As Soviet forces advanced toward Budapest and laid siege to the city (in December), Arrow Cross militants (the *Nyilas*) and unaffiliated thugs took advantage of the chaos to plunder and kill at random. Naturally, their efforts disproportionately targeted Budapest's most vulnerable community, the Jews, who mostly lived in clearly marked buildings or in a hastily established ghetto along Budapest's Dohány Street.¹³⁷ By the time the city was liberated in January and February 1945, the reign of terror, Allied bombing, and Soviet shelling had claimed an additional 36,000 Jewish lives, not to mention the lives of thousands of their non-Jewish neighbors.

Reflections on the Hungarian Case

Hungary presents the most vivid illustration of this project's central thesis. As an unoccupied German ally, where informal German hierarchy was minimal, Hungary's Jews were largely spared. But when an attempt to leave the Axis side was discovered and foiled, Hungary was subjected to a more direct form of German hierarchy and the largest surviving Jewish community in Europe paid the awful consequence. Hungary is the clearest example of the 'frightening conclusion' that 'for the Jews in a given country to have had a chance of survival, that country had to be loyal to the Germans'.¹³⁸

The victimization statistics skillfully compiled by Randolph Braham (1981: p. 1298) and presented in Table 4.2 provide dramatic, if somber, confirmation of this proposition. In the period before March 1944, a 'mere' 63,000 (or 7.6%) of Hungary's 825,007 Jews¹³⁹ had been deported,¹⁴⁰ killed,¹⁴¹ or drafted into the labor service.¹⁴² If we subtract these victims from the total, however, and start 'anew' for the post-occupation period, we reveal that 618,007 (or 81.1%) of the 762,007 Jews who remained in Hungary in March 1944 were deported or killed the upheavals that followed. Taken as a whole, **681,007 (82.5%) of Hungary's 825,007 Jews fell victim to the Holocaust.**¹⁴³

Broken down by region (Table 4.3), the victimization statistics for Hungary suggest another interesting fact: Victimization rates were not

Table 4.2 Victimization rates in Hungary by occupation period

| | <i>Jewish population</i> | <i>Victims (%)</i> |
|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Pre-March 1944 | 825,007 | 63,000 (7.6) |
| Post-March 1944 | 762,007 | 618,007 (81.1) |
| Total | 825,007 | 681,007 (82.5) |

Table 4.3 Victimization rates in Hungary by region

| | <i>Jewish population</i> | <i>Victims (%)</i> |
|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| New territories | 334,386 | 323,386 (96.7) |
| Trianon provinces | 243,818 | 236,818 (97.1) |
| Budapest | 246,803 | 120,803 (48.9) |
| Total | 825,007 | 681,007 (82.5) |

necessarily higher in newly acquired territories. In Romania and Bulgaria, of course, we did observe higher victimization rates in newly acquired territories. But the Hungarian case suggests that the discrepancy was not due to structural or cultural factors (that Jews in these regions could not find adequate hiding places, that they were less assimilated, or that they were more derided by the local population), but rather to institutional factors, matters of governmental policy. The Hungarian case shows that governments could carry out the Final Solution with near-total efficiency *when and where they decided it was applicable*. Jews in the occupied regions of Bulgaria and Romania were not victimized at a higher rate, it would seem, because they were disenfranchised, foreign or poor, but rather because their governments *decided* that they would be the first to go. Jews in the provinces of Trianon Hungary itself found no safer haven by virtue of their citizenship, history, or proximity to Budapest; they were victimized with equal or greater intensity as Jews in newly acquired territories because their government, under great German pressure, was unable or unwilling to protect them. We have every reason to believe that, had deportations not been cancelled or had the war continued longer, the Jews of Budapest would have suffered with equal intensity as Jews around the continent. Ultimately, Budapest's Jews were saved by Horthy's cancellation of the deportations and by the end of the war, not by their levels of assimilation, sophistication, or connectedness to the Hungarian elite.

The quick and efficient implementation of the Final Solution in Hungary allows us to reconsider the ways in which timing does or does not matter to

victimization rates. Clearly, the late start of the deportation effort in that country did not hinder the program's efficiency. To the contrary, there is reason to believe that Hungary's Jews suffered *more* because, by the time the Final Solution was applied to their country, German policymakers had acquired years of experience at the task. Eichmann had time, attention, and resources that could be devoted specifically to the Hungarian case because his task had been completed everywhere else. Timing mattered in the Hungarian case, not because deportations got a late start and not because people knew more about what the Final Solution entailed, but because military developments *interrupted* what would have been even more complete devastation.

The Hungarian case also allows us to test the theory of 'Nazi determination', the idea that victimization rates would be higher where Nazi Germany attached greater importance to the Final Solution. Hungary was one of the few countries where Germany saw a deep connection between the war and the Final Solution. German policymakers saw Hungarian Jewry as a *military* enemy, rather than merely an ideological or racial one. And yet, despite the danger they may have posed in the eyes of German antisemites, Hungary's Jews *survived* for most of the war. The Nazi desire to destroy a country's Jews could only proceed unabated to the extent that that desire motivated German policymakers to alter the level of hierarchy. The Germans did not succeed in eliminating Hungarian Jewry because they saw Hungarian Jews as a greater threat, *per se*, but because the perception of such a threat (Jewish or otherwise) led them to subject that country to a more direct form of military occupation.

CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER FOUR

The cases considered in this chapter demonstrate the importance of political institutions and of *realpolitik* in the perpetration of the Holocaust. Long dismissed as incomprehensible, unspeakable, and impervious to rational analysis, the implementation of the Final Solution—if not the *decision* to implement such a policy in the first place—is surprisingly consistent, ordinary, and even predictable across a wide variety of cases. Scholars of the Holocaust, and even the few political scientists who address this case, have long emphasized the cultural, ideological, and demographic factors that made the Final Solution possible.¹⁴⁴ That work is important, and has provided us with the context necessary for comprehending the historical

period in which these events took place. But in focusing on such issues, we have sometimes overlooked the importance of political and international institutions in the implementation of social policy. Politics is ‘top-down’ as well as ‘bottom-up’. Institutions and laws matter every bit as much as the ideology and sentiment that inform them.

The three cases considered in this section show us that governments could implement policies effectively *if and when* they devoted resources to the task. Bulgaria and Romania could implement the Final Solution in *their* occupied territories every bit as efficiently as Germany could in its. But when Germany attempted to extend the Final Solution to places where domestic institutions *also* existed, the implementation of that policy was largely limited. Ultimately, the policy was only applied with full force in those areas where Nazi interests and the interests of local policymakers overlapped. Grass-roots opposition to German policy—along with tacit support for it—existed everywhere in the German sphere of influence. But popular opposition—even if only that of a vocal minority—could only find full expression in a country where domestic political institutions existed to channel them.

This chapter also demonstrates the importance—and poverty—of official labels for understanding international institutions. To the end, all three countries in this chapter remained formally independent of Nazi Germany. But informal hierarchy in the region existed long before the war began for any of its participants. Countries have always turned to local hegemonies for protection and support in the international realm; and they have always *paid* hegemonies for that support by allowing the hegemon to implement domestic policy or, in what amounts to a similar thing, by implementing domestic policy *on behalf* of their hegemonic sponsor. Jewish policy during the Holocaust was, in this sense, just another bargaining piece in international negotiation. But because local governments could surrender other political commodities more cheaply than they could their own citizens, the bargains that were struck usually resulted in the provision of military and economic goods, and not of genocidal ones. So long as deporting Jews was (financially or politically) costly, and so long as local governments wanted things like territory and economic prosperity more, local leaders would ‘talk loudly’ about solving the ‘Jewish problem’, but they would devote their political capital to solving other political problems first. The principle benefit of alliance is that it gave local leaders the political capital necessary to resist German pressure on political fronts that were more sensitive than the military front itself.

NOTES

1. Peter Swirski, *American Utopia and Social Engineering in Literature, Social Thought, and Political History* (Routledge, 2011): p. 118.
2. To be sure, *some* anti-Jewish legislation preceded Germany's renewed appearance as a regional hegemon; but German hegemony exacerbated the issue and emboldened many Eastern European countries to pass, preserve, and strengthen such policies. Thus, anti-Jewish legislation passed in Hungary in 1920 was allowed to lapse a few years later; another such law, passed in 1938, constituted the first in a series that grew ever more severe as German diplomatic and military victories mounted. It should be noted that, while most anti-Jewish legislation (in Eastern Europe as in France) was intended to *please* the Germans, it was not passed as a result of direct German pressure. See also Ettinger (1974: 12) and Eugen Weber (1980: 45).
3. In new and weak countries, where international diplomacy had such important repercussions for domestic outcomes, anti-Jewish legislation was a cheap and effective signal of pro-German sympathy. Thus, in his aptly-titled 'Hungarian Foreign Policy During the Inter-War Period, with Special Reference to the Jewish Question', C.A. Macartney argues that 'practically all Hungarian Governments ... *paid for* ... economic help, political assurances and military cooperation [with] anti-Jewish measures' (1974: 133, my emphasis). Vago and Mosse add that some Eastern European nations 'entered into competition for Germany's favor', seeking 'favorable' revision of the Treaty of Versailles in a process that made local Jews 'expendable' (1974: xiv). See also Jelinek (1989: 293).
4. Hitchens: 269; Rothschild: 312; Janos: 263; Marshall Miller: 23ff; Janos: 290.
5. Vago and Mosse 1974: xiii–xiv; Ettinger 1974: 1; and Seton-Watson 1989: 420, *passim*.
6. In this vein, István Deák tells us that the 'jingoistic Budapest Jewish press was a prominent advocate of the Hungarian cause against the Habsburgs and the Slavs' (1989: 644; see also Vago 1974: 31–32).
7. Braham 1997: 33. See also Deák 2001b: 51.
8. Deák 1989: 644. See also Hugh Seton-Watson 1989: 424–5.
9. Thus, by focusing on countries like Hungary and Romania rather than Poland and the Baltic States, I am adhering to a long tradition

in comparative political science of testing a theory by examining its least likely case (see Lijphart 1971: 692n62). If evidence for a theory can be found among the cases where that theory is *least likely* to be true, the reasoning goes, the theory is only more likely to explain outcomes among the complement of applicable cases.

