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Sarah A. Cramsey

Jan Masaryk and the Palestinian Solution

Solving the German, Jewish, and Statelessness
Questions in East Central Europe

Abstract

This article uses war-time speeches, notes scribbled on postwar planning pamphlets, confidential government letters and private conversations from the early to mid-1940s to demonstrate how Jan Masaryk's understanding of postwar Jewish questions, namely who belongs to the Jewish people and where do those Jewish people belong geographically, cannot be unwoven from broader questions regarding German belonging in the Czechoslovak body politic. While the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister remained committed to resolving statelessness as a condition and wanted to protect Czech and Slovak-speaking Jews in his reconstituted postwar state, his commitment to purging Czechoslovakia of its German minority trumped his other beliefs. This obsession with cleansing the Czechoslovak body politic of Germans and German groupness captivated Jan Masaryk so much that he sometimes failed to differentiate German-speaking Czechoslovak Jews from the broader ethnically German mass. Therefore, scholars who desire to understand how Jan Masaryk utilized his power and influence to keep the bricha flowing across the Polish-Czechoslovakian border in 1946 or how he lobbied for the creation of a Jewish polity in the Middle East, must evaluate how his broader Weltanschauung necessitated the reorganization of all east central European peoples along political lines. In this way, Masaryk's postwar commitment to enabling Jewish movement away from east central Europe and towards a faraway, ethnicized polity is best understand within the context of the overall ethnic revolution, which gripped the region between Berlin and Moscow across the 1940s.

A few weeks after the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine produced their much anticipated report, Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Jan Masaryk expressed his agreement with the majority recommendation to divide the British Mandate into two federated states: one for Arabs and one for Jews. Meeting with representatives of the UN in Lake Success, New York on 8 October 1947, Masaryk rationalised his support for the contentious plan and a provision therein encouraging more Jewish displaced persons (DPs) in Europe to emigrate, urgently if necessary, towards this new polity. In comments featured in *The New York Times* one day later, Masaryk spoke candidly about the "Jews of the ghetto, the gas chamber and those still in concentration camps".[1] He urged that these Jews, whom he no longer identified as Czechoslovak or Polish citizens but as members of the Jewish people, should be aided in their quest to enter Palestine and establish themselves as part of the soon-to-be partitioned state. Masaryk's comments in the autumn of 1947 expressed the

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1 Thomas J. Hamilton, U.N. Urged to Seek Zionist-Arab Talk, in: The New York Times, 9 October 1947, 12. Masaryk most likely meant in displaced person camps, which were often located in former concentration camps.

view that Europe's Jews "belonged" outside of Europe's borders and closely aligned with a specific set of actions he had taken more than a year earlier.

During the summer of 1946, Masaryk and a few key actors within the Czechoslovak government refused to let the border between their state and Poland close, thereby allowing Polish Jews to exit their homeland en route towards the Adriatic or DP camps in occupied Germany and Austria and onward to new hypothetical homelands in the Middle East, Western Europe, and across the oceans. The Polish Jews crossing the border into Czechoslovakia in June, July, and August were not the first to use the north-eastern border of Masaryk's state as a departure point. Beginning in February 1946, large groups of Polish Jews, many of whom had survived the war in the Soviet Union and had just recently returned to Poland on organised transports earlier that year, began swarming the border crossings near the town of Náchod in Czechoslovakia. By the end of June 1946, the last of the 180,000 to 200,000 Jews with Polish citizenship who had spent the war years in the Soviet Union had returned to Polish territory but not to their former homes.[2] Many of these residences stood in regions relinquished to the westward expanding Soviet Union. Thus, central planners at the state level directed them onward toward depopulated cities mainly in the so-called Recovered Territories, the westernmost territories of the new Polish state that had belonged to the German state. These returnees arrived to homes left empty by evacuating 'ethnic' Germans and to navigate the often deadly terrain of the postwar Polish state.[3]

In the immediate postwar years, a condition bordering on civil war existed across Polish territory at varying times in varying locations and between various groups (combatants in this war included Poles aligned with the government-in-exile in London, "home" communists, "Moscow" communists, extremist Ukrainian national-

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2   On the Polish experience in the Soviet Union during the Second World War, see Keith Sword, Deportation and Exile. Poles in the Soviet Union, 1939–48, London 1994; Laura Jockusch/Tamar Lewinsky, Paradise Lost? Postwar Memory of Polish Jewish Survival in the Soviet Union, in: Holocaust and Genocide Studies 24 (Winter 2010) 3, 373-399, I take the numbers of the repatriates from Jockusch and Tamar; Natalie Belsky, Encounters in the East. Evacuees in the Soviet Hinterland During the Second World War (Dissertation), Chicago 2005; Eliana Adler, Hrubieszów at the Crossroads. Polish Jews Navigate the German and Soviet Occupations, in: Holocaust and Genocide Studies 28 (Spring 2014) 1, 1-30; Katherine Jolluck, Exile and Identity. Polish Women in the Soviet Union during the Second World War, Pittsburgh 2002; Rebecca Manley, To the Tashkent Station. Evacuation and Survival in the Soviet Union at War, Ithaca 2009; Keith Sword, Deportation and Exile. Poles in the Soviet Union, 1939–48, London 1994, Jan Gross, Revolution from Abroad. The Soviet Conquest of Poland's Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia, Princeton 1988; Mark Edele/Sheila Fitzpatrick/Atina Grossmann (ed.), Shelter from the Holocaust. Rethinking Jewish Survival in the Soviet Union, Detroit 2017.

3   The English-language historiography on forced population transfers, especially of 'ethnic Germans' in the postwar years, has grown exponentially of late. See Gregor Thum, Uprooted. How Breslau Became Wrocław during the Century of Expulsions, translated from German by Tom Lampert and Allison Brown, Princeton/Oxford 2011; Hugo Service, Reinterpreting the Expulsion of Germans from Poland, 1945–9, in: Journal of Contemporary History 47 (2012) 3, 528-550.; R.M. Douglas, Orderly and Humane. The Expulsion of the Germans After World War Two, New Haven 2012; Chad Bryant, Prague in Black. Nazi Rule and Czech Nationalism, Cambridge, M.A./London 2007; Tara Zahra, Kidnapped Souls: National Indifference and the Battle for Children in the Bohemian Lands 1900–1948, Ithaca 2008; David Gerlach, The Economy of Ethnic Cleansing. The Transformation of the German-Czech Borderlands After World War II, Cambridge 2017; Benjamin Frommer, National Cleansing. Retribution against Nazi Collaborators in Postwar Czechoslovakia, New York 2005; and, the formative standard, Joseph Schechtman, European Population Transfers, Oxford 1946. Schechtman was a researcher at the Institute of Jewish Affairs of the World Jewish Congress and early drafts of this book can be found in the Archive of the World Jewish Congress at the American Jewish Archive in Cincinnati (hereafter AJA). See AJA, WJC, C117/7, for instance, for drafts that Schechtman wrote in 1942.

ists, and warring partisans).[4] The already uncertain and violent atmosphere further destabilised on 4 July 1946 when a pogrom occurred in the city of Kielce, during which residents and people from nearby locations killed 42 Polish Jews in one day's time.[5] The chaotic status quo coupled with two elements – the fear of another Kielce and the work of operatives from Mandate Palestine and elsewhere who were encouraging Jewish returnees from the Soviet Union to leave – prompted nearly two thirds of the remaining Polish Jews who had survived the Second World War and the Holocaust to join those who had passed into Czechoslovakia earlier in 1946. They became participants in the *bricha* (literally "flight", the semi-legal postwar movement of Jews away from Europe towards Mandatory Palestine, or so the Zionist-inspired agents abetting their exit hoped). For scores of thousands of these newly displaced people, the road out of Poland passed directly over the Czechoslovak border and, five miles onward, through the town of Náchod. Thus, as long as the border between these two states remained open for passage, Polish Jews could leave Poland and hope to become some of the first citizens of a modern Jewish state or federal entity if and when such a polity came into existence.

Masaryk and his colleagues throughout the highest echelons of the Czechoslovak government exerted a high level of control over this border point and the flow of DPs in the spring and summer of 1946. More so than officials of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), leaders of the great powers, or Jewish non-profit agencies working on the ground, Czechoslovak state and local officials in Prague, Náchod, and various points in between crafted policies, upheld precedents encouraging movement, and ignored others that would have stifled the flow of these migrants.[6] Only Polish officials like Marcin Spychalski equalled the importance of Czechoslovak actors. Arguably, the Czechoslovak state was most responsible for the continuation of this migratory movement. According to historian Yehuda Bauer, an

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4   After the war ended in May 1945, Poland still remained a very hostile place. In 1945 and 1946, Poland's borders changed drastically, shifting more than 150 miles westward, with the Soviet Union absorbing the eastern third of the country. Thus, most of Poland's western and eastern borders were highly contested by residents on the ground. Involuntary and voluntary population exchanges ensued between Poland and the Soviet Socialist Republics of Belarus and Ukraine. On Poland in the immediate postwar period see: Antony Polonsky/Boleslaw Drukier, The Beginnings of Communist Rule in Poland, December 1943–June 1945, London 1980; Norman Naimark/Leonid Gibianskii (ed.), The Establishment of Communist Regimes in Eastern Europe, Boulder 1997; Marcin Zaremba, Wielka trwoga. Polska 1944–1947. Ludowa reakcja na kryzys [The Great Fear. Poland 1944–1947. A Popular Reaction to Crisis], Warsaw 2012. On Jews in postwar Poland, see David Engel, Patterns of Anti-Jewish Violence in Poland, 1944–1946, in: Yad Vashem Studies 26 (1998), 43-85; David Engel, Bein shichrur lebrichah. Nitzolei hashoah bepolin vehama'avak al hanhagatam, 1944–1946 [Between Liberation and Flight. Holocaust Survivors in Poland and the Struggle for Leadership], Tel Aviv 1996; Natalia Aleksiun, Dokad dalej? Ruch syjonistyczny w Polsce 1944–1950 [Where To? The Zionist Movement in Poland, 1944–1950], Warsaw 2002; Anna Cichopek-Gajraj, Beyond Violence. Jewish Survivors in Poland and Slovakia in 1944–1948, Cambridge 2014; I. F. Stone, Underground to Palestine, New York 1946; Jan Gross, Upiorna dekada, 1939–1948. Trzy eseje o stereotypach na temat Żydów, Polaków, Niemców i komunistów [Ghastly Decade, 1939–1948. Three Essays on Stereotypes about Jews, Poles, Germans, and Communists], Cracow 1998; Jan Gross, Fear. Antisemitism in Poland after Auschwitz. An Essay in Historical Interpretation, Princeton 2006; and Jan Gross/Irena Grudzinska Gross, Golden Harvest. Events at the Periphery of the Holocaust, Oxford 2012. John Connelly's wonderful review essay of Jan Gross' oeuvre illuminates any encounter with Jan Gross' work: Poles and Jews in the Second World War. The Revisions of Jan T. Gross, in: Contemporary European History 11 (2002) 4, 641-658.