10. Nazi historians were not alone in this. Bohemia and Moravia had been part of the 'First Reich', the Holy Roman Empire.
11. Differential victimization rates within Czechoslovakia itself would make for fascinating future research. At 97%, the victimization rate of the Protectorate (which was virtually annexed by Germany) was significantly higher than in Slovakia (a puppet state with at least nominal independence). (I hereby express my gratitude to Ben Frommer who, as this book went to press, directed my attention to very precise victimization statistics for Czechoslovakia.).
12. His intention was to secure the German flank for operations in Greece, where Italian forces were mired in a war they seemed unable to win. According to Barbara Jelavich, it 'appeared clear that either the pact had to be signed or [Yugoslavia] would face a war that it could not win' (p. 236). See also Stavrianos: 755.
13. In Croatia, German forces characterized their operation as an action aimed at the liberation of Croatia from Serb domination.
14. It is fairly common practice to refer to Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary as German 'satellites'. However, the term leads to confusion, because it leaves us with no way to distinguish these countries from Slovakia and Croatia, which are also referred to as 'satellites' in the extant literature. The terminology is made no clearer by the relative paucity of comparative literature, to which Asher Cohen and Béla Vágó (two scholars concerned with making just such a distinction) are welcome exceptions. But the confusion is as old as the history itself, as the Nazis, too, had a tendency to 'confuse' nominal sovereignty with real independence.
15. In Bulgaria, King Boris III was a constitutional monarch who slowly took the reins of real power in the country; by the time the war began, he was the head of a 'royal dictatorship' (Chary: 4). Romania's King Carol II assumed dictatorial power in February 1938, only to be ousted by General Ion Antonescu in September 1940, who quickly consolidated his grip on the country, abolishing parliament and appointing a fascist cabinet of military officials and members of

the Iron Guard. (Carol's young son, Michael I, became the new king, but never acquired much more than his title.) Antonescu's rival counterpart in Hungary was the regent, Admiral Miklós Horthy; Horthy shared power with a series of prime ministers (appointed by Horthy himself) who varied from very friendly to indifferent in their views toward Nazi Germany.

16. In fact, Hungarian officials, trying to impress the Germans, were later to boast that theirs was the first country to implement anti-Jewish legislation, and that they did so as early as 1920.
17. Marshall Miller suggests that the trade in arms is as political as it is economic, since buying a country's weapons entails *future* dependence (e.g., for the replacement of those weapons, etc.) (p. 13).
18. Stavrianos: 704. On the relationship between economic integration and international hierarchy, see Lake 2009. For the applicability of this relationship to the current cases, see Hitchens: 7; Janos: 301; and Rothschild: 312.
19. See Jelavich: 235; Hilberg 1985: 759; Rothschild: 317.
20. Indeed, my conclusions here are anticipated by a number of scholars who write about Germany's southeastern allies: For example, Béla Vágó argues that 'in Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria the handling of the Jewish problem seismographically registered the degree of their dependence on Nazi Germany' (1989: 234). In his pathbreaking study of the survival of Bulgarian Jewry, Fredrick Chary offers the general conclusion that the 'Bulgarian Jews, like a great many Rumanian and Italian Jews, and all of the Finnish Jews, were saved because those countries were *allied* to the Reich rather than defeated by it' (194 [my emphasis]). And Asher Cohen notes that 'Germany's ability to implement the policy of extermination ... was contingent upon the limits of its rule' (1989: 63–4).
21. Groueff: ix; Todorov: 4; Marshall Miller: 5; Ben-Yakov: 271; Oren: 401; Arendt 1963: 185.
22. In other words, nationalist factions looked to Italy and Germany; liberals, to Great Britain and France; and leftists, to the Soviet Union. Marshall Miller observes that the situation was similar to that in Jeffersonian America, where opposing attitudes toward Britain and France found deep resonance in the country's *domestic* political factions (p. 6; also see Chary: 10).
23. Chary explains that Boris' pick of Filov had as much to do with Boris' ability to control the 'colorless' professor of German Studies than with the latter's Germanophilia (p. 18).

24. Although it had not yet signed the Tripartite Pact, the Bulgarian government later (December 1940) permitted the entrance of 'small numbers of German troops; their presence, however, was publicly denied' (Jelavich: 234).
25. The Jews in Macedonia had already been subjected to Yugoslav anti-Jewish legislation dating back to 1939. To Greek Jews in Thrace, however, the Bulgarian legislation was entirely new.
26. Married women were permitted to take their husbands' (non-Jewish) citizenship.
27. It was virtually non-existent in 'Old Bulgaria' until the summer of 1944.
28. Beckerle succeeded the career diplomat Herbert Freiherr von Richthofen in the spring of 1941, and served until the end of the war.
29. For more on Jewish life in prewar Bulgaria, see Todorov: 4; Oren: 396–8; Deák 2001b: 51; Hilberg 1985: 744, 748; Chary: 28–9; WJC: 112–3.
30. Jewish life in the occupied territories was almost completely decimated, although not a single Jew was deported from Bulgaria itself.
31. Since a legacy of the Ottoman millet system had preserved the status of Jews as a distinct corporation, it was quite normal that the Bulgarian administration would have a special department for such matters.
32. Hannah Arendt observes that the loophole resulted in 'an epidemic of conversions' (1963: 186).
33. Chary: 37. Stephane Groueff argues that the king 'accepted the new legislation as the lesser of two evils, as the only possible way to gain time with the Nazis and prevent the worst' (p. 319).
34. Until September 1942, only Jews in forced labor had been required to wear the Jewish star.
35. All emphasis from the Schellenberg document (NG-5351) is in the original.
36. It is interesting and, in fact, crucial to note that German officials recognized the electricity shortage as a pretext. Throughout this study, I have argued that German officials were willing to 'look the other way' when otherwise cooperative collaborators shirked in their duties regarding the Final Solution. Schellenberg's description of the situation shows that Germany was not entirely 'duped' by the Bulgarians, but aware of their procrastination and willing to let it proceed.
37. To be exact, Article 1 of the Agreement states: 'After confirmation by the Council of Ministers, ~~in the new Bulgarian lands Thrace and Macedonia~~ will be prepared 20,000 Jews—without regard to age

and sex—for deportation.’ (~~Strikethrough~~ made by hand on the original document.)

38. Belev instructed his staff to deport ‘all Jews of Thrace and Macedonia and a definite number of Jews from the old boundaries, in all 20,000 people, by the end of the month of May 1943 at the latest, according to the agreement with Germany’. In response, the KEV developed a plan calling for the deportation of 6000 Jews from Thrace, 8000 from Macedonia and Pirot, and 6000 from the old territorial boundaries (see Chary: 80).
39. The German version is evidently not to be found.
40. Chary (pp. 82–4) offers fascinating hypotheses as to source of the discrepancy, but notes that any conclusions must be considered speculative.
41. German and Bulgarian officials, of course, were quick to attribute such attitudes to Thracian Greeks; however, there is no evidence that local Slavs were any less sympathetic to their Jewish neighbors.
42. Bulgarian citizenship had been extended to Greeks and Slavs in the occupied territories, but not to Jews.
43. A total of 4075 of the 4273 Jews living in Thrace were eventually deported, but the number of Jews initially arrested is unavailable. In Macedonia, 7215 of 7381 Jews (97.8%) were arrested, with 7160 eventually deported. There were some 200 Jews living in Pirot prior to the operation, 186 of them non-Bulgarians; 158 were deported. Thus, the deportation rate from Bulgarian-occupied territories was 96.2%; the victimization rate for the area would be at least that, since it would also include the small number of Jews who died in captivity before deportation (see Chary: 101–128, especially p. 127).
44. In selecting 8400 Jews, Belev exceeded the 6000 initially promised from Old Bulgaria. However, since there were only about 11,500 Jews in Macedonia and Thrace (as opposed to the 14,000 that both he and Dannecker discussed), Belev might ‘simply’ have been hoping to make up for the anticipated shortfall.
45. According to Chary, the MPs threatened to raise the matter in the Subranie, causing ‘at least a public scandal and perhaps even a government crisis’ (95). Avraham Ben-Yaakov notes that a number of the more nationalist MPs threatened the minister with “‘personal sanctions” (that is, assassination) if he did not call off the deportation’ (269; see also Oren: 407).

46. The list also included Aleksandar Tsankov, a member of the right-wing opposition and the darling of Berlin, although Tsankov may have been motivated more by his desire to embarrass the government than by his sympathy for Bulgarian Jews (Chary: 97).
47. Sofia's chief rabbi, Asher Hananel, was placed under house arrest (and not taken to Samovit or expelled) because he was a decorated war hero. While in detention, however, Hananel was subjected to a severe scolding by Belev himself, who said: 'You should be thankful that you have support, powerful support behind you; if this were not so, I would lock you and your entire spiritual community up this evening and send you to Germany, not Poland' (quoted in Chary: 151).
48. A total of 19,153 Bulgarian Jews were expelled from Sofia in May 1943 (Ben-Yaakov: 269); this represented about 37% of the Jews in Old Bulgaria (not including Dobrudzha). In Denmark, by contrast, nearly *all* of the Jews were forced to leave their homes; however, they were never subjected to the same level of anti-Jewish legislation and, of course, their government played a mostly indirect role in their persecution.
49. Peshev's wartime activities did spare him the death penalty; he was, nonetheless, sentenced to 15 years of hard labor and later died in poverty. Petrov was executed; his pro-Jewish activities were of little interest to Soviet prosecutors.
50. Although, it should be noted that, in the French case, only the most extreme Vichy apologists end up in the Intentionalist camp.
51. In the German case, the debate centers around whether or not, or who or when or to what extent, anyone in Germany's chain of command *ordered* the Final Solution, as opposed to whether or not Germany's collaborators conspired to sabotage it.
52. Generally speaking, I have taken to referring to these territories collectively as 'Old Romania'. It refers to the area under Romanian control immediately preceding the German invasion of the Soviet Union. It should be noted, however, that the word 'Old' begs the question as to whether it refers to the boundaries of Romania before the territorial losses of 1940 or before the territorial gains of 1918.
53. After joining the German attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941, Romania would win back Bukovina and Bessarabia, and also come to occupy the new territory of Transnistria, a swath of the Soviet Ukraine between the Dniester and Bug rivers that included Odessa. Romania would not recover Northern Transylvania until it switched

to the Soviet side in October 1944. (The switch occurred in August, when King Michael sponsored a coup against Antonescu's regime and declared war on his former ally, but Romanian forces did not reoccupy Transylvania until two months later.)

54. The Iron Guard had been outlawed, along with other political parties, in 1938, and Carol ordered the execution of its leaders. Carol's treatment of the Iron Guard infuriated Hitler and might have contributed to Germany's anti-Romanian position in the territorial revisions of 1940.
55. Fischer-Galati 1974: 167–70; Ancel 1990b: 1294.
56. Lavi 1974: 180–6.
57. Ancel 1989 (p. 337). This form of direct access is unprecedented for a formally independent country. It means that the Germans were working directly with Romania's Commissar for Jewish Affairs. In Bulgaria, the Germans tended to work *through* Gabrovski, the Minister of the Interior, who in turn passed on orders to Belev (who was, in any case, increasingly ignored).
58. Hungarian troops joined the operation shortly thereafter.
59. Shechtman (pp. 375–6). The precise number of Jews in the area is difficult to establish (see endnote, below). According to several sources, the area had about 300,000 Jews at the start of hostilities (see Yahil 1990a: 344; Ancel 1990c: 1473), but as many as 60–70% may have escaped during the Soviet withdrawal and the prolonged siege of Odessa. Many thousands must have also been killed by the German and Romanian armies or by Einsatzgruppe D during the initial phase of the occupation (see Ancel 1990c: 1473, 1988: *passim*), and thousands more might have been deported by the Soviets themselves in the days before the Axis invasion (Ancel 1990a: 262).
60. Ancel observes: 'The Romanian and German soldiers did not stop to kill every Jew they encountered. Many of the first troops to arrive did not consider the shooting of Jews as part of their job' (1988: 217).
61. It should be noted that in these areas, which had always remained a part of Romania, Romanian troops operated alone, without the help of their Axis partners.
62. In response to Filderman's protest, Antonescu did grant a relatively small number of exemptions, about 20,000 in all. The competition for these exemptions was intense and very corrupt. But the fact that Antonescu received—and replied to—Filderman's petition in the

first place is quite interesting. Of course, one would hardly go so far as to say that the marshal's reply was comforting; but it does go some way toward illustrating the position of Jews in an independent country, however antisemitic it may have been. In countries without a collaborating government (e.g., the Netherlands), Jews could only appeal to their fellow citizens, who were nearly as powerless as they were.

63. Before Transnistria had been handed over to the Romanians, a German unit there attempted to drive 12,000–15,000 Jews *into* Bessarabia, which had just been recovered by Romania. It is not clear if these Jews were Transnistrian natives, or if they had first been expelled *from* Bessarabia by advancing Romanian forces. One German Einsatzgruppe surmised that the Romanians had been 'playing a deliberate game of driving Jews back and forth' across the Dniester in the hopes of getting rid of the Jews by mere attrition (Hilberg 1985: 769; see also Ancel 1990d: 208). In February 1942, the German Ministry for the Eastern Occupied Territories reported that the Romanians had driven 10,000 Jews from Transnistria into German-occupied Ukraine; the Germans were 'horrified' (Arendt 1963: 192; see also Hilberg 1985: 777) and shipped the Jews back to Transnistria.
64. The deportation area included Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina (both of which had been reconquered from the Soviet Union in June 1941) and *also* Southern Bukovina (which had remained in Romanian hands throughout the Soviet occupation) and the region of Dorohoi (which had been incorporated into Bukovina in 1938).
65. These figures are taken from the chart in Hilberg (1985: 771). The precise numbers vary considerably according to the source (see also Shechtman 384–387).
66. Shechtman (376) and Ioanid (177) suggest that 100,000–120,000 Jews remained after the Soviet retreat.
67. From Yahil (1990a: 344), one can calculate at least 110,000 victims (35,000 executed in retaliatory measures and another 75,000 arrested and detained in concentration camps). Fisher notes that 130,000 '[o]f the *local* Jewish population [in Transnistria] ... died the death of martyrs' (136; but see also 125). Hilberg states that 'the Romanians ... killed around 150,000 *indigenous* Jews in the Odessa area and Golta' (1985: 759 [my emphasis]), without any mention of how many the *Germans* killed nor of how many were

killed *outside* these areas. Jean Ancel states that a 'total of 185,000 Ukrainian Jews were murdered by Romanian and German army units' (1990c: 1475).

68. Fisher says that '[o]f those deported to Transnistria ... [a] total of 87,757 Rumanian Jews perished, of whom the Germans destroyed 18,800. This means, then, that the Rumanians destroyed 68,957 of their own Jewish countrymen' (136).
69. Hilberg (1985: 781). In mid-1941, Romania's anti-Jewish legislation had been extended to the recaptured territories of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina. The areas were 'cleansed' of Jews just a few months later.
70. That is to say, the Romanians watered down the German plan to such a degree during its implementation that it ended up *looking* like the plan they (the Romanians) had originally envisaged.
71. One of these was Iuliu Maniu, leader of the National Peasants' Party and an outspoken antisemite.
72. Hilberg suggests that Lecca changed his mind regarding deportations after a visit to Berlin, where German officials apparently gave him the cold shoulder (1985: 785–6).
73. Indeed, Romania was the only Axis state where such high officials as a cabinet minister and the mayor of the capital city had to be dismissed for the illegal use of seized Jewish property (Hilberg 1985: 759–60).
74. Asher Cohen 1989: 63–64n. Since Cohen provides a *death* rate ('120,000 out of 450,000 [Romanian Jews] were *murdered* [my emphasis]') rather than a victimization rate, my suspicion is that his statistic is lower because he counts the 60,000 Jews who survived after being deported to Transnistria as non-victims. Since this is a study of the 'efficiency' with which the Final Solution was carried out, however, I count *all* deportees as victims, even if they survived the war. See also Ancel 1990b: 1296–7; Landau; and Dawidowicz: 403.
75. See Hilberg (1985: 771) and Fein (54). The 'demographic deficit' calculation method compares the Jewish population of a given region before the Final Solution with the surviving population *afterwards*. In general, this method derives higher victimization rates, since it 'counts' natural deaths, escapees, and expelled persons as victims. For most of the other countries in this project, I have used a more precise method of calculation—which adds the number of deportees to the number of deaths inside the country and

compares that number with an original population measure. Due to the spontaneity and lack of organization for the Final Solution in Romania, however, such statistics are nearly impossible to establish.

76. Actually, there would be some justification in using the death rate in the Romanian case, since the Romanian government was, in fact, partially responsible for *saving* (and repatriating) deported Jews toward the end of the war.
77. This depends upon whether we consider areas like Southern Transylvania to be part of the Romanian 'home territory'.
78. For more on the relative similarity of the Romanian and Bulgarian cases, see my own 'The Final Solution in Bulgaria and Romania: A Comparative Perspective' in *East European Politics and Societies*, Vol. 22: No. 2 (Spring 2008): pp. 203–248.
79. One difference, of course, is that in the Romanian case, the Romanian outdid the Germans in their enthusiasm for the operation; in France, the Germans outdid the French.
80. The interest was very likely shared by Hungary's remaining Jews, who were well connected politically and who, since World War I, found themselves to be an isolated minority, whereas they had previously constituted one ethnic group among many.
81. Sipos notes that Germany maintained a 'liaison staff' of about 2000 officers (1996: 243n).
82. Transcarpathian Ukraine is sometimes called 'Ruthenia'. In Hungarian, the territory is also known as 'Kárpátalja'.
83. Hungary acquired Felvidék in November 1938; it signed the Anti-Comintern Pact in January 1939. In March 1939, Hungary reacquired Transcarpathian Ukraine; in November of that year, Hungary signed the Tripartite Pact, formally becoming an Axis power. Hungary acquired Northern Transylvania in August 1940 and Bačka in April 1941; by that time, it had also become an active participant in the Axis war against Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union.
84. See Arendt (1963: 194). Janos shares this assessment of the 'ambiguous' nature of Hungarian democracy (305–6).
85. The Romanian Sima, we might remember, had been safely stowed away in Germany after his attempted coup against Antonescu in January 1941.
86. For trade dependence as an indicator of political hierarchy, see Lake (2009: 56–7).