5   In his memoir recounting these events, Yitzhak Zuckerman pinpointed the days immediately following the Kielce Pogrom as a decisive moment for Polish policies towards an open border with Czechoslovakia. He also credited Marcin Spychalski with deciding when and how to allow the movement of Polish Jews across the border. See the last chapter in A Surplus of Memory. Chronicle of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, Berkeley 1993.

6   On the shift of international norms relating to minority rights and population transfers which foregrounded these developments, see Sarah A. Cramsey/Jason Wittenberg, Timing is Everything. Changing Norms of Minority Rights and the Making of a Polish Nation-State, in: Comparative Political Studies 49 (2016) 11, 1480-1512.

expert on the *bricha* since his book on the topic was published more than half a century ago, "quite simply, no Jews could have passed to Bratislava or Prague had it not been for the aid and sympathy extended by the Czechs".[7] And one Czech in particular, Jan Masaryk, leveraged a great deal to keep the stream of Polish Jews moving at full capacity.

Masaryk figures prominently in a report written by Israel Jacobson, a Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) official in Prague who participated in meetings related to the permeability of the border crossing near Náchod throughout July 1946. In Jacobson's official telling, Masaryk personally assured him and the JDC that "everything would be done to keep the Czechoslovakian border open and that he personally would pay tribute to the various officials who had been assisting this important work at the (scheduled) government meeting on July 16".[8] Moreover, Masaryk declared to Jacobson that "Czechoslovakia must remain a haven of refuge for these Jews fleeing from terror" and that if the Czechoslovak borders were closed he "would resign" in protest.[9] Jacobson's report features prominently in Bauer's account of the *bricha* and so, in both documents, Masaryk assumes a hero-like status on account of his ultimatum.[10] Because of their dedication to keeping the border near Náchod open and subsidising the short-term stays and further travel of Polish Jews who crossed into Czechoslovakia, Masaryk and his fellow government officials became intrinsic supporters of a larger project devoted to achieving a Jewish territorial unit in Palestine.[11]

What motives propelled Jan Masaryk to advocate for the "Jews of the ghetto" before the United Nations and to keep the border at Náchod open so that the *bricha* out of Europe could continue undeterred? Scholars interested in Masaryk's impact have offered some explanations. Besides his philosemitism and his commitment to compensating, albeit in a small way, those Jews who had survived the tragedy of the Shoah, recent contributions by Jan Láníček and Kateřina Čapková have revealed

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7   Yehuda Bauer, Flight and Rescue. Brichah, New York 1970, 182. Bauer wrote: "it must have cost the Czechs a very considerable sum of money for trains and food and they earned the sympathy and the gratitude of the Jews", 184.

8   Archiv bezpecnostních složek [Archive of the Security Services, Prague, hereafter ABS], Report of Israel Jacobson to the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, #425-192-74.

9   Ibid.

10 Bauer, Flight and Rescue, 182-188.

11 Jan Láníček discussed how Masaryk leveraged his influence to keep the border open in order to secure the political and economic support of American Jewry. See Chapter 5 in his Czechs, Slovaks and the Jews, 1938–48. Beyond Idealisation and Condemnation, London 2013 and the documents he cited in: Bulínová, Marie (ed.), Československo a Izrael v letech 1945–1956. Dokumenty [Czechoslovakia and Israel 1945–1956. Documents], Prague 1993. In September 1946, the stream of Polish Jewish refugees lessened considerably, coinciding with a substantial drop in violence against Jews on Polish territory. See Engel, Patterns of Anti-Jewish Violence in Poland. I submit that the violence against Jews stopped and the stream of refugees slowed simultaneously because so many Jews, including most repatriated Polish Jews, had already left Poland by the autumn of 1946. With the repatriation process over, those Polish Jews who wanted to settle in Upper or Lower Silesia would have already decided to stay by this point. Violence against Jews ceased for similar reasons. Once Jews stopped returning to Poland, they stopped being a threat for those non-Jewish Poles who occupied formerly Jewish houses or who had obtained Jewish property. Thus, the "fear" which Jan Gross invoked had an expiration date in postwar Polish society. Violence against Jews or against Jewish property therefore seems, to my mind, to have been directly related to Jewish repatriation waves. The UN closed the border at Náchod in November 1946, but the border seems to have been opened again soon thereafter. A few thousand people crossed the border in the early winter of 1947 but new emigration policies in Poland made travel out of Poland much more difficult beginning in February 1947. Dariusz Stola's work is helpful on this topic, see Kraj bez wyjścia? Migracje z Polski 1949–1989 [A Country With No Exit? Migration from Poland, 1949–1989], Warsaw 2010. Around this time, Náchod ceased being a viable exit point. The JDC and federal operations helping refugees stopped soon after.

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more complex incentives.[12] Both of these Czech scholars have linked Masaryk's encouragement of Jews to live as a nation elsewhere to his desire to remove the German-speaking minority from postwar Czechoslovakia.[13] In fact, Láníček's convincing and well-documented monograph reveals that Masaryk and the entire Czechoslovak government-in-exile "embarked on [a] policy that aimed at liquidat[ing…] the Jewish minority question in Europe" in order to justify their commitment to liquidating the German minority in Czechoslovakia as well.[14]

My intervention draws inspiration from Čapková and Láníček while also attempting to answer a slightly different set of questions. Besides his political desire to rid Czechoslovakia of minority politics and thus of German, Jewish, Hungarian, Polish, and Ruthenian minorities, Masaryk also pushed for Jews to belong elsewhere, in an ethnically Jewish territorial entity within the Palestinian Mandate, and to move there with the financial and logistical support of his own country and other international entities. Further, he desired to simultaneously solve the problem of "statelessness", which he saw as inextricably linked to both the 'Jewish question' and the failed issue of minority rights. So how did Masaryk come to envision that a massive Jewish migration away from Europe towards an ethnically determined territory in the Middle East would constitute the ideal solution for the German, Jewish, and statelessness questions? To phrase it differently, how did Masaryk's new answers to the perennial questions of "who belongs to the Jewish people and where do the Jewish people belong" allow him to solve other pressing problems in domestic and international contexts?[15]

This article uses wartime speeches, notes scribbled on postwar planning pamphlets, confidential government letters, and private conversations to chart the development of Masaryk's views on German-speaking Czechoslovak citizens, the place of Jews in postwar Czechoslovakia, the viability of Palestine as a Jewish state, as well as the issue of statelessness in general throughout the 1940s. Unlike his colleague, President Edvard Beneš, who publicly expressed strong views concerning the future of Palestine as a homeland for nationally-minded Jews in the early 1940s and deviated little from those ideas for the duration of the war, Masaryk laboured over Jewish questions, sometimes even contradicting himself in one and the same

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12 Láníček, Czechs, Slovaks and the Jews, 1938–48 and Kateřina Čapková, Between Expulsion and Rescue. The Transports for German-Speaking Jews of Czechoslovakia in 1946, in: Holocaust and Genocide Studies 32 (Spring 2018) 1, 66-92.

13 Láníček also indicated that support for bricha improved Czechoslovakia's image, especially in American popular opinion. See Láníček, Czechs, Slovaks and the Jews, 176. For an introduction to the issues facing German-speaking Jews in Central Europe, see Kateřina Čapková/David Rechter, Germans or Jews? German-Speaking Jews in Post-War Europe. An Introduction, in: Leo Baeck Institute Year Book 16 (2017), 69-74.

14 Láníček, Czechs, Slovaks and the Jews, 191. On the Czech government-in-exile, see also Livia Rothkirchen, The Czechoslovak Government-in-Exile. Jewish and Palestinian Aspects in the Light of the Documents, in: Yad Vashem Studies 9 (1973), 157-199.

15 Masaryk left behind published writings from his time as a diplomat until his mysterious death in 1948, some of which are cited below. For more on Masaryk's life, see: Zbyněk Zeman, The Masaryks. The Making of Czechoslovakia, New York 1976; Antonín Sum, Otec a syn. Tomáš Garrigue a Jan Masarykové ve vzpomínkách přátel a pamětníků [Father and Son. Tomas Garrigue Masaryk and Jan Masaryk in the Memories of Their Friends and Those Who Remember Them], Vol. 2, Prague 2000; Robert Lockhart, Jan Masaryk. A Personal Memoir, London 1951; and a memoir by his girlfriend at the time of his death, Marcia Davenport, Too Strong for Fantasy, New York 1967.

meeting.[16] Just as high-profile members of the World Jewish Congress (WJC), an international organisation founded in 1936 to speak in a collective voice for Jews in the diaspora and their right to live wherever they pleased, and other leaders throughout the Allied universe slowly moved towards Beneš' ideas regarding the necessary creation of a Jewish state in Palestine as the 1940s progressed, Jan Masaryk eventually became a key spokesperson for the idea that Europe's Jews belonged elsewhere as well.[17] Arguably, in the corridors of the exiled Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry based in London, at the first meeting of the UN in San Francisco, and at various meetings related to the work of UNRRA, Masaryk advocated more consistently on behalf of Jewish demands for emigration out of Europe than any of his diplomatic equivalents. His picaresque journey towards endorsing a Zionist-compatible solution to the 'Jewish question' and Jewish migration out of Europe cannot be unwoven from his less convoluted intellectual trajectory concerning German migration away from Czechoslovakia. In this way, plans pertaining to the small number of surviving German-speaking Czechoslovak Jews illuminate larger considerations about the ethnic makeup of his postwar state and his thoughts regarding the plague of statelessness overall.[18]

Jan Masaryk's ideas about the return of Jews to postwar Czechoslovakia were closely linked to his feelings regarding the fate of German nationals who had been Czechoslovak citizens before the Munich Agreement in 1938. The boundaries conceived at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference and finalised by international agreements thereafter divided historically German-speaking regions and incorporated more than three million German-speakers into the First Czechoslovak Republic. After Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany, political leaders like Konrad Henlein from

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16 In fact, in 1940 and 1941, the World Jewish Congress perceived Edvard Beneš as a threat for the continued declarations that after the war Jews in Europe who wanted group rights would only achieve them in a Jewish state. According to WJC Official Arieh Tartakower on September 25, 1941, "Dr. Beneš expressed himself against granting the Czech Jews minority rights in the future Czech Republic … [he] felt that 'national Jews' [those who selected Jewish as their nationality on the interwar census] should be deprived of Czech citizenship and should be induced to emigrate to Palestine as soon as possible … this is a very dangers attitude which contrasts markedly with the former democratic traditions of Czechoslovakia and endangers the position of Jews in other countries." AJA, WJC Collection, A 24/1, "The minutes of the meeting of the representatives of Czech Jews and Polish Jews in the United States."

17 On the WJC, see: Unity in Dispersion. A History of the World Jewish Congress, New York 1948, and Zohar Segev, The World Jewish Congress during the Holocaust. Between Activism and Restraint, Berlin 2014.