87. Berend: 36. See also Braham 1981: 27; Braham 1989: 600; Ranki: 696; and Sipos 1996: 254.
88. In 1940, Horthy himself worried that replacing Jews in the Hungarian economy too quickly would leave the country bankrupt. He added that, out of self-interest, Jews were more loyal to their 'adopted country' than were the extreme right-wing elements, whose 'muddled convictions', he feared, would lead them to deliver Hungary to the Germans (Hilberg 1985: 803). In December 1942, Hungarian ambassador Sztójay in Berlin reminded the German Foreign Office that the elimination or resettlement of Hungary's 800,000 Jews, apart from being practically unfeasible, would cause great harm to the Hungarian economy (Braham 1989: 600). See also Berend: 32.
89. For more on prewar Jewish life in Hungary and its acquired territories, see Deák 2001a: 311 and 1989: 644; Seton-Watson 1989: 424–5; Vago 1974: 31–2; Braham 1997: 33; Hilberg 1985: 827; Jelinek 1990: 1472; and Ancel 1990c: 1476.
90. A Numerus Clausus Act in 1920 restricted the enrollment of Jews in universities to 6%, roughly their proportion of the total Hungarian population. This law was allowed to expire a few years later.
91. The 254-member Hungarian upper house included representatives of Hungarian royalty, various aristocratic estates, representatives of Regent Horthy and the Church, and representatives of the Jewish community. After the dissolution of Jewish *communal* representation, 11 Jews (8 of them baptized) continued to sit in the chamber as representatives of other corporations. Some of these members continued to sit in the upper house even after 1941, 'for the Hungarians were slow in the dismissal process' (Hilberg 1985: 801).
92. Precise numbers are 'all but impossible to determine' (Braham 1981: 218n22).
93. It should be noted that these 700 people were not killed as Jews per se, but rather as insurgents in a rebellious territory.
94. David Cesarani suggests that the Bárdossy government actually fell as a result of the massacre (1997: 13); Braham suggests that the change in government had more to do with other factors, namely Horthy's disapproval of Bárdossy's increasingly pro-German stance (1981: 215).
95. Braham (1981: 212) mentions this possibility. He makes no mention, however, of Kállay's desire to improve relations with the country's

- Jews*. Given his elite background, his patriotism, and his interest in 'defen[ding] Hungary's antiquated social order' (Braham 1981: 223), it seems reasonable to believe that Kállay would have also been interested in serving his Jewish constituency.
96. At least eight of the defendants received heavy sentences, ranging from 10 to 15 years in prison. However, while on temporary parole (in accordance with the Hungarian Military Code), the four leading convicts were able to flee the country and take refuge in Vienna, Germany. They returned to Hungary shortly after the German occupation in March 1944, where their convictions were overturned and their military ranks restored. Fekethalmy-Czeydner, the leading defendant, later rose to prominence, becoming Deputy Minister of Defense after Szálasi's coup in October 1944. He used his position to settle accounts with his former accusers, leading to the execution of at least one of them.
 97. In fact, Sztójay noted to his German interlocutors that he did not actually agree with the protest, but that he was merely a messenger of his government's objection.
 98. The Hungarian defeat at Voronezh on January 13 resulted in the loss of 150,000–200,000 Hungarian lives.
 99. Braham (1989: 606). Among other things, Veessenmayer believed that Hungary had sheltered its Jews based on the belief that the presence of Jews in the country would deter Allied bombing (see Braham 1989: 606).
 100. It certainly did not help relations with Germany that Kállay gave diplomatic recognition to the 'treacherous' Badoglio government in Italy soon after Mussolini's ouster.
 101. A contingency plan for the *total* occupation of Hungary, Operation Margarethe II, was prepared at the same time (Braham 1981: 383n13); Horthy's submission to Hitler's demands at the second Klessheim meeting (see below) led the Germans to implement the more limited occupation.
 102. The Hungarian leadership feared Romanian or Slovak participation in the occupation.
 103. German forces entered Hungary just 90 minutes after the train carrying Horthy and his entourage departed the station in Salzburg (Braham 1981: 396).
 104. There is some debate as to Horthy's continued role in Hungarian politics after the German occupation. According to various scholars

- (Ranki 697; Deák 1989: 647), Horthy withdrew from public affairs. Peter Sipos, on the other hand, argues that Horthy ‘exercised his full powers as head of state’, appearing before the public on several occasions and exercising his right of preliminary approval of the more important decrees and laws (Sipos 1996: 251–2). Significantly, Horthy relinquished that right when it came to the specific issue area of Jewish affairs, giving his cabinet ‘complete freedom’ when it came to the regulation of Hungarian Jewry. Nonetheless, it seems clear that in Jewish matters and in other areas of domestic policy, Horthy’s continued presence as head of state ‘legitimated’ the occupation, making it acceptable to the Hungarian masses (Braham 1981: 372–3, 376, 433).
105. Horthy was later warned that he would lose his crown for displaying any sign of treachery. In July 1944, Hitler threatened that ‘if any member of the palace clique should once more in any manner try to enter the political life of Hungary and play a part in it, the *Führer*, through the *Sicherheitsdienst*, will arrest that person and have that person executed within 24 hours’ (Sipos 1996: 252). Fortunately for Horthy and his only living son, Hitler would break that promise in the coming October, when Horthy was to do just that.
 106. See Deák: The new government was ‘appointed by Horthy but selected by the Germans’ (1989: 646–7).
 107. Among others, the staff included Theodor Dannecker, whom we have already met in France and Bulgaria.
 108. Sztójay was ‘a notorious Jew-hater and pro-Nazi’ (Cesarani 1997: 16).
 109. Jaross was Minister of the Interior. His political views were similar to Imrédy’s, the Germans’ first choice for prime minister.
 110. Endre was a state secretary working under Jaross. According to the Hannah Arendt, he had ‘an antisemitism that even Horthy had called “insane”’ (1963: 199).
 111. Baky had been one of ‘the most outspokenly anti-Semitic members of the Hungarian officers’ corps’. Along with Endre, he was to become ‘one of those mose [*sic*] clearly responsible for the tragedy of Hungarian Jewry’ (Braham 1981: 403).
 112. Ferenczy was the *gendarmierie* officer in charge of deportations. He was of Swabian background, and his allegiance to the Germans was ‘unswerving’ (Braham 1981: 411). Ferenczy had served in Košice (in Felvidék) during the round-up and deportation of ‘alien’ Jews in August 1941.

113. The church reacted furiously to this decree, especially upon the realization that it would result in thousands of Christians—including clergymen—wearing the symbol. Cardinal Serédi, Prince Primate of Hungary, secured an exemption from Sztójay just days before the ordinance was to go into effect. In fact, the concession he secured was fairly broad, and included exemptions for Christians, foreign Jews, war veterans, and the families of Jewish Hungarian soldiers who died in World War II.
114. According to Randolph Braham, the ‘masses of Hungarian Jewry had no idea ... of the mass murders committed in the German concentration camps’. Some must have discounted rumors about the camps as anti-Nazi propaganda; and still others must have lived in denial that events like those in Eastern Europe could be repeated in Hungary, where the destiny of Jews and Christians had been intertwined for so long. Finally, the continued presence of Horthy as head of state must have convinced some Jews that they would be protected, as they had been for so long (Braham 1981: 424–5, 433). Indeed, with the military situation as it was and with the Germans on the verge of defeat, it is difficult, even for the historian, to comprehend why the Germans would have initiated such a massive program at so late a stage in the war.
115. Hilberg (1985: 824). The literature provides no explanation as to why they needed blankets.
116. The minutes of the meeting are reproduced in Braham (1981: pp. 437–40).
117. Ironically, the ‘worsening news from Poland [could have been] greeted as additional proof of the myth that ... Horthy would continue to safeguard “his” Jews’ (Asher Cohen 1997: 126).
118. Braham (1981: 433) and Deák (1989: 647–8) both observe that the Jewish Council’s collective resignation or suicide might have exposed Eichmann’s ruse for what it was and awakened the Jews to the reality of the situation. But the availability of such ‘choices’ illustrates the desperation of the situation.
119. According to Peter Sipos, ‘Eichmann coordinated the deportation of Hungarian Jewry with some 200 men’ (1996: 255).
120. See Hilberg 1985: 832–3 and Braham 1981: 528–3.
121. As it turns out, Jews in the Hungarian ‘home’ territory did have the greatest chance of survival (and almost 50% of the Jews within Hungary’s pre-1938 borders would survive), but that was only because they were the first to be exempted and the last to go.

122. Mayors were responsible for hearing the appeals of Jews from exempted categories, which included physicians and citizens from a host of foreign countries. Interestingly, in addition to Jews from the USA, Britain, Axis co-belligerents, and a host of neutral countries, Russian Jews were also exempted. This may have been an attempt to 'hedge' against a likely Soviet victory in the war.
123. See Ranki (702). In fact, according to a table of victimization statistics provided by Braham (1981: 1298), 236,818 of the 243,818 Jews (97.1%) in the provinces of Trianon Hungary had been deported, killed, or drafted into the labor service. The same was true for 323,386 of the 334,386 Jews (96.7%) in the newly acquired territories. All told, by the time deportations were cancelled, 560,204 of the 578,204 Jews (96.9%) living outside of Budapest could be considered 'victims' of the Holocaust.
124. On this, the first day of deportations from Zone I, Angelo Rotta, the Papal nuncio, delivered a letter of protest to the Hungarian Foreign Office.
125. The fact that non-able-bodied Jews had been included in the 'evacuation' was explained away with reference to the notion that it was best to keep workers together with their families.
126. Braham (1981: 752–4, 759). David Cesarani notes that Horthy had been lobbied by neutral countries 'well before' he decided to cancel the deportations; he saw the American bombing of Budapest, however, as a reprisal; thus, Horthy was probably more influenced by the bombing than by the lobbying (Cesarani 1997: 16–7).
127. William McCagg Jr. makes note of various scholars (including Braham and Deák) who 'carp ... at the Western Allies for failing to bomb Auschwitz ... while hardly mentioning what they [the Allies] actually were doing' (quoted in Deák 1989: 654–5). It is indeed amazing that the story of Roosevelt's reprisal is not better known.
128. The rescued Jews included Kastner's father-in-law.
129. In fact, the supplies were to be used exclusively on the Eastern Front. The Germans still harbored hopes that, at the last moment, the USA and Britain would turn on their Soviet allies. They were further convinced that a deal could be arranged because of their twisted logic that the Allies were only fighting this war on behalf of the Jews anyway.
130. See Hilberg (1985: 843–47); Aronson (96); Ranki (702); and Braham (1981: Chapter 29) for a detailed discussion of these rescue attempts.

131. Lakatos soon relaxed many of his country's most heinous anti-Jewish provisions.
132. The unit was led by Major Otto Skorzeny, the commander who had successfully rescued Mussolini a year earlier.
133. Rich (1974: pp. 248–9). Just days before Horthy's foiled coup, Veessenmayer informed Szálasi that he was Hitler's choice to lead the new Hungarian government. Together, the men then discussed the composition of the cabinet that Szálasi would lead.
134. See Sipos (1998: 57); Hilberg (1985: 835); and Rich (1974: 251). Braham (1981: 829) and Deák (citing Braham) (1989: 649) suggest that the number of Jews living in Budapest at the time was somewhat lower, about 150,000–160,000. At a meeting in August, Interior Minister Jaross estimated that 280,000 Jews still lived in Budapest, including 170,000 who had been confined to 'Yellow Star' houses (Braham 1981: 742n13).
135. Budapest's Jews had been dispersed throughout the city, reflecting the viewpoint of many Hungarian antisemites that this would prevent the Allies from bombing the city. (Hilberg calls the Hungarian maneuver 'almost an experiment to test the theory of world Jewish rule' [1985: 834].) They were confined to apartment buildings which were designated as Jewish houses and marked with large yellow stars. In August, the Association of Christian Jews of Hungary won the right to have separate buildings, which would also be marked with a cross. However, the segregation of Jews by region was never systematically implemented (see Braham 1981: 734–41).
136. See also Braham (1981: 833). Diplomatic recognition would have also allowed Szálasi to demonstrate the independence of his regime (Sipos 1998: 58). Ultimately, the quest for recognition forced Szálasi to honor (at least temporarily) the immunity of Jews who held protective passes from neutral states, and this left room for clever diplomats like Raoul Wallenberg (the Swedish diplomat) and Charles Lutz (his Swiss counterpart) to do their heroic work.
137. The Budapest ghetto had been established in late November 1944 to house 'protected' Jews who remained in the city after Szálasi's cancellation of the worker delivery program.
138. Deák (1989: 650). Given the nature of events in Hungary, this observation is more widespread in the Hungarian case than anywhere else in the literature on the Holocaust. The way that the proposition is normally stated, however, indicates that the Hungarian case is usually viewed in isolation, and not seen as a confirmation of

a more general trend. For example, Randolph Braham states: '*Ironically*, it appears in retrospect that had Hungary continued to remain a militarily passive but vocally loyal ally of the Third Reich instead of provocatively engaging in essentially fruitless ... diplomatic manoeuvres, the Jews of Hungary might have survived the war relatively unscathed' (1997: 37 [my emphasis]; see also 1989: 593). I agree, of course; however, given the comparative perspective, I do not see this as 'ironic'; in fact, I believe Braham's counterfactual statement is *proven* by the Bulgarian and Romanian cases—where 'vocally loyal all[ies] of the Third Reich' *did* succeed in protecting the bulk of their Jewish populations. See also Yehuda Bauer, who calls the survival of Hungarian Jewry a 'paradox' (1997: 194). For an explicit comparison with Bulgaria and Romania, see Cesarani (1997: 16).

139. This includes 100,000 baptized Jews and Christians of Jewish origin.
140. A total of 20,000 'alien' Jews were deported in the summer of 1941. Around 15,000 of these came from the acquired territories. Most of the deported Jews were killed in the massacres at Kamenets-Podolsk.
141. About 1000 Jews were killed in the Bačka massacres in January 1942.
142. In fact, about half (20,000 of 42,000) of the Jews drafted into the labor service would ultimately survive the war. However, since this project aims to measure the effectiveness of German policy (i.e., the degree to which the Nazis could carry out their genocidal wishes), drafted and deported Jews (even those who ultimately survived) are counted as 'victims' (i.e., as 'victimized survivors').
143. For the reasons stated above, this figure includes victimized survivors. Due to the 'large' number of victimized survivors (116,500 returned deportees; 20,000 liberated labor servicemen), Hungary's death rate is considerably lower: 68.4%. (This number also reflects 5000 Jews who managed to escape abroad and, of course, the 119,000 Jews who were liberated in Budapest.)
143. As we have seen, the same is true for the scholarship on the Holocaust in Western Europe, where many attribute the Netherlands' high victimization rate to the Dutch people's 'traditional deference' to authority, and Denmark's low victimization rate to that country's traditions of democracy and religious toleration.

Conclusion: German Hegemony, State Power, and Jewish Survival

“What you cannot enforce, do not command.”
—Sophocles¹

This book began with a promise that it would have implications for the study of political science, for the study of the Holocaust, and for the moral lens through which we view collaboration. Before moving on to consider these implications, let us reconsider German hierarchy in light of the forgoing analysis.

German Hierarchy Throughout the Entire Sphere of Influence

International hierarchy is an important concept in the study of international relations. As we have seen, it is also crucial to our understanding of the Holocaust. In the preceding chapters, we observed how Germany subjected different countries in its sphere of influence to very different forms of domination. Throughout, we have been careful to examine how these different administrative forms came about—noting that the resulting equilibrium was often the product of negotiation. We have also been careful to distinguish between the theory and the practice of German rule—noting that a country’s actual place in Germany’s world order often differed from its formal designation. And, of course, we have been careful to note how the different forms of German hierarchy affected the implementation

and efficiency of the Final Solution, and how local officials—in a myriad of ways for a myriad of reasons—often used the autonomy they had to defend some local Jews, to persecute others, and always to translate, modify, and bend Germany’s genocidal commands in accordance with their own political purposes.

Combined with the analysis that preceded it, we now have the tools to construct a clear and complete typology of German hierarchy throughout the entire sphere of influence (Table 5.1). This, in turn, will allow us to test the correlation between hierarchy and victimization rate at a region-wide scale—allowing us to see the extent to which our intra-regional observations have applicability across German-dominated Europe.

Germany’s Axis allies were the most autonomous polities in the German sphere of influence. Finland, Bulgaria, Romania, Italy until September 1943 (known as ‘Italy 1’), and Hungary until March 1944 (‘Hungary 1’) all maintained complete domestic administrations. Formally speaking, none was subjected to direct German occupation, although anecdotal evidence suggests that the huge German presence in Romania constituted an *informal* occupational force (see Chapter 4). Thus, we may envision **Alliance** [I.A.] as one form of indirect German hierarchy. Moreover, although all of the observed cases in this category were formally free of German occupation, anecdotal analysis allows us to break up the Alliance category into two sub-categories: **Fully independent** German Allies, representing countries that were free of German occupation [I.A.1.]; and a distinct category for Romania, the Axis ‘partner’ that played host to such a substantial German presence that we may safely consider it **informally occupied** [I.A.2.].