18 In both interwar Czechoslovakia and interwar Poland, as multi-ethnic states, citizens of Jewish origin (or members of a religious community) could opt for either Jewish nationality or German, Czechoslovak, or Polish nationality. Usually, the census classification was decided on the basis of "everyday language". Thus, citizens in Poland or Czechoslovakia would be counted as Jewish nationals if they spoke Yiddish (or in a smaller number of cases Hebrew) at home. Poles or Czechoslovaks of Jewish descent still qualified as Poles and Czechoslovaks on the census if they spoke Polish or Czechoslovak as their language of everyday use. According to the 1930 Czechoslovak census, there were 117,551 Jews living in Bohemia and Moravia and 356,830 living in Czechoslovakia overall. 57 per cent of this population were declared as having Jewish nationality (speaking a "Jewish" mother tongue), 24 per cent were declared as Czechoslovaks, 12 per cent as German, 4 per cent as Hungarian, and 1 per cent as "other". Thus, about 42,000 Czechoslovak Jews spoke German as their mother tongue (although these Jews were often bilingual). Nearly 80,000 Jews from Bohemia and Moravia died during the Second World War and the Holocaust. Of the 40,000 or so that survived in 1945, a few thousand were 'native' German-speakers. To learn more about the interwar censuses in Poland and Czechoslovakia and Jewish identification on those censuses, see Jeffrey Kopstein/Jason Wittenberg, Between State Loyalty and National Identity. Electoral Behavior in Interwar Poland, in: Polin. Studies in Polish Jewry 24 (November 2011); Kateřina Čapková, Češi, Němci, Židé? Národní identita Židů v Čechách, 1918–1938 [Czechs, Germans, Jews? The National Identity of Jews in Bohemia, 1918–1938], Prague 2005; Zahra, Kidnapped Souls; Tatjana Lichtenstein, 'Making' Jews at Home. Zionism and the Construction of Jewish Nationality in Inter-War Czechoslovakia, in: East European Jewish Affairs 36 (June 2006) 1, 49-71; Tatjana Lichtenstein, Racializing Jewishness. Zionist Responses to National Indifference in Interwar Czechoslovakia, in: Austrian History Yearbook 43 (April 2012), and Tatjana Lichtenstein, Zionists in Interwar Czechoslovakia. Minority Nationalism and the Politics of Belonging, Bloomington 2016.

amongst these German-speakers (classified as *Volksdeutsche* or ethnic Germans under Nazi German expansionist ideology) continued to generate feelings of separatism. Henlein's party, after 1935 the Sudetendeutsche Partei, used the spirit of the Minority Treaties drawn up after the Paris Peace Conference to advocate for increased national autonomy within Czechoslovakia and even the attachment of German-speaking regions to an enlarged German state. Accordingly, Beneš and Masaryk blamed the minority rights system and the "Germanising segments" of Czechoslovakia's German minority for the dismemberment of their state in the Munich Agreement. Soon after their move from Prague into diplomatic exile, Beneš and Masaryk commenced a public relations campaign linking the German minority to German aggression overall. Even though Masaryk, Beneš, and their government could not guarantee whether or when they would return to their homeland, they were certain that a reconstituted Czechoslovakia could not include this 'fifth column'. After the war ended (whenever that might be), the Germans had to go.[19] Problematically, German-speaking Jews with Czechoslovak citizenship could potentially fall into this category.

President Edvard Beneš' wartime views on Czechoslovakia's 'German problem' are well-documented.[20] His key associate Jan Masaryk, by contrast, has received much less attention. Recent contributions by Láníček and Čapková have certainly helped to correct this imbalance. The documentary trail in this article, however, hurtles towards the crisis at the Czechoslovak-Polish border near Náchod and the 1947 meeting of the UN cited above. Thus, this mix of previously cited and new evidence has been harnessed to an original end: to understand how Jewish settlement in Palestine helped solve, at least partially, three 'problems': that related to the German minority, that related to the Jewish minority, and that related to the persistence of statelessness. Along with my forthcoming monograph, *Uncertain Citizenship. Jewish Belonging and the 'Ethnic Revolution' in Poland and Czechoslovakia, 1936–1946*, this article contributes to an exciting conversation that scholars of the twentieth-century Czechoslovak Jewish experience like Láníček, Čapková, Michal Frankl, Rebekah Klein-Pejšová, Anna Cichopek-Garaj, Tatjana Lichtenstein, and Christiane Braun have initiated over the past decade.[21] My research contributes a new vantage point to this rich discussion by positioning the Czechoslovak story within a broader trans-

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19 See Chapter 6 in Bryant, Prague in Black. Also helpful is Chad Bryant, Either German or Czech. Fixing Nationality in Bohemia and Moravia, 1939–1946, in: Slavic Review 61 (Winter 2002) 4, 683-706.

20 See Bryant, Prague in Black, and Zahra, Kidnapped Souls, as well as Frommer, National Cleansing; see also the chapter "The Czechoslovak Government-in-Exile in London. Attitudes and Reactions to the Jewish Plight", in: Livia Rothkirchen, The Jews of Bohemia and Moravia. Facing the Holocaust, Omaha 2006, 160-186; and, most recently, Láníček, Czechs, Slovaks and the Jews.

21 See the contributions by Jan Láníček, The Postwar Czech-Jewish Leadership and the Issue of Jewish Emigration from Czechoslovakia (1945–1950), 76-96, and Kateřina Čapková, Dilemmas of Minority Politics. Jewish Migrants in Postwar Czechoslovakia and Poland, 63-75, in: Francoise S. Ouzan/Manfred Gerstenfeld (ed.), Postwar Jewish Displacement and Rebirth, 1945–1967, Leiden 2014; Jan Láníček, What did it mean to be Loyal? Jewish Survivors in Post-War Czechoslovakia in Comparative Perspective, in: Australian Journal of Politics & History 60 (September 2014) 3, 384-404; Michal Frankl/Kateřina Čapková, Nejisté útočiště. Československo a uprchlíci před nacismem 1933–1938 [An Insecure Haven. Czechoslovakia and Refugees before Nazism 1933–1938], Prague 2008; Jan Láníček, Arnošt Frischer and the Jewish Politics of Early 20th-Century Europe, London/New York 2017; Anna Cichopek-Gajraj, Beyond Violence. Jewish Survivors in Poland and Slovakia in 1944–1948, Cambridge 2014; Lichtenstein, Zionists in Interwar Czechoslovakia; Rebekah Klein-Pejšová, Mapping Jewish Loyalties in Interwar Slovakia, Bloomington 2015; Christiane Brenner, 'Země se vrací'. Konstrukce identity v českém diskursu o pohraničí po roce 1945 ['The Land Will Return'. The Construction of Identity in the Czech Discourse about Borderlands after 1945], in: Proceedings of the Tenth Meeting of Czech Historians, Ostrava 2015, 317-324; and Christiane Brenner, Mezi tradicí a revolucí. Kontinuita a změny v myšlení Edvarda Beneše po druhé světové válce [Between Tradition and Revolution. Continuity and Change in the Thinking of Edvard Beneš after the Second World War], in: Dějiny a současnost [Past and Present] 6 (2004), 40-44.

national history detailing how East Central Europeans of both Jewish and non-Jewish background decided to negate the diaspora and push for an ethnically Jewish state in the Middle East during the first half of the 1940s. To understand how Jan Masaryk became a prime enabler of this 'ethnic revolution', or the process by which East Central European states became ethnically homogenous and Jews became perceived as citizens of their own state on far away Palestinian shores, it is necessary to evaluate Masaryk's wartime views on these three questions and how those views changed (or changed very little) over time.

A note on my sources before we plunge into the document trail: While collections in Prague and London yield a few fresh documents about Jan Masaryk, the archives of the WJC in Cincinnati, Ohio contains a plethora of useful texts that have only recently been studied by scholars of East Central Europe. Láníček and Čapková have mined the documentation of this archive in their recent contributions and this article will reconsider documents that they have used as well as other, new documents, specifically concerning discussions about statelessness and the 1946 events on the Czechoslovak-Polish border that I have decided to prioritise here. The Executive Committee of the WJC wrote to Masaryk, received telegrams from Masaryk, met frequently with Masaryk, corresponded with diplomats under Masaryk's leadership, and spoke amongst themselves about Masaryk, his changing views, and their expectations about him. Masaryk demanded the attention of the WJC for his position as Foreign Minister, the second highest-ranking member of the government based in London, and his ability to communicate in fluent English with other Allied officials.

German Questions, Jewish Questions, and Their Problematic Overlap

Like his colleague Edvard Beneš, Masaryk decided early on during the war that postwar Czechoslovakia should no longer contain an ethnic German minority in the abstract. Over the radio waves on the evening of Wednesday, 23 October 1942, for example, Masaryk addressed the Nazi-appointed State Secretary of the Protectorate Karl Hermann Frank on BBC Czechoslovak-London radio.[22] Speaking mostly in German, he asked "his people in Czech to forgive him for doing so" explaining that their shared language was "too good to use when addressing such jackals". Masaryk used vivid vocabulary to describe the despicable "Germans who are very quick at putting the noose around peoples' necks throughout Europe". With tactics such as "public mass murder and torture", Frank and all "blood suckers are writing a white book of bloody horror, pronouncing [their] own verdict of guilt". After this current conflict, Masaryk declared with certainty that Germany would be defeated and the "disgusting spider of the swastika will be swept away". Punishment would ensue and "evil doers" would face "terrible severity". Masaryk's opinion of German elements within his occupied state rang loudly: they must face their crimes and the consequences.

Masaryk and Beneš agreed that culpable Germans should be punished and excised from Czechoslovak society. But how to weed out the "good Germans" from the "bad Germans"? Furthermore, how to differentiate those persecuted as Jews under Nazi racial laws from others listed as German nationals on the 1930 Czechoslovak

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22 AJA, WJC Collection, Report of the Czechoslovak Press Bureau dated October 23, 1942, H 292. See Chapter 1 of Láníček, Czechs, Slovaks and the Jews for more on the Czech government-in-exile, radio broadcasts, and the BBC. Láníček mentioned this broadcast, but dated it to 1943, not 1942.

census? While Beneš and Masaryk agreed on the exclusion of Germans in postwar Czechoslovakia, they issued sometimes contradictory opinions about Jewish belonging in Czechoslovakia and elsewhere. Masaryk seemed notably less certain than Beneš regarding his stance on Zionism and Jewish settlement in Palestine in the early war years.

For instance, in a speech given at the Royal Albert Hall in London a few days after this radio broadcast on 29 October 1942, Masaryk mentioned Palestine but guaranteed that Jews could return to postwar Czechoslovakia.[23] Addressing an assembly of British Jews, Masaryk reminisced about the equality Jews enjoyed in his interwar state: When "Czechoslovakia again takes its rightful place in the heart of Europe, our Jewish brethren will be welcome and I count on their cooperation in building up what Hitler has destroyed". He noted that, although the audiences' "longing eye often rests on the country of your past glory, Palestine", deliverance would come only if those Jews in the audience fulfilled their "duty one hundred percent as citizens of Great Britain".

Like his colleagues in the WJC, Masaryk spoke more openly about Jewish migration from Europe as the war progressed.[24] However, unlike WJC leaders such as Nahum Goldmann, Arieh Tartakower, Lev Zelmanovits, Maurice Perlzweig, and Zorach Warhaftig who debated to what extent they should negate the diaspora in Europe, build a postwar Jewish home in the Middle East or reinforce Jewish culture within a region that had cradled a unique and demographically numerous Jewish collective, Masaryk had a more overriding concern: endorsed plans to build up a Jewish polity in Mandate Palestine partially as an attempt to solve Czechoslovakia's 'German question'. For if non-Jewish Germans belonged elsewhere, namely in an ethnic German state, then German-speaking Jews belonged elsewhere as well. Because he could not justify the expulsion of German Jews who were suffering under Nazi racial laws, the establishment of a Jewish state allowed Masaryk to solve a very real conundrum: namely how to eliminate the German ethnic element from the Czechoslovak body politic.

Even when Masaryk was invited by Jews to speak about Jews at a Jewish event, his thoughts repeatedly turned to Germans instead. While delivering the Lucien Wolf Memorial Lecture at the Jewish Historical Society of England on 14 September 1943, Masaryk reflected on national minorities in interwar Czechoslovakia. Although he mentioned the Jewish "religious minority" in his former state, his emphasis fell upon the German "racial minority" and the disastrous consequences of their existence. Offering some historical context, Masaryk explained how, soon after the conclusion of the First World War, Czechoslovaks as a whole realised they would have to "share [their] citizenship with Germans, Magyars, Little Russians [Ruthenians from Subcarpathaian Rus] and others".[25] Once the government "found the solution for the German minority" within Czechoslovakia's borders, it could "easily find the solution to other minority problems".[26] Beginning in 1918, the 'German question' and Czechoslovakia's response to it served as twin foundations for the entire minority rights system. By the 1930s, moreover, rabid German nationalism had corroded the

23 AJA, WJC Collection, Masaryk's speech at Royal Albert Hall, London on 29 October 1942, H 98/5. Láníček mentioned this speech but did not analyse it. Láníček, Czechs, Slovaks and the Jews, Chapter 1.

24 On the idea that many members of the exiled diplomatic universe became "empirical Zionists" over the course of the war, see Sarah A. Cramsey, The Palestinian Turn. How Arieh Tartakower and the World Jewish Congress Recast Jewish Belonging Away from East Central Europe, 1940–1945, forthcoming.

25 Jan Masaryk, Minorities and the Democratic State. A Lucien Wolf Memorial Lecture, London 1943, 7.

26 Ibid.

cement binding ethnic German nationals to their Czechoslovak citizenship. No doubt referring to the support directed towards Henlein's party in the Sudetenland, Masaryk lamented that the German minority had proved itself unable to live "entirely unto itself" and exchanged their "Czechoslovak citizenship for German Reich citizenship" when they overwhelmingly voted for Konrad Henlein's Sudetendeutsche Partei in the 1935 parliamentary elections.

Unlike the Jews in the Weimar Republic, who "blended love of country, the true patriotism, with [their] European citizenship", many Germans living in Czechoslovakia "believed in a hierarchy of races", thus destabilising the political life of the First Republic and making the Munich Agreement seemingly inevitable. Masaryk stood before the gathered listeners nearly five years into a conflict spawned by German nationalist aggression. He could not envision a postwar reality in Czechoslovakia that included a replication of the post-First World War minorities system and asked that "the minority problem be settled drastically and with finality".[27] As the problem of the German minorities transcended Czechoslovak borders, the nations as a whole "must take steps to ensure that minorities shall never again act as a lever for power with aggressive designs". Thus, those who opted for German citizenship in the Reich "ceased to be citizens of their former states" and "governments of the liberated countries are, therefore, entitled to decide for themselves whom among the Germans they will restore citizenship". Those German nationals who wished to prove themselves good citizens of Czechoslovakia could apply for their citizenship to be reinstated. Overall, however, the Czechs and Slovaks had to consummate their national life in their own homeland. In Masaryk's view, "members of minorities in all countries have before them a compelling, momentous and irrevocable choice – to work faithfully for the welfare of the countries in which they are living or to get out!"[28] Masaryk did not employ the word "expulsion" nor did he explain how population transfers of ethnic minorities would proceed. The message underlying his vision of the postwar world, however, comes across in unnuanced, ethnic terms.

Bringing his attention back to his audience at the Jewish Historical Society, Masaryk concluded with the pronouncement of a "precious, almost heavenly word – security". Both the Jews and the Czechoslovaks "need and deserve security – economic security, political security, religious security. The future of Europe, nay of the world, depends on that. May it please God that his gift, kept from the Czechoslovaks for a long time and from the Jews for a still infinitely longer time will become our common denominator."[29] Masaryk could have invoked yet another type of security: ethnic security. If the German national minority destabilised Czechoslovakia and represented a fifth-column threat to the democratic state, security depended on the separation of that population from the body politic. He did not utter the name Palestine or demand the creation of an ethnic Jewish polity, but his plea that both Jews and Czechoslovaks deserved "security" independently suggested the existence of two independently secure states.

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27 Ibid, 19.
28 Ibid, 20.
29 Ibid.

Masaryk and Debates over DPs at UNRRA

Just a few weeks after his lecture at the Jewish Historical Society in London, Masaryk travelled to Atlantic City, New Jersey to attend the first conference of UNRRA. There, he encountered WJC official Arieh Tartakower and received readings regarding Jewish topics.[30] Three pamphlets from the meeting remain pressed between caramel coloured folders in the confidential archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The longest piece, "Memorandum on Postwar Relief and Rehabilitation of European Jewry", which was finalised on 11 November 1943, detailed postwar plans for European Jewry as a whole. The list of suggestions comprises twenty-nine pages, briefly mentions the possible "urge to migrate towards Palestine", and recommends that "the task of resettling uprooted Jews must, therefore, be divided between the governmental and intergovernmental machinery on the one hand and the competent Jewish organizations on the other".[31] This more general reading astutely complemented a more specific "Aide Memoire" from the Czechoslovak Jewish Representative Committee published on 5 November 1943, which was specifically addressed to Jan Masaryk. Authored by Czechoslovak Jews Frederick Fried and Hugo Perutz, this pamphlet argued "that the Jewish problem differs from other problems" and that the restoration of family unity for uprooted Jews must motivate postwar planning.[32]

Lest we think that the publications of the WJC fell on deaf ears, a third publication concerning the UNRRA conference was adorned with underlining, highlighting, and a handful of memos stapled to the back.[33] A short, four-page flyer entitled "The Atlantic City Conference of UNRRA" rolled off the presses of the British arm of the WJC in January 1944 and garnered the attention of at least two Czech Foreign Ministry employees working in London exile: Zdeněk Procházka and Hubert Ripka. Both men left evidence of their readership on the worn flyer in the form of thin, wobbly underlining, thick red highlights, and their signatures. Their reading attention focussed on UNRRA discussions concerning the repatriation of DPs to their countries of residence and to other countries willing to accept them.

Which specific passages did Procházka and Ripka mark with their red and black pens? One of the two men underlined that "displaced populations" constituted the "most acute rehabilitation problem". The UNRRA subcommittee dedicated to "Displaced Persons" and the entire council did not specify protocols for Jews as such, instead advocating that the "sole rule of procedure in the case of deportees should be 'repatriation' and that 'repatriation' should mean solely the return of United Nations citizens to their countries of origin".[34] The British Section of the WJC noted a fatal flaw in this logic. Both readers drew attention to the next section and declared that many Jewish refugees after the war "will not find it possible or will not prefer to return to the countries of homes from which they were removed and who should by every rule of justice be aided to resettle elsewhere".[35] As a corrective, the WJC British

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30 Arieh Tartakower was a sociologist from Poland who was in the Executive Committee of the WJC during the 1940s and beginning in 1944 headed the Department for Relief and Rehabilitation.

31 Archiv Ministerstva zahraničních věcí [Archive of the Foreign Ministry, Prague, hereafter AMZV], Aide Memoire of the Jewish Representative to the United Nationals Relief and Rehabilitation Association Meeting in Atlantic City by Frederick Fried and Hugo Perutz, Londýnský Archiv-Důvěrný [London Archive-Secret], Box #33.

32 Dr. Frederick Fried was Chairman of the Czechoslovak Jewish Representative Committee of the WJC while Prof. Hugo Perutz, who was a notable member of the Prague Jewish community, also served on this committee.

33 AMZV, The Atlantic City Conference of UNRRA, Londýnský Archiv-Důvěrný, Box #33.

34 Ibid.

35 Ibid.

Section proposed that "repatriation of deportees [could] take the form not only of returning citizens to their countries of origin but also of returning displaced residents who were not citizens of their country in question to the countries of their 'settled residence'".[36] The British WJC wanted UNRRA to make their DP solution formula more lenient. In this way, personal choices gained leverage, whereby citizenship would not be the deciding factor animating repatriation schemes. These ideas disturbed Procházka and Ripka, not neccessarily because they wanted to impede the resettlement of European Jews, but because they wanted to ensure that German nationals would be excluded from postwar Czechoslovakia.

After the UNRRA conference in Atlantic City, a few other members within the Czech government joined the conversation initiated by Procházka and Ripka to discuss how international plans concerning the repatriation of DPs meshed with internal discussions about the expulsion of German nationals. Plans for the expulsion of German nationals from postwar Czechoslovakia had not necessarily been finalised or detailed, but the idea that population exchanges could ensure postwar peace had been approved personally by Franklin Delano Roosevelt in June 1943 and by Joseph Stalin in December 1943 during private meetings with President Beneš. Czech officials, including Masaryk, vetted UNRRA declarations and the proceedings of the subcommittee devoted to DPs to decipher how freshly established UN precedents could interfere with domestic plans for expulsion.

This deciphering proved difficult, however, because the first UNRRA meeting had not established clear precedents. Moreover, of all the problems UNRRA members had dealt with in Atlantic City, "one of the most difficult" concerned the solutions for the "rehabilitation of displaced persons". In a report dating from the end of November 1943 and disseminated to all government departments in December of that year, a Czech delegate to UNRRA named Josef Hanc detailed the dissonance which plagued discussions of these topics.[37] During subcommittee meetings, "many opinions" were voiced. The Czechs agreed with the Yugoslavs that governments must agree on evacuations but the committee as a whole did not issue an opinion on this statement. The "general resolution given in the end" was that the "delicate and complicated question be solved humanitarily".[38] Hanc, the former Czech Consul General in the United States, did not comment on this vague formulation in the report. Two of his colleagues, Procházka and Ripka, would comment on this in a handful of letters exchanged in early 1944.