The next set of countries in the hierarchy typology, Denmark, France, and Hungary after March 1944 (‘Hungary 2’), were all **formally occupied by** Germany. In all three of these cases, however, German forces consolidated their position in the country with reference to a **prior, negotiated agreement** [I.B.]. Danish officials, we shall remember, accepted a German ultimatum that accompanied the German invasion force; their acceptance of the ultimatum allowed these officials to remain in office with a degree of autonomy that was unique within the German occupational realm. Over the course of the next few months, of course, there were some personnel changes within the ranks of Danish government. (The king replaced the pacifist Foreign Minister Peter Munch with the pro-German Erik Scavenius; and the death of Denmark’s prime minister paved the way for Scavenius’ (eventual) promotion to that post as well.) However, these changes were made in the context of a regime and constitution that were

made in Denmark and that remained essentially unchanged from long before the German occupation.

By contrast, the French Armistice Agreement and the agreement made with Hungarian officials at the Second Klessheim Conference were also concluded by direct negotiation with German officials. However, while the invasion itself was still underway, French Prime Minister Paul Reynaud was replaced by Marshal Pétain. Further constitutional changes in France followed the German occupation by a matter of weeks, even though these changes were of domestic origin and purely legal in character. At Klessheim, Hungarian leader Miklós Horthy agreed to make substantial changes to his government in return for a purely German (and supposedly temporary) occupation. The agreement allowed Horthy to avoid appointing members of the fascist Arrow Cross, but subsequent negotiations between Hungary's new (pro-German) prime minister and the German Plenipotentiary resulted in the appointment of a government that was much more to Germany's liking. The German occupational force in Hungary also included a powerful contingent that directly represented the interests of the German SS.

In other words, though Denmark, France, and Hungary all fell subject to a *negotiated* German occupation, Denmark is the only country of the three where the regime in power remained **essentially unchanged** from its pre-occupation form [I.B.1.]. In France and Hungary 2, post-occupation governments were **reconstituted** in the context of the German occupation and are thus considered to be governments formed **under duress** [I.B.2.].

It should be noted that continued German meddling in Hungary's domestic affairs had the effect of further intensifying German hierarchy in that country. After Horthy's botched attempt to leave the German alliance (in October 1944), German forces kidnapped the regent's son, forced the regent to resign, and secured the appointment of an Arrow Cross government. Subsequent efforts to renew the victimization of the country's Jews were 'artificially' interrupted by the Soviet liberation of Hungary, which followed the Arrow Cross's ascendance by a matter of months. It is thus difficult to determine the effect that this change in German hierarchy had on the country's victimization rate. Though the power of the Arrow Cross was never truly consolidated during this second phase of the occupation, the new occupation regime (one could even call it 'Hungary 3') shared certain similarities with the created puppet regimes in Norway and Greece [I.C.2.].

Though Denmark, France, and Hungary were all occupied by German forces, Germany maintained the fiction of their independence by continuing to deal with their governments via the existing diplomatic legations in each country. And though the French and Hungarian governments were reconstituted under duress following the German invasion, Germany explicitly negotiated with these governments as part of the occupation agreement. The same may *not* be said of the **German-imposed puppet governments** that took power in Norway, Greece, and Italy after September 1943 ('Italy 2') [I.C.].

Following the German invasion of Norway, the king and government fled the country and established a government-in-exile. Germany then filled the power vacuum with a complete cabinet (and later, a prime minister) drawn from the ranks of Norway's small fascist party, which theretofore had no official position (not even a parliamentary seat) in Norway's constitutional government. The king and government of Greece also fled the German advance and established a government-in-exile. Following the military surrender, however, Germany appointed a new government in Greece, headed by the military's commanding general, Georgios Tsolakoglou. Thus, Norway and Greece both came to be ruled by German-appointed puppet governments. These governments were appointed unilaterally, without negotiation, by Germany alone; the recently departed constitutional governments of these countries had absolutely no say in the matter and retained no position in the new administrations.

Following the Allied invasion of Sicily on July 10, 1943, King Victor Emmanuel forced Mussolini to resign. He was replaced by Marshal Pietro Badoglio, who subsequently dissolved the fascist party and placed Mussolini under arrest. When Allied forces invaded the southern Italian mainland in September 1943, Badoglio surrendered to them. Before the Allies could fully liberate the country, however, Germany invaded Italy from the north and reinstalled Mussolini as leader. (The royal family escaped to the Allied operational zone.) Thus, Italy 2 also came to be ruled by a German-appointed government. The regime differs from those in Greece and Norway, however, because Mussolini's government in Italy had been **resurrected** from a party that had previously held power in country [I.C.1.]. The **German-appointed governments** in Greece and Norway, on the other hand, were staffed by leaders who had **no previous political role** [I.C.2.]. Nevertheless, in all three cases, the departing government (in the Italian case,

Badoglio's government) was given no say in the 'new' governmental administration.

In Greece and Norway, Germany appointed puppet leaders to positions that had been left vacant. In Slovakia, Croatia, and Serbia, Germany created **puppet states** [I.D.] out of what had previously only been territories. Of course, each of these territories had a history, be it as a national identity or as a Serbian state that no longer existed. But in the half year between September 1938 and March 1939, Hitler made use of these national identities to tear existing states (Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia) asunder, and to create new ones that, by the very nature of their rebirth, would owe a great deal to their new German master.

Hitler's intrigues at Munich in September 1938 led to the resignation of Czechoslovakian President Eduard Beneš and the creation of a federally organized Czecho-Slovak Union. On March 14, 1939, under intense pressure, Hitler 'persuaded' the Slovakian parliament to declare its independence (although, to be sure, many of its members did not need to be pushed). On the same day, Jozef Tiso, the Slovakian nationalist who had been made prime minister of the Slovak part of the Czecho-Slovak Federal Republic in October 1938 and jailed a few days earlier by the government in Prague for not renouncing his desire for Slovak independence, was proclaimed prime minister of the new Slovakian state. As his first act in office, Tiso requested that German troops enter his country to guarantee its new status as an 'independent' country.

Though the particular intrigues differed, Germany also used the occupation of Yugoslavia (on April 6, 1941) to create friendlier puppet states. Within ten days of the invasion, organized military resistance in Yugoslavia had come to an end and an independent state of Croatia had been proclaimed. Germany had the exiled membership of Croatia's fascist party (the Ustaša, headed by Ante Pavelić) brought back from Italy and installed as leaders of the newly independent Croatian state.

Germany began the administration of Serbia by giving away slices of Serbian territory and attempting to create a government out of the remnants of the old regime. By August, however, many of the most respected ministers in this provisional Serbian government had resigned. On August 29, 1941, Germany formed a new government in Serbia under the leadership of General Milan Nedić.

The appointment of Tiso, Pavelić, and Nedić to positions of political power resembles, in some respects, the appointment of Quisling in Norway and Tsolákoglou in Greece. All of these men were installed by Germany unilaterally and, in fact, against the wishes of their governments.

Pavelić and Quisling were fascist nationalists who had no legal standing in their own countries until Germany intervened. Tsolákoglou and Nedić were generals, advanced to positions of power by a Germany that was unwilling or unable to establish governments that were more representative of the old regime. Only Tiso and Nedić had any real political experience of their own, and Tiso's was as the head of a Slovak political entity that was *also* a German creation (in September 1938); Nedić's highest position had been as Yugoslav Minister of War, a position from which he had been ousted on March 27, 1941. In other words, there is an important difference between pre-existing leaders like Pétain, Horthy, and even Mussolini, on the one hand, and puppets like Quisling, Tsolákoglou, Tiso, Pavelić, and Nedić, on the other. The former were 'found' by Germany in the countries it occupied or (in Mussolini's case) *returned* to a position he had previously occupied; the latter were, to varying degrees, 'political nobodies'—leaders who, to an even greater extent, owed their very positions in office to the German gun. Dependence is a great insurer of loyalty.

But where Tiso, Pavelić, and Nedić differ from Quisling and Tsolákoglou is that the countries they came to lead were, themselves, only German creations. Quisling and Tsolákoglou were installed as leaders of Norway and Greece when the governments of those long-standing countries fled. Tiso, Pavelić, and Nedić came to power as part of the very intrigues that gave their countries life in the first place. In other words, Quisling and Tsolákoglou were puppet governors in states that had long existed; Tiso, Pavelić, and Nedić² were leaders of **puppet states** that owed their very existence to Nazi Germany [I.D.].

Collectively, all of the aforementioned modes of German influence may be considered **Indirect** [I.]. Whether it was negotiating with an ally, with leaders that 'agreed' to the occupation, with a government that it appointed, or with a state that it created, Germany was, in all of these cases, dealing with a technically sovereign entity. All of these countries had local citizens as free-standing prime ministers, ruling over complete cabinets that, formally speaking, were the authors of national policy. Germany could work with a country's leaders or it could create the country itself. The leaders may have been screened for loyalty or promoted because they were loyal in the first place. But in all cases, Germany was working with countries that had complete domestic administrations. The major differences are not so much in the institutional makeup of the regimes as in the nature of their creation.

In this respect, Germany's **direct rule** [II.] of other countries appears very different. Though we can observe various levels of German hierarchy

within this category, *none* of the countries on this side of the hierarchy chart had domestic governments during the German occupation. In all cases, the local chain of command was incomplete. The important distinctions among these countries are to be found in the relative ‘completeness’ of that chain of command, the nature of German oversight, and the extent to which Germany prepared the territory for incorporation into the German Reich.