In reading over the subcommittee minutes dealing with DPs, Ripka noticed that a slight change in wording could potentially inhibit Czechoslovakia's ability to control the ethnic makeup of its postwar population. In an early meeting of the Subcommittee for Displaced Persons, those assembled – including two Czechoslovaks, Jiří Stolz and Evzen Loebl – confirmed that nationals of UN states or stateless people should "be repatriated to their countries of residence, provided these countries are willing to receive them".[39] Ripka agreed with this formulation, whereby the individual state ultimately decided on the process of repatriation. Language issuing from a

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36 Ibid.
37 AMZV, Josef Hanc, Report on UNRRA Meeting in Atlantic City, Londýnský Archiv-Důvěrný, Box #33. Josef Hanc served as a diplomat in the Czechoslovak Foreign Service, as a lecturer at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy during the war, and wrote in journals and the New York Times on Czechoslovak themes. See for example Czechs and Slovaks Since Munich, in: Foreign Affairs (October 1939), 102-115. Trained as a historian, his books included Tornado Across Europe. The Path of Nazi Destruction from Poland to Greece, New York 1942, and Eastern Europe and the United States, Boston 1942.
38 AMZV, Josef Hanc, Report on UNRRA Meeting in Atlantic City, Londýnský Archiv-Důvěrný, Box #33.
39 AMZV, Letter from Ripka to Procházka on January 25, 1944, Londýnský Archiv-Důvěrný, Box #33

subsequent meeting of this subcommittee, however, did not guarantee the same level of state autonomy. In fact, the will of individual states was completely erased from the repatriation equation. Instead, UNRRA would work "in consultation with member governments to assist in the return of nationals of UN states and stateless people who had been displaced as a result of the war to their countries of settled residence".[40] The prerogative of the individual states was absent in this subcommittee formulation. Ripka saw this slight change as intensely problematic. If an individual state like Czechoslovakia could not control the displaced Germans filtering back to their prewar Bohemian and Moravian homes, then Czechoslovak plans to expunge the body politic of the German national element would be threatened. Accordingly, Czechoslovaks had to work to amend this language and ensure that UN legal codes protected state autonomy. If Stolz and Loebl had protested this revision in the subcommittee, Ripka would have precedence to offer disagreement. He asked Procházka for clarification and direction.[41]

Procházka responded quickly to Ripka's letter. While he registered Ripka's concern for this "serious situation", he considered patience the best possible response. Masaryk's busy schedule precluded time to consider UNRRA's stance on repatriation. Procházka promised to ask Masaryk for guidance moving forward upon the Foreign Minister's return from travelling.[42] Nearly five weeks later, Procházka wrote back to Ripka with Masaryk's response to this repatriation quandary. Procházka had spoken to Masaryk about Ripka's concerns and Masaryk had offered clear responses. First, even though Czechoslovakia had agreed to welcome stateless individuals and refugees from Germany and Austria across her borders, future meetings of UNRRA might allow for further discussions and different solutions regarding this matter. More importantly, Masaryk directly addressed Ripka's fundamental concern regarding the ability of individual states to control the ethnic composition of their body politic. According to Procházka, Masaryk offered assurances that "the expulsion of Germans will be our own affair", despite the "formal adoption" of UNRRA proposals indicating the contrary.[43]

The report submitted by the British Section of the WJC found readership within Czech government circles. Information gleaned from the report, however, did not necessarily inspire discussions devoted to Jewish life in postwar Czechoslovakia. The more meaningful questions revolved around the German issue. Masaryk endorsed UNRRA proposals demanding universal policies towards stateless DPs while simultaneously crafting plans to push German nationals beyond Czechoslovakia's borders. There is no differentiation in this particular paper trail between non-Jewish Germans, Jewish Germans, German-speaking enemies, or German-speaking dissidents working against the 'Third Reich'. Masaryk and his colleagues privately working through UNRRA proposals cast the world in monolithic ethnic terms. Publicly, however, Masaryk vacillated between more nuanced understandings of ethnicised belonging and speaking of the Jews as a discernible entity deserving of their own state.

40 Ibid.
41 Ibid.
42 AMZV, Letter from Procházka to Ripka dated January 26, 1944, Londýnský Archiv-Důvěrný, Box #33.
43 AMZV, Letter from Procházka to Ripka dated March 3, 1944, Londýnský Archiv-Důvěrný, Box #33.

ARTICLE

Public Voice Versus Private Meetings. Masaryk's Contradictory Language

When Masaryk spoke with the press after attending the inaugural 1943 UNRRA conference in Atlantic City, he offered an evaluation of the event infused with Jewish exceptionalism. The 'Jewish problem', Masaryk opined, demanded "a specific treatment" and it was "laughable" to think otherwise.[44] The nations of the world could not "build a permanent peace" without treating Jewish concerns as such in the rehabilitation program. For 2,000 years, Masaryk said, "we Christians have been discriminating against Jews. Let us this once have the courage to discriminate in order to help them finally solve their problem."[45] In this public setting, Masaryk mandated discrimination. In fact, he declared that a permanent peace depended on this particular kind of positive discrimination.

A few months later, however, Masaryk promised to oppose discrimination in all its manifestations throughout the postwar world. At a dinner arranged in his honour by the Czechoslovak Committee of the United Jewish Appeal on 24 May 1944, he reiterated that the UN had a "duty" to deal with the 'Jewish problem' "thoroughly and for all time".[46] It did not follow, however, that there would "be any differentiation on religious grounds among the citizens of the future free and democratic Czechoslovakia". Instead, Masaryk declared that neither he nor Beneš "would be a part of any such indecency". When people returned to Czechoslovakia, "we are not going to ask: are you a Jew or a Catholic or a Protestant?" Rather, the "people at home will ask 'have you done your duty during the terrible crisis that all of us together have been facing the last half a dozen years'".[47] Thus, actions, not discrimination, would provide the foundation for postwar Czechoslovak citizenship.

Perhaps Masaryk revised his call for Jewish discrimination because he stood at a lectern in the midst of fundraising for the United Jewish Appeal. After all, calling for continued, albeit positive, discrimination vis-à-vis the Jewish people might have ruffled the feathers of American Jews advocating for continued support of Jews in the diaspora and equality overall. But the juxtaposition of these two public statements focusses attention towards the precarious position Masaryk held as a deeply respected public figure intent on securing his state the most favourable postwar conditions. Publicly referred to and privately regarded as a loyal friend to the Jewish people by the WJC and others, Masaryk's words carried weight in public opinion and diplomatic circles.

His commitment to the Jews functioned in two, sometimes contradictory, ways. First, he advocated for the re-entry of Czechoslovak Jews into postwar Czechoslovakia. Second, he pressed that the "nations of the world, among them the Jews" gather at peace conference tables to deal with the 'Jewish problem' "intelligently and humanely".[48] Sometimes, these two commitments opposed each other. Czechoslovak Jews who professed German nationality complicated Masaryk's first commitment while also solidifying his allegiance to his second commitment. Masaryk did not expect the Czechoslovak people to ask "are you a Jew or a Catholic or a Protestant" in the wake of liberation. He did, however, assume that his countrymen would ask "are you German?"

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44 Cited in Z.H. Wachsman, Jan Masaryk, Friend of the Jewish People, New York 1943, 16.
45 Ibid.
46 Ibid.
47 Ibid.
48 Ibid, 15.

The dissonance evident in Masaryk's sometimes conflicting visions for Jews in the postwar world appeared once again in a meeting between the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister and two representatives of the WJC. Maurice Perlzweig and Frederick Freid met Masaryk in Washington, D.C. on 16 May 1944 to discuss comments made by Edvard Beneš concerning the repatriation of Jews in general and Czechoslovak Jews in particular after the war. According to the memo filed by Perlzweig a few hours after the meeting, Masaryk issued contradictory statements concerning postwar plans for the reintegration of minorities in Czechoslovak society. In this intimate meeting, Perlzweig explained that disquiet had emerged in Jewish circles by Beneš' declaration "that the return of Czechoslovak Jews must depend on the adoption of some international machinery for the repatriation of Jews".[49] In response, Masaryk "wished to explain the background of the statement

> [. . .] indicating at the same time that he did not see eye to eye with Beneš on this question." Briefly, in Perzlweig's shorthand, "the background was the Sudeten question". During a visit to Churchill before Masaryk left London, "Winston had expressed the hope that the Czechs would get rid of the Germans."[50]

When Masaryk exhibited "hesitation", "Winston reassured him that he meant no harshness, but said that it might be done gently, by giving them 48 hours [sic] notice to go for example".[51] Offering no comment on whether such a short time frame would be harsh or not, Perlzweig continued with his description of the meeting. "Having told this story [about Churchill], Masaryk turned on me and with great conviction said 'there will be no more minorities, Brother Perlzweig.' The rest of the conversation left it crystal clear that the Czechs felt that their loyal support of special minority rights under the old system had been very ill rewarded and that they did not propose to repeat it."[52]

Perlzweig's response to Masaryk's blunt comment harkened back to earlier WJC responses to Beneš' Zionist leanings earlier in the war. He expressed concern for the citizenship status of Jews in the diaspora. The WJC leader "pointed out that [the Sudeten German question] was not the issue and that it was important to reassure public opinion that the citizenship rights of Jews in regard to repatriation would be observed". Masaryk prevaricated and proposed "to make a strong statement about it at a forthcoming meeting of the United Jewish Appeal" and, subsequently, "offered to write out a statement immediately". Perlzweig attached the statement in full. Dated 16 May 1944 and signed by Jan Masaryk, it read:

> "I wish to go on record once again in stating that decent citizens of Czechoslovakia regardless of race or faith will be treated in the same fair manner as was the case before this terrible war started. The treatment of Jews in my country is a matter of personal pride to me and there will be no change whatsoever in this respect. This little statement can be considered as the concerted opinion of the Czechoslovak Government-in-Exile."[53]

Commenting on this statement in his memo, Perlzweig observed that "there is no explicit reference to repatriation, but apparently it is implied in the reiterated prom-

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49   AJA, WJC Collection, Memo to the Office Committee From Dr. Perlzweig on May 16, 1944, H 98/3. Additionally, Perlzweig noted that "it would be impossible for Masaryk to say anything of value if more than two of us were present". Láníček, Czechs, Slovaks and the Jews, references this meeting in Chapter 4, The Jewish Minority in Postwar Czechoslovakia, 116-137.
50   AJA, WJC Collection, Memo to the Office Committee From Dr. Perlzweig on May 16, 1944, H 98/3.
51   Ibid.
52   Ibid.
53   Ibid.

ise of equal rights." During the meeting, Perlzweig and Fried had directed Masaryk to this admission. In response, Masaryk "repeated one of his stock sayings: 'I will not go back without my Jews'".[54]

Thus, a gathering initiated to offer clarification resulted in thicker confusion. In response to a serious question about the status of Jewish repatriates overall, Masaryk offered, to use Perlzweig's wording, "a stock saying" and an incomplete glimpse of a broader context that he did not fully describe. This meeting reveals that even in May 1944, after Beneš had received private guarantees from Roosevelt (June 1943) and Stalin (December 1943) concerning the homogenisation of the Czechoslovak body politic and further reassurances on populations transfers more generally from the Big Three at Teheran, the Sudeten Germans haunted conversations about postwar Jewish life in Masaryk's state. Perlzweig, Fried, and their WJC colleagues were justified in raising the point about procedures for Jewish repatriation. In less than a year, thousands of Czechoslovak Jews bearing German nationality (and most likely German mother tongue) who had survived the war would return to a country where their citizenship rights remained uncertain. The inability of Masaryk (and, to be fair, others in the Czechoslovak government-in-exile) to tease out these 'Jewish problems' from the broader 'German problem' arguably abetted citizenship confusion on the ground in the wake of Hitler's defeat.

Just how deep did Masaryk's suspicions concerning German-speaking Czechoslovak Jews strike? A radio address delivered by Masaryk on the occasion of Rosh Hashanah on 29 September 1943 provides an informative glimpse: Masaryk reminded his Czech-speaking listeners in the United Kingdom or perhaps those intercepting the signal illegally on the continent that on this day Jews in "America, England, Russian, and Palestine" prayed for the "poorest of the poor, who had their synagogues torn down by the German barbarians and were massacred by the millions".[55] Reflecting on the war in general, Masaryk noted that German antisemitism was the "first statement of the German taste for domination and eradication of others" and thus should be considered the first indicator of Hitler's aggressive war. Reflecting on Jews in the diaspora worldwide, Masaryk admitted "it is true that every nation is known by how it treats the Jews, and we behave admirably".[56]

However, Masaryk continued, in a different and provocative tone, "it is also true that some Jews did not behave well. They walked repeatedly through Prague cafés and spoke German [němčili] even after 1933."[57] In the midst of a radio address commemorating the Jewish New Year, in which he spoke of the evils of antisemitism and the murdered Jewish millions, Masaryk recalled that some Czechoslovak Jews acted badly in the waning years of the First Republic, gallivanting around with the German language on their lips. After the war, however, Masaryk predicted, "it will be difficult [...] to find a Czechoslovakian who will make these mistakes again". What to make of this prediction? Was it a veiled threat, or a simple admission that the discrimination and murder unleashed by Nazi Germans would impel German-speaking Czechoslovak Jews towards other languages and more complete integration? He quickly regained his bearings, noting that he had "also know[n] many, very many decent, proper, faithful Jews" who "belonged among us as our own".[58] As he closed his radio remarks, Masaryk assumed a self-congratulatory posture, saying that after

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54 Ibid.
55 Jan Masaryk, Volá Londýn [London Calling], Prague 1948, 261.
56 Ibid.
57 Ibid, 262.
58 Ibid.

the war "our children and the whole world can say that we helped the Jews and we remained descent people amidst German horrors".[59]

Fundamentally, Masaryk's decision to recognise the Jewish New Year is exceptional and justifies journalist Z.H. Wachman's categorisation of him as a "friend to the Jewish people". Masaryk had offered condolences for the wartime Jewish loss, maintained a note of hopefulness moving forward, and exhibited a sensitivity to a religious calendar that was not his own. On the other hand, this address, which was meant to mark the passage of Jewish time, contains problematic references to "Germanising" tendencies amongst Czechoslovak Jews. Poised before a microphone and intent on reaching out to Jews across occupied Europe and in liberated areas as well, Masaryk cast accusations concerning regretful interwar behaviour and a prediction that Germanising Jews would not operate in the same haughty manner after Hitler's defeat. Why include such negative reminiscences in an address containing Rosh Hashanah greetings at a very sombre moment? Masaryk's words are best understood against a backdrop of paranoia. So worried was Masaryk about the ethnic German element in Czechoslovakia that a New Year's speech for a decimated people became an opportunity for pointing fingers and offering a guarantee that Jews in postwar Czechoslovakia would never "Germanise" in the same way again.

Confronting Statelessness at the UN and in Postwar Plans

As Masaryk prepared for another extended trip to the United States early in 1945, the entire Czechoslovak government-in-exile prepared for their return to continental Europe. In March, Masaryk went to San Francisco for the inaugural session of the UN. Beneš, on the other hand, travelled east, beyond Prague towards Moscow, where his overland homeward journey would commence. If, as they initiated their equally circuitous routes back towards Prague, the two men contemplated the fate of German nationals (of Jewish and non-Jewish background) in postwar Czechoslovakia, the heralding of 1945 also occasioned action with regards to another neighbouring state: Poland. On 1 January 1945, the Soviet Union, which had severed diplomatic relationships with the London Poles after the discovery of the massacre of Polish soldiers at Katyn in the spring of 1943, recognised the Government of National Unity as the government of Poland. At the end of that same month, Czechoslovakia became only the second state to do the same. The British and the Americans still considered the London Poles as representing the Polish state. Thus, a sovereignty dispute resulted in the convening of the first meeting of the UN without Polish representation: Neither of the "Polish governments" was present in Atlantic City. With Germany, Austria, and Hungary absent from the UN's gathering (as the former Axis powers they were not at first admitted to the UN), Czechoslovakia was the only East Central European government present in San Francisco. Thus, the mail room at Masaryk's Foreign Ministry office once again became a receptacle for guidance and requests from Jewish organisations concerned with East Central European Jews in general.

The final section of this article turns to the category of statelessness and how ideas about this condition influenced Masaryk's more general worldview concerning Germans, Czechoslovak Jews, and the ethnic revolution. Discussions of statelessness were omnipresent in international circles during the Second War World. Statelessness and citizenship are mutually exclusive: Therefore, to eradicate statelessness, a

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59 Ibid, 263.

political entity must bestow citizenship or an international organisation must create a new category for political belonging which transcends state borders. As the Second World War drew to a close, few serious discussions at international levels entertained the reintroduction of Nansen passports or the creation of a new status that would simply prolong statelessness. Instead, it became "generally accepted doctrine that statelessness is undesirable".[60] Thus, nationality law had to be reformed in such a way that "every individual may have a nationality and statelessness may be eliminated". In the words of a booklet produced by the British Section of the WJC, which arrived at Czechoslovakia's Foreign Ministry in March 1945, the "abolition of statelessness can only be a humanely satisfactory remedy if nationality warrants the enjoyment of fundamental human rights by all nationals".[61] In other words, for statelessness to vanish, the category of nationality needed to guarantee basic rights for all people regardless of nationality.

The author of the article, legal scholar Paul Weis, explained that "there is no basis in present international law for a right to a nationality; neither has the individual a right to acquire a nationality at birth, nor does international law prohibit loss of nationality after birth by deprivation or otherwise".[62] This situation placed the individual at the mercy of the "nationality-granting" state. Due to an "exaggerated conception of the state", "the unlimited exercise of its sovereign omnipotence", and the "lack of effective international machinery for the enactment and enforcement of universal rules", the individual floated alone on the high seas, cast off from political lifelines. As long as "nationality is the link between the individual and the benefits of the Law of Nations, legal policy regarding nationality must see its task in providing this link". Nationality should be conceived of as a "means" towards a specific aim: the "enjoyment of the benefits of the Law of Nationals and – ultimately – of the Rights of Man by all of those rights which are common to all men".[63]

To foreground his argument, Weis made reference to a series of denaturalisation laws passed in the 1930s which stripped groups of citizenship rights. These laws had had a sizeable impact on his own life: Born in Vienna in 1907, Weis had been a law student when he lost his citizenship and faced internment in Dachau in 1938 and 1939.[64] While describing the revisions of German and later Austrian law, Weis emphasised the Jewish predicament which emerged in a variety of occupied countries as Nazi German law was instituted by the occupiers. Stateless people were by default "unprotected".[65] The status of statelessness was hereditary and only stateless people codified as refugees could claim international protections. Statelessness evaporated only after repatriation, naturalisation in another state, marriage, or death. Notably, migrations directed towards Palestine and America did not lead to statelessness as these immigrants were in a position to "acquire the nationality of the country of immigration".[66]

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60 AMZV, Paul Weis, The Problem of Statelessness, Londýnský Archiv [London Archive], Box #440, 3.

61 Ibid, 3. Weis offered a clarification in terminology: "in this paper nationality is used in the Anglo American sense to denote membership in a state and not in the sense used in Central Europe, where it denotes belonging to a nation".

62 Ibid, 36.

63 Ibid, 36.

64 For biographical information, see Ivor Jackson, Editorial Paul Weis, 1907–1991, in: International Journal of Refugee Law 3 (1991) 2, 183-184. For a broader postwar overview of the issues in this pamphlet, see Paul Weis, Nationality and Statelessness in International Law, London 1956. Weis was connected to the International Refugee Organization and was a legal advisor to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva.

65 AMZV, Paul Weis, The Problem of Statelessness, 4.

66 Ibid, 19.

Seeking a solution to the problem of statelessness, Weis argued that simply "allotting stateless persons a nationality" would not ameliorate the situation. Rather, the "question has to be decided whether the nationality to be allotted is the nationality of the State with which the person is in fact most closely connected".[67] So the "will of the people" had to be ascertained before nationality could be fixed. As the individual and the group were entitled to state belonging as a basic human right, the power and authority of individual states was, necessarily, constrained. The state could no longer indiscriminately deprive someone of nationality and could not arbitrarily cast out citizens until those people had acquired political belonging elsewhere.[68] To cite Weis directly: "under existing customary International Law, no State may refuse to receive back into its territory any of its nationals or former nations unless the latter has acquired another nationality. It is desirable that this rule should be laid down unconditionally and unambiguously by contractual legislation."[69]

Therefore, Weis recommended that in countries like Czechoslovakia, where Jews might want to live again, returning prewar citizens should obtain their former political status *ipso jure*, as legislation initiated by occupying powers was to be rescinded. Those Jews who possessed wartime citizenship in Axis countries, however, could decide not to reacquire their prewar nationality. Compulsory repatriation may have been out the question, but decisions regarding citizenship were to be made by individuals and not necessarily by state powers. For example, a reinstatement of interwar citizenship laws across Nazi-occupied Europe would allow Jews to return to their former countries of residence. For those Jews refusing to return to their prewar homes in Germany, Austria, Italy, Bulgaria, Romania, and France, the eradication of statelessness would have opened up an aperture for the creation of new citizenships elsewhere, as in Palestine or the western hemisphere. Weis himself would have fallen into this category had he not acquired British citizenship in 1947. After being released from Dachau in 1939, he had managed to emigrate to England, where he continued his law studies and began his work for the British Section of the WJC. On the question of whether Jewish DPs should have the right to emigrate directly to Palestine, as the final resolution of the WJC's War Emergency Congress demanded, Weis was silent. He did not address this specifically in his paper as "it requires special and most careful examination in connection with the entire Palestinian problem".[70]

In the end, Weis articulated a handful of distinct demands. First, he asked that "nobody should be deprived of his nationality for reasons of discrimination (political, racial, religious or other)" in the future.[71] Second, he suggested that old nationalities should be restored "from the date on which they were deprived of it".[72] Both of these fundamental demands were translated into Czech and sent from Procházka's desk to the Ministry of the Interior soon after the pamphlet arrived at the Ministry's London office in March 1945. Why did these two demands provoke concern in Czechoslovak government circles? The memorandum attached to the translation does not offer an explanation. Perhaps, however, we can deduce from the evidence presented in this article why Weis' revision of "statelessness" as a viable political category would threaten postwar plans for a reconstituted Czechoslovak body politic.

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67 Ibid, 21-22.
68 Ibid, 22.
69 Ibid, 23.
70 Ibid, 23.
71 Ibid, 23.
72 Ibid, 24.

As illustrated by numerous examples, Masaryk and his colleagues in the Czechoslovak government-in-exile desperately wanted Germans out of postwar Czechoslovakia. Accordingly, they approached the issue of statelessness with this paramount concern woven throughout their thoughts. So, if German-speaking Jews from Czechoslovakia could automatically regain their prewar citizenship with the backing of international law, a small but noticeable number (arguably between 1,500-2,000 people) would potentially have legal rights to stay in Czechoslovakia, thereby complicating the expulsion of Germans. Both Paul Weis and the WJC wanted to guarantee that Jews could not arbitrarily be deprived of political belonging in the future, and both wanted previously annulled citizenships to be reinstated. In general, Masaryk hoped that citizenship would be reinstated for Jews as well. He did not, however, want German-speaking Jews to remain in his Czechoslovakia, despite their prewar citizenship status as Czechoslovaks. Herein lies the contradiction: Masaryk, the steadfast friend of the WJC in Allied diplomatic circles, wanted German-speaking Jews to gain citizenship elsewhere, perhaps in an ethnically Jewish state, so that Czechoslovakia's plans for postwar ethnic homogeneity could be more completely realised. The emergence of Palestine as a state for 'ethnic' Jews offered Masaryk a solution to the perennial 'Jewish problem', the problem of statelessness, and the problem of minorities in Czechoslovakia and East Central Europe overall.

At the end of June 1945, delegates from 44 nations individually approached a table laden with two volumes, the UN Charter and the Statute of the International Court of Justice, to add their signatures to the freshly finalised international covenant. Even after four weeks of meetings and assembly, much remained unsolved. A definitive resolution on statelessness did not emerge from this gathering. In fact, the UN did not issue official conventions on statelessness until 1954 and 1961 respectively. Further, the UN assembly in San Francisco did not produce definitive guidelines for dealing with Jewish victims of Nazi persecution. In fact, many months later, continued attempts to enshrine a category specifically for Jewish DPs in international law met with failure until February 1946.[73] At that time, resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations included "persons who, having resided in Germany or Austria, and being of Jewish origin" as constituting "refugees".[74] Beyond this, no mention of "Jewishness" was encoded in UNRRA or other United Nation's policies in the immediate postwar years.

Without clear directives on these two important topics, Masaryk left California and, for the first time in seven years, travelled home towards Prague. He arrived in Prague in the summer of 1945 as a "somber optimist".[75] He strongly felt that "Europe must be saved" in the wake of Hitler's war. But what would "Europe" look like after this intervention? Masaryk returned to Czechoslovakia anxious to recast his state in a new, ethnically homogenous image. A few points had coalesced in his mind in descending degrees of clarity. First, most Germans, including some German-speaking Jews with interwar Czechoslovak identity documents, would not be welcomed back. Second, by supporting Zionist ambitions to establish a Jewish state on the territory of Mandatory Palestine, Masaryk could further justify his plans to create an ethnically homogeneous Czechoslovakia through any means possible. Moreover, Ger-

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73 AMZV, Report of the special committee for Refugees, London 8 April – 1 June 1946, Mezinárodní Odbory [International Organisations], Box # 206.

74 See Annex #1 of the Draft Constitution for the International Refugee Organization, presented to the General Assembly of the United Nations on 13 December 1946, https://www.unhcr.org/protection/historical/3ae68bee8/refugees-displaced-persons-report-third-committee.html [accessed January 9, 2019].

75 AMZV, Journal of the Third Session of the Council London, Aug 7-25 1945, Mezinárodní Odbory, Box #206.

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man-speaking Jews who had citizenship in interwar Czechoslovakia could claim another potential homeland in a Jewish polity. Third, the wider ethnic revolution, which promised to cement new links between "land" and "people", had the potential to improve the condition of statelessness.

This article has argued that Masaryk's understanding of postwar Jewish questions, namely who belonged to the Jewish people and where those Jewish people belonged geographically, cannot be unwoven from broader questions regarding German belonging in the Czechoslovak body politic and the more general issue of statelessness. While Masaryk remained committed to resolving statelessness as a condition and wanted to protect Czech- and Slovakian-speaking Jews in his reconstituted postwar state, his commitment to purging Czechoslovakia of its German-speaking minority trumped his other beliefs. This obsession with cleansing the Czechoslovak body politic of Germans, the German language, and a German collective identity captivated Jan Masaryk so much that he sometimes failed to differentiate German-speaking Czechoslovak Jews from the broader ethnically German mass. Therefore, scholars who desire to understand how Jan Masaryk utilized his power and influence to keep the *bricha* flowing across the Polish-Czechoslovak border in 1946 must evaluate how his broader worldview necessitated the reorganisation of all East Central European peoples along ethnic lines. In this way, Masaryk's commitment in the summer of 1946 to keeping the border open and the facilities in the town of Náchod accessible to Polish Jews trading their former heterogeneous homeland for a faraway and imagined ethnically homogeneous polity, as captured in his 1947 speech at the UN, is best understood within the context of the overall 'ethnic revolution' which gripped the region between Berlin and Moscow throughout the 1940s.

Sarah Cramsey

Historian, Tulane University

scramsey@tulane.edu

Article

Copy Editor:
Tim Corbett

Anna-Raphaela Schmitz

„Meine Familie hatte es gut in Auschwitz"

Das Leben der Lager-SS in Auschwitz-Birkenau nach Dienstschluss

Abstract

For SS personnel, the Auschwitz concentration and extermination camp was a workplace and residence. This article focuses on the lives of the male perpetrators after official hours and explores what influence this had on their work within the camp complex and vice versa. Family structures as well as comradeship among perpetrators were meant to help maintain a subjectively experienced sense of 'normality'. Retrospectively, it seems difficult to imagine that the SS families managed to have a 'normal' life in close proximity to the concentration camp. They benefited from the amenities of the infrastructure that developed around the camp complex. They often took advantage of the practice of robbery and appropriation of the prisoners' goods. Since work life and private life in Auschwitz-Birkenau were intertwined in this way, the Holocaust and the mass crimes should also be examined from this perspective.

Als soziales Gefüge war der Lagerkomplex Auschwitz-Birkenau ein von extremen Erfahrungen geprägter Raum. Aus den unterschiedlichen Zeugnissen, Erlebnisberichten und Ego-Dokumenten aus diametral entgegengesetzten Perspektiven[1] geht hervor, dass die Wahrnehmungen unterschiedlicher nicht sein könnten: Für die Lagerinsassen war das größte Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslager eine Stätte des Terrors und konstanter Todesangst. Für die Täter war Auschwitz, zumindest auf den ersten Blick, einfach nur ein Dienst- oder Wohnort. Die SS-Männer führten häufig ein aktives Familienleben, zelebrierten auch außerhalb der Lagergrenzen Kameradschaft und fanden Gefallen an verschiedensten Freizeitvergnügen. Lagerkommandant Rudolf Höß beispielsweise genoss die Zeit nach Dienstschluss mit seiner Frau und den Kindern im eigenen Heim. Fotos zeigen die Familie bei heiteren Spielstunden im eigenen Garten, nur wenige Meter von den Lagergrenzen entfernt.[2]

1 Rudolf Höß in: Jadwiga Bezwinska/Danuta Czech, KL Auschwitz in den Augen der SS, Katowice 1981: Aus diesem Werk (Seite 14) ist auch das Titelzitat dieses Beitrags entnommen; vgl. weiter: Hermann Langbein, Menschen in Auschwitz, Wien 1972, Anita Lasker-Wallfisch, Ihr sollt die Wahrheit erben. Die Cellistin von Auschwitz. Erinnerungen, Hamburg 2001; H.G. Adler, Auschwitz. Zeugnisse und Berichte, Frankfurt 1984; Henryk Mandelbaum, I was at the Auschwitz Crematorium. A Conversation with Henryk Mandelbaum Former Prisoner and Member of the Sonderkommando at Auschwitz, [Oświęcim] 2011; Alan Haft, Eines Tages werde ich alles erzählen: Die Überlebensgeschichte des jüdischen Boxers Hertzko Haft, Göttingen 2009; Primo Levi, Ist das ein Mensch? München1992; Wiesław Kielar, Anus Mundi. Fünf Jahre Auschwitz. Frankfurt am Main 1982; Ella Lingens-Reiner, Gefangene der Angst. Ein Leben im Zeichen des Widerstandes, Wien 2003.

2 Einige Privatfotografien der Familie Höß finden sich bei Rainer Höß, Das Erbe des Kommandanten. Rudolf Höß war der Henker von Auschwitz. Er war mein Großvater. Geschichten einer schrecklichen Familie, München 2013.

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Wie trennten die SS-Männer die Sphären Arbeitsalltag und private Freizeit und inwieweit war dies vor dem Referenzrahmen aus Gewalt und Massenmord überhaupt möglich? Zentrale Fragen sind folglich, in welchem Umfeld sich das Bewachungspersonal nach Dienstschluss bewegte. Ferner, was die SS-Führung dazu bewegte, den Männern vor Ort – trotz aller Reglementarien und Normen – individuelle Räume zuzugestehen.[3]

Aus der heutigen Perspektive ist es schwer nachzuvollziehen, dass die Täter und ihre Familien in direkter Nähe zum KZ Auschwitz ein ‚normales‘[4] Leben führen konnten. Doch beide Sphären – der verbrecherische Dienst und der Familienalltag – waren klar voneinander getrennt, jedoch auch voneinander abhängig und über die handelnden Individuen miteinander verbunden. Ein Großteil der Lager-SS war davon überzeugt, im Sinne der NS-Ideologie einen Dienst für das Vaterland zu leisten. Trotz ihrer persönlichen politischen Vorstellungen mussten viele Männer sich erst an die mörderischen Gegebenheiten in Auschwitz gewöhnen, um sich anschließend von ihrer Arbeit als Privatmensch abzuschirmen. Die „Selbsthingabe“[5] und Pflichterfüllung für die nationalsozialistische Ideologie galt sowohl für die männlichen als auch für die weiblichen Mitglieder dieser „verschworenen Gemeinschaft“.[6] Der Psychologe Robert Jay Lifton deutet die Ambivalenz zwischen der Freizeit der SS-Männer und der Brutalität der Mordprozesse innerhalb der Lagermauern als Auswirkung einer „Doppelung“ der Täterpersönlichkeiten, also einer Trennung ihrer „Selbst in zwei unabhängig voneinander funktionierende Ganzheiten“:[7] ein „Auschwitz-Selbst“ der Männer und ein „ursprüngliches Selbst“ als Privatperson.[8] Die letzten Sätze in den autobiographischen Aufzeichnungen des ehemaligen Lagerkommandanten knüpfen an die „zwei Gesichter“ der SS-Täter im Konzentrationslager an und zeigen, wie sich viele Männer – zumindest unbewusst – wahrnahmen:

> „Mag die Öffentlichkeit ruhig weiter in mir die blutrünstige Bestie, den grausamen Sadisten, den Millionenmörder sehen – denn anders kann sich die breite Masse den Kommandanten von Auschwitz gar nicht vorstellen. Sie würde doch nie verstehen, daß der auch ein Herz hatte, daß er nicht schlecht war.“[9]

Der Kontrast zwischen Privatsphäre der Lager-SS einerseits und deren Rolle im Vernichtungsprozess andererseits, hätte größer nicht sein können. Dennoch war gerade ein stabiles privates Umfeld der Täter eine wesentliche Voraussetzung dafür, dass der Massenmord so ‚reibungslos‘ realisiert werden konnte.