As we have seen, Belgium and the Netherlands were similar to one another in that both were subjected to the rule of a German commander who oversaw a ‘**headless**’ **domestic administration** of Secretaries-General [II.A.]. These department secretaries (or ‘permanent under-secretaries’ in British parlance) were the highest-ranking non-elected officials in any given government ministry. As such, the Secretaries-General had some say in the *way* policies were implemented. (And, to be sure, they took on more important political roles when the ministers under whom they worked were gone.) Formally speaking, however, the role of a Secretary-General was to implement political policy, not to create it. The ‘headless administrations’ in Belgium and the Netherlands were, as a result, relatively powerless to resist German influence.

Of course, Belgium had two ‘favorable factors’ that the Netherlands did not: Its popular king remained in the country and, partly as a result of his cooperation, Belgium was placed under a German **military commander** [II.A.1.], rather than a civilian **Reichskommissar** (who reported directly to Hitler) [II.A.2.]. Nonetheless, in both cases, the supreme commander in the country was a German official (not a German appointee). The highest-ranking local official in both countries was a Secretary-General, and, in any case, the bureaucracy itself was constantly screened for loyalty and re-staffed with local officials (often fascists) who the German commanders could trust.

In this sense, the Reichskommissariat established in the Netherlands differed considerably from the one established in Belarus and the Baltic States. On July 17, 1941, Hitler established the *Reichskommissariat Ostland* to rule the newly conquered eastern territories of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Belarus. Rather than overseeing a centralized administration of local officials, however, the Reichskommissariat Ostland appointed a vast array of local directors, general councilors, and regional administrators. In his systematic study of *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*, Raphael Lemkin notes that these Baltic administrators had even less authority than their Dutch counterparts (p. 11), at least some of whom had been

‘held over’ from before the occupation. Like the Netherlands, these occupied Soviet territories were administered by a Reichskommissar. However, the Reichskommissar and his German staff were assisted by a **decentralized bureaucracy of only the most minor of local officials** [II.B.].

Germany extended its most direct form of occupational hierarchy over the territories it intended to annex. To be sure, Germany also subjected the Baltic States, Belarus, and even the Netherlands to Germanization programs of varying intensity. But the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia³ and the Polish General Government were actively prepared for incorporation into the German Reich; meanwhile, Luxembourg and the western regions of Poland (those that directly bordered the Reich) were subjected to the rule of German Gauleiters, Nazi party officials and regional governors like the ones that ruled within Germany itself. In Germanizing a population or placing it under the authority of a German Gauleiter, Germany prepared a territory for **incorporation into the Reich itself** [II.C.]. This was German hierarchy taken to its logical extreme.

This rigorous, systematic, and comparative typology of occupation regimes across the German sphere of influence allows us to see quite clearly the real and dramatic effects that German hierarchy had on rates of Jewish victimization across Europe. The graph below (Fig. 5.1) uses

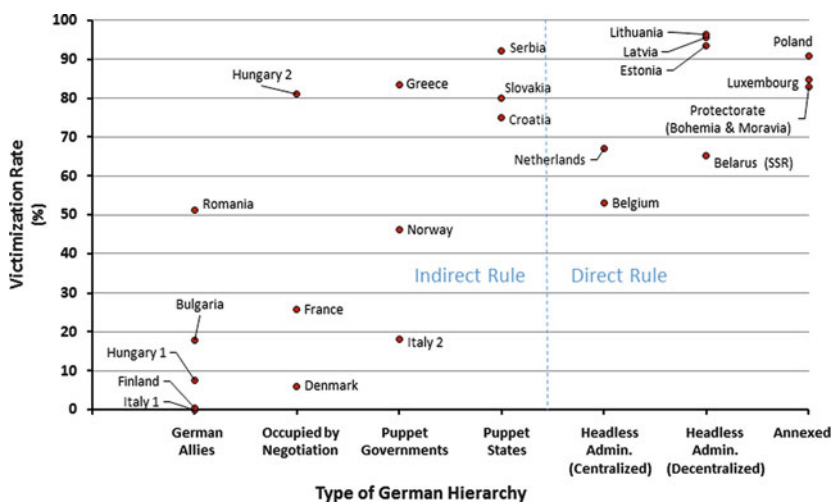


Fig. 5.1 Relationship between German hierarchy and victimization rates

our typology to group occupation regimes by sub-category: German Ally, Negotiated Occupation, Puppet Governments, Puppet States, Headless Administrations (Centralized and Decentralized), and Quasi-Incorporated Territories (Annexed).⁴ It demonstrates an unambiguous trend, with countries subjected to ever more direct forms of German hierarchy displaying ever higher rates of Jewish victimization.

It should be noted that the correlation holds regardless of the category level we use to group our cases. The most basic distinction the typology makes is that between countries subject to Indirect Rule, on the one hand, and Direct Rule, on the other. The average victimization rate for countries in the first category is 42%, compared to 83% among countries subjected to direct German rule. Alternatively, we could expand the graphic representation to recognize *sub*-sub-category distinctions (Fully Independent, Informally Occupied, Pre-existing Government, Reconstituted Governments, etc.). For the most part, this would only enhance the correlation by ‘smoothing out’ a few apparent outliers.⁵ In other words, the taxonomy withstands quite a degree of quibbling as to the logic or necessity of any particular typographic distinction.

There will also always be discussion and debate about the placement of particular countries in their respective family groupings. As we have seen, Nazi Germany’s *de jure* designation of a country often differed quite significantly from that country’s actual experience under German domination. The blurry line between ‘persuasion’ and ‘threat’ was one that Germany (and even the Allied powers) was willing to exploit during the war itself. (For their part, the collaborators were anxious to go along with *either* characterization, depending upon which side looked more likely to win.) These debates have raged since World War II, and we will not settle them here. What remains clear is that—whatever taxonomy we use, and however we rank particular countries within that taxonomy—the correlation is persistent and difficult to ignore.⁶ Overall and in the aggregate, high levels of German hierarchy correlated with high levels of Jewish victimization. Our systematic comparison of German occupation regimes has allowed us to identify the key underlying determinant of Jewish victimization rates during World War II.

Presented in this manner, the chart reveals additional aspects of victimization rate variation throughout the German sphere of influence: Victimization rates themselves showed a great deal of variation within the indirect forms of German hierarchy and far less variation where German rule was direct. For example, countries subject to Indirect Rule include

cases with very high victimization rates as well as cases where almost all of the Jews survived. The Direct Rule category, on the other hand, displays a much narrower range of victimization rates—almost all of them, high.⁷ The extensive variation among countries subjected to indirect German rule represents the important influence of other variables. As suggested in Chapter 1 (Fig. 1.1), high degrees of German hierarchy had the potential to neutralize the effects of these variables. Where German hierarchy was low, the influence of additional factors often found full expression.

Lessons and Implications

It is common—almost customary—for educators and scholars of the Holocaust to suggest that the vital importance of their work is in preventing such atrocities from ever happening again. If true, this is certainly a noble and worthy effort. But there is something of a disconnect between that claim—learn your history or else be condemned to repeat it—and a vocabulary that also pervades Holocaust discourse, a vocabulary that describes the Holocaust as ‘irrational’, ‘incomprehensible’, ‘unspeakable’, and ‘unique’. If the vocabulary is correct, then comparative, systematic, scientific analyses of the Holocaust—such as the one you just read—are impossible. In fact, if a historical event were truly unique, then it could not happen again—and learning from it will do us no good. Needless to say, I don’t believe this to be true, and I avoid the customary vocabulary.

Historians and political scientists alike have been hesitant to treat the Holocaust as a case for comparative research—the former, perhaps, because they are beholden to a research methodology that resists comparative or state-level analyses and the latter, perhaps, because they see the event as ‘too complex’ or ‘too old’ to be of contemporary relevance. Thus, despite a brilliant and broad historical literature that explains the course of the Holocaust in this or that particular country, and despite increasing interest among social scientists in the study of ethnic conflict and state-sponsored violence, there exist only a handful of studies dedicated to a general answer for the question from which this project took its start. This is surprising, and it does not bode well for those who would have us learn from history’s most horrible events.

Why did more Jews survive in some German-occupied countries than in others during World War II? As we have seen, some of the long- and tacitly accepted answers to this question have withstood comparative scrutiny, but only within certain limits. The timing of deportations was important, and

earlier deportations tended to be more 'successful'. However, there are significant exceptions to this rule and, in any case, the relationship is not statistically significant; moreover, invasive forms of German hierarchy could counteract the 'advantages' of a late deportation (as they did in Hungary). Democratic traditions and widespread sympathy for Jews could lead to massive outbreaks of opposition to Nazi policy; however, Germany could render that opposition irrelevant when and where it was willing to impose direct costs upon a recalcitrant public (as it did in the Netherlands). Geography was important, and countless thousands of Jews escaped into neutral Sweden or even fascist Italy; however, widespread opportunities for escape were not even exploited in certain circumstances (Norway) and the number of Jews reporting for deportation 'voluntarily' suggests that escape was not even a consideration for many. Likewise, going into hiding—an escape option theoretically open to anyone—was attempted only by the relative few. In fact, the vast majority of survivors survived *legally*, under the protection of their state, their marital status, their church, or the official exemption of their representative bodies. Citizens, generally speaking, had an easier time acquiring these protections; but even their status as citizens could be rendered irrelevant where the state—the institution primarily responsible for the security of citizens—failed to maintain its own administration or ceased to exist entirely. Every one of these factors had some effect on the implementation of the Final Solution; however, that effect was usually diminished where German hierarchy was significant and enhanced where local officials maintained key positions in the domestic administration.