Bislang sind Studien über den Alltag der SS-Kameraden in Konzentrationslagern während ihres Dienstes und in ihrer Freizeit ein Forschungsdesiderat. Das Privatleben der Täter wird meist nur am Rande in Studien über einzelne Lager themati-

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3   Trotz der Klarheit über die Binnendifferenzierung, wird in diesem Aufsatz der Begriff *privat* synonym mit denen wie *Freizeit, Freiraum, individuelle Handlungsräume* verwendet. Vor allem im Hinblick auf den Unterschied aus: *von oben vorgegebenen und organisierten, vorstrukturierten Freizeitaktivitäten* und tatsächlichen individuellen Handlungsfreiräumen, die ihrerseits sowohl konform wie auch nonkonform zu den nationalsozialistischen Prämissen sein können, aber eben nicht müssen.

4   Rolf Pohl (Hg.), Normalität der NS-Täter? Eine kritische Auseinandersetzung, Hannover 2011.

5   Martin Broszat (Hg.), Kommandant in Auschwitz. Autobiographische Aufzeichnungen des Rudolf Höß, München 2015, 223.

6   Bastian Hein, Himmlers Orden. Das Auslese- und Beitrittsverfahren der Allgemeinen SS, in: Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte 59 (2011) 2, 263-280, 265; Broszat (Hg.), Kommandant in Auschwitz, 21 und 25.

7   Robert Jay Lifton, Ärzte im Dritten Reich, Stuttgart 1988, 491.

8   Ebd., 496 f.

9   Broszat (Hg.), Kommandant in Auschwitz, 235. Beispielsweise galt der Kommandant von Auschwitz-Birkenau weithin als treusorgender Familienvater.

siert.[10] Dezidiertes Anliegen der hier auszugsweise vorgestellten Studie ist es demgegenüber, individuelle Freiräume der Täter – sowohl zugestandene wie nonkonforme – als Ermöglichungskriterium des Holocaust zu begreifen. Relevante Dokumente für einen solchen Blick auf entsprechende soziale Praktiken der SS-Mitglieder sind unter anderem Erinnerungsberichte ehemaliger Häftlinge. Um Aufschluss über Wahrnehmungen und Erfahrungen aus Sicht der Täter zu gewinnen, sind Ego-Dokumente wie Briefe oder Tagebücher wichtige Quellen. Prominente Beispiele dafür sind die autobiographischen Aufzeichnungen von Lagerkommandant Rudolf Höß oder das Tagebuch des SS-Mediziners Johann Paul Kremer.[11] Ebenfalls bieten die Standort- und Kommandanturbefehle des Konzentrationslagers Auschwitz wichtige Einblicke in das private Leben der Männer mit ihren Frauen und Kindern direkt neben den Stätten ihres Mord- und Tötungseinsatzes.[12]

Auch die Fotografien des *Höcker-Albums*[13] dokumentieren das Leben der SS-Mitglieder außerhalb der Lagergrenzen. Die Aufnahmen des ehemaligen Adjutanten des Kommandanten Richard Baer, Karl Höcker, zählen fachlich betrachtet zur Kategorie „fotografische Selbstinszenierung". Zwar finden sich in dem Album auch Bilder zu dienstlichen Anlässen, doch liegt der Fokus auf der Dokumentation von privaten Zusammenkünften der SS-Männer und der SS-Helferinnen („SS-Maiden")[14] in deren Gefolge. Der Großteil des Fotoalbums zeigt Mitglieder der Lager-SS bei unterschiedlichen Freizeitaktivitäten wie der Jagd, Feierlichkeiten, Kameradschaftsabenden oder Ausflügen.

Das Lebensumfeld des SS-Personals

Im riesigen „Interessengebiet des KL Auschwitz"[15] entstanden rund um den Lagerkomplex Siedlungen mit Häusern und Wohnungen für die Familien der SS-Männer, eine Schule und ein Kindergarten, Kino und Theater, Geschäfte, sowie Gemüse- und Blumengärten.[16] Im Rahmen der städtebaulichen Modernisierung wurde Wohnraum für einige tausend Männer und ihre Angehörigen konzipiert.[17] Für den

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10 Marija Vulesica (Hg.), Bewachung und Ausführung. Alltag der Täter in nationalsozialistischen Lagern, in: Geschichte der Konzentrationslager 1933–1945, Band 14, Berlin 2011. Vgl. weiters das Forschungsprojekt *Die Lager-SS Mauthausen/The Mauthausen SS-Camp*, das am Institut für Zeitgeschichte Wien unter Leitung von Bertrand Perz durchgeführt wurde.

11 Martin Broszat (Hg.), Kommandant in Auschwitz, vgl. auch: Tagebucheinträge von Johann Paul Kremer, in: Bezwinska/Czech, Auschwitz in den Augen der SS, 140-207.

12 Norbert Frei/Thomas Grotum/Jan Parcer/Sybille Steinbacher/Bernd C. Wagner (Hg.), Standort und Kommandanturbefehle des Konzentrationslagers Auschwitz 1940–1945, München 2000.

13 Im Dezember 2006 erwarb das United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) in Washington, D.C. von einem anonym gebliebenen ehemaligen Soldaten der US-Army das Fotoalbum von Karl Höcker mit seinen 116 Aufnahmen: Christophe Busch/Stefan Hördler/Robert Jan van Pelt (Hg.), Das Höcker-Album. Auschwitz durch die Linse der SS, Darmstadt 2016.

14 In der Organisation SS-Helferinnenkorps arbeiteten Frauen für die Waffen-SS. Im Gegensatz zu den Frauen im SS-Gefolge, die nur Zivilangestellte waren, zählten die SS-Helferinnen („SS-Maiden" genannt) zur Waffen-SS und waren somit vollgültige Mitglieder der ,SS-Sippengemeinschaft'. Vgl. dazu: Jutta Mühlenberg, Das SS-Helferinnenkorps. Ausbildung, Einsatz und Entnazifizierung der weiblichen Angehörigen der Waffen-SS 1942–1949, Hamburg 2011.

15 Das „Interessengebiet des KL Auschwitz" war offiziell zwischen 1941 bis Januar 1945 ein Sperrgebiet der SS für den Lagerkomplex Auschwitz-Birkenau. In dem zuletzt etwa 40 Quadratkilometer großen Areal lagen die drei Lagerbereiche, Werkstätten, SS-Betriebe sowie die Landwirtschaftsbetriebe des Lagerkomplexes und dessen Außenlager; siehe Angelika Königseder, Die Entstehung des Lagers und das „Interessengebiet" Auschwitz, in: Wolfgang Benz/Barbara Distel (Hg.), Der Ort des Terrors. Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager, Band 5: Hinzert, Auschwitz, Neuengamme, München 2007, 83 f.

16 Gudrun Schwarz, Eine Frau an seiner Seite. Ehefrauen in der „SS-Sippengemeinschaft", Hamburg 1997, 100.

17 Einleitung in Frei (Hg.), Standort und Kommandanturbefehle, ii.

Bau der großen Siedlungen war zuvor die einheimische polnische Bevölkerung aus ihren Dörfern vertrieben, ihre Häuser beschlagnahmt und diese in das Gebiet eingegliedert worden.

So entstand ein Areal mit einer Bedarfsinfrastruktur, die sowohl dem öffentlichen und dem dienstlichen, als auch dem Freizeitleben der SS-Mitglieder diente: landwirtschaftliche Güter, eine Pflanzenzuchtstation, Laboratorien, Anlagen für die Pferde-, Geflügel-, Fisch- und Schweinezucht sowie Anlagen für den Ackerbau.[18] Zu der SS-Siedlung gehörten darüber hinaus ein Kaffeehaus, eine „Führerunterkunft" (Wohnungen für nicht verheiratete SS-Mitglieder), ein „Führerheim" (Kasino), eine „Ärzteunterkunft" (Wohnungen für ledige Mediziner), die Truppenunterkunft (Kasernen für die SS-Wachmannschaften), das SS-Reviergebäude (Spital), Unterkünfte für die Angestellten der Deutschen Ausrüstungswerke, für Polizisten sowie die Mitarbeiter in den landwirtschaftlichen Betrieben. Verheiratete SS-Führer lebten mit ihren Angehörigen in eigenen Wohnungen oder Häusern, ebenfalls in der Nähe der Lagerumzäunungen.[19] Populärer Treffpunkt für die Lager-SS war das *Deutsche Haus* am Bahnhofsplatz der Stadt. Ausschließlich für Deutsche reserviert, fungierte es als Gasthaus für die SS-Männer und als Hotel für wichtige auswärtige Gäste der Kommandantur. Dort befand sich ein Restaurant mit Bar. Hier trafen sich die Männer zum Essen, Trinken oder Kartenspielen.[20] Die SS-Mitglieder und ihr Gefolge konnten Sportangebote wahrnehmen, hatten einen eigenen Fußballplatz, ein Schwimmbecken, eine eigene Saunaanlage.[21] Auch ein Bordell war vorhanden.[22]

‚Privater' Alltag der Täter

Das Alltagsleben der Täter in Auschwitz war von der SS-Führung in hohem Maße reglementiert und organisiert. So trifft hier der Terminus „normierter Alltag" zu, den Stephan Lehnstaedt bereits in seinem Werk zu den besetzten Städten Warschau und Minsk aufgreift.[23] Der Privatalltag der SS-Mitglieder in Auschwitz wurde durch die politischen Vorstellungen der übergeordneten Organisation in hohem Maße instrumentalisiert. Von der SS-Führung implementierte unterschiedliche Restriktionen