Conceptualized as it has been above, international hierarchy is not 'one more' in a list of explanatory variables for rates of Jewish victimization. It is, instead, an underlying and 'ubiquitous' factor, one that combined with and modified other explanatory factors in fairly consistent and always important ways. Timing, geography, antisemitism, resistance, and even national chauvinism all had the potential to affect rates of Jewish victimization in one way or another. However, that potential was only realized and those opportunities only exploited where local leaders wielded sufficient power to give them expression and to stave off German attempts at heavy-handed intervention. Under direct German hierarchy, 'favorable factors' were often curbed, neutralized, or done away with entirely.

Local leaders could strike bargains with a Germany that had military, economic, and strategic concerns that outweighed its concern for the Jewish Question; but their ability to extract concessions from Germany was contingent upon their possession of sufficient domestic authority to use as a chip in those very negotiations. Without domestic authority, local

leaders had nothing to give Nazi Germany; and without the incentive to hold back on certain occupational mandates, Germany could push forth with the implementation of its entire policy agenda. The bargaining power of local leaders was contingent upon their willingness to stay in office and maintain the power with which they could then bargain.

The realization that state-level institutions and international hierarchy were crucial in the implementation of occupational policy is somewhat unsurprising, but nonetheless informative. It has lessons for our understanding of history, of political science, and of moral judgment regarding the Holocaust.

First, the common caution that the Holocaust is too complex for comparative analysis seems premature, however massive or complex the event truly was. Within certain broad limits, comparative social science reveals pattern and regularity within the spectacle of even the most harrowing and ‘incomprehensible’ events. Because of its breadth (and not *despite* it), this project gives us a more nuanced understanding of the Holocaust, not to mention of the dynamics of state-sponsored violence, imperialism, and military policy more generally. Social scientific methods can enhance our understanding of the Holocaust just as the study of the Holocaust can enhance our understanding of contemporary issues in political science.

This project also contributes a new perspective to a series of older historical debates. For decades, historians of the Holocaust were deeply involved in debating the intentions of the Holocaust’s primary persecutors. To this day, studies of countries under German occupation reflect a continuing concern with the collaborators and their motivations under German occupation. After years of investigating why more Jewish people survived in some German-occupied countries compared to others, I still meet people who want to know ‘Which were the good countries and which were the bad ones?’ A similar concern can be seen in the work of historians like Michael Marrus and Robert Paxton, who, in their touchstone study of *Vichy France and the Jews*, seem at pains to note that the survival of so many Jews in collaborationist France was not due to a ‘well-articulated plan’ on the part of the collaborators.

Political science allows us to go beyond the terms of this debate. Politics is the process by which individual interests and aspirations are discovered, reconciled, and articulated into public policy. As such, political scientists *start* with the recognition that all institutional policy begins with the interests of individuals. Thus, it makes no sense to speak of an institution (such as a German subject state) having a ‘well-articulated’ plan to save Jews *or* to murder them. Rather, the policy outcome itself is the aggregate

interest of thousands of individual actors, ranging from the monarch to the state bureaucracy, to German supervisors, the international community, and countless millions of ordinary citizens. Institutional choices cannot be intentional, because institutions do not have intentions; however, institutional choices can be conceptualized as the aggregate intention of those very actors who play a role within the institution itself.

It is therefore interesting that, despite widespread antisemitism, political leaders, where they maintained any modicum of autonomy, almost always attempted to protect at least some local Jews. Mass publics throughout Europe, it would seem, saw the protection of citizens (from death, if not persecution) as the very *raison d'être* of the state. Thus, even for some of Europe's most notorious antisemites, a person's status as a citizen trumped his or her membership in a reviled ethnic and religious group. With a few notable exceptions, state institutions, where they continued to exist at all, insisted upon a distinction between Jews who were citizens and Jews who were not; and they routinely made concessions that resulted in the forfeiture of foreign Jews while seeking assurances for the protection of their fellow citizens. Of course, in some cases, even that degree of resistance remained impossible—and the citizen/foreign distinction was one of the factors most sensitive to German hegemony. But it remains interesting, amazing, and perhaps ironic that, while liberalism and socialism both failed the Jews of Europe, nationalism—the sentiment most closely associated with the protection of one's fellow citizens—had a tendency to protect them. Even the Germans realized that the persecution of Jews would flow more easily if the citizenship of Jews was first revoked.

Most important, this project explores the logic and limits of mass coercion as a tool in contemporary politics. It therefore addresses one of the most fundamental issues in political science: the role of violence in the maintenance of political order. In many respects, World War II is the most vivid illustration of this issue that history has to offer. The Nazi regime was one of the most brutal in history, and thus the one where we would most expect to see coercion as the sole tool of political manipulation. However, as we have seen, even the Nazis resorted to negotiation and compromise when such a strategy seemed feasible and even when the strategy entailed real costs in terms of the efficiency with which hegemonic policy could be implemented. The German domination of Europe during World War II presents us with a case where coercion was the most likely strategy for the maintenance of political order. It is therefore fascinating that it was so often used as a last resort. The 'extreme' and unique aspects of the German genocide do not make it impervious to social scientific analysis. Rather, they make it surprising that the case is not

investigated any more than it currently is. The *contemporary* importance of understanding Nazi Germany cannot be overstated.

Finally, this project calls into question simplistic judgments of collaboration as morally vacant. As it turns out, high-level collaboration correlated with high rates of Jewish survival and a reduction in the suffering of the population at large. The purpose of this project, of course, is not to exonerate the collaborators—who, after all, cooperated with the Germans, prolonged the war, and ultimately contributed to the suffering of (Jewish and non-Jewish) Europeans elsewhere on the continent. But it should at least bring us to a more nuanced understanding of the causes and consequences of collaboration. In his postwar trial for treason, Vichy leader Marshal Pétain claimed that he intentionally acted as France's *shield* because he was unable to act as its *sword*. I have no way of knowing, and many reasons to doubt, the sincerity of Pétain's claim. But if it is true, it raises harrowing moral questions that are difficult to ignore.

Throughout these pages, we have been faced with the notion that reaction to German occupation entailed a tragic choice. Collaboration often meant giving up the noble effort to resist German occupation. But resistance was often futile, and usually increased the brutality of the occupation that inevitably followed. Under such circumstances, it may have been better to protect one's own citizens, even if that meant helping the Germans as well. It is neither my ability nor my intention to adjudicate between these compelling moral claims. But we do ourselves and our science a disservice if we do not at least recognize the tragic logic of collaboration and its consequences.

From Melos to Masada, the ancient world is littered with the skeletons of those who defended principle to the point of death. But those who prefer sovereignty to survival are the exception, not the rule. True, even the cities that survive as subjects of another state bear the scars of imperial conquest and domination. And there is little evidence that the strategy of collaboration is the 'best' one in the long term—much less, the 'right' one. But objective study of the Holocaust requires that we deflate villainy as much as we do heroism. Disturbing as the moral implications may be, we cannot deny the simple fact that collaborators—be it by the virtue of their own intention or the unwitting consequence of selfishness—succeeded in saving more Jews than the most righteous of gentiles. There is little doubt that history's greatest freedom fighters had the best interests of their people in mind. But if we are to learn anything from the most tragic events in Jewish national history, it might be that, while Tito and Bar Kokhba are rightly considered heroes of a 'Jewish' cause, Pétain and Herod saved more Jewish lives.

NOTES

1. *Sophocles Quotes*. [Quotes.net](http://www.quotes.net/quote/1073). STANDS4 LLC, 2016. Web. April 4, 2016. <http://www.quotes.net/quote/1073>.
2. It should be noted that Lemkin, who also argues for the distinction between puppet governments and puppet states, includes Serbia as a ‘puppet government’, alongside Norway, Greece, France, and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.
3. German officials originally intended to leave Bohemia and Moravia with a fair degree of independence. In fact, the territories were originally staffed by a complete Czech government and administration, albeit one that was under close German supervision. In September 1941, however, alarmed by reports of sabotage and terrorist activity, Hitler appointed Reinhard Heydrich as Reich Protector of Bohemia and Moravia. Heydrich immediately declared a state of emergency, arrested some 10,000 people, and even had the Czech Prime Minister executed. By January 1942, the autonomous Czech government had been almost completely abolished: Government ministries were reorganized in line with existing German departments of government and were staffed, for the most part, by German officials—some of whom were drawn from the Protectorate’s substantial German minority.
4. For other representations of German hierarchy and Jewish victimization rates (with alternate ways of measuring German hierarchy), see Helen Fein’s *Accounting for Genocide* (1979) or my own ‘International Hierarchy and the Final Solution’ (2015).
5. Romania, for example, would shift to the right of the fully independent countries—a position for which its relatively high victimization rate is a ‘better fit’; such a categorization would also recognize the distinction between Belgium and the Netherlands—again, creating a better fit between hierarchy level and victimization rate.
6. For example, Ben Frommer has suggested that Serbia be characterized as having been subjected to much more direct German hierarchy, something akin to that exercised in the Czech Protectorate (II.C.). It should be noted that such a shift would only enhance the correlation between German hierarchy and Jewish victimization rates.
7. The standard deviation among countries in the Indirect Rule category (34 percentage points) is more than double that of countries in the Direct Rule grouping (16 percentage points).

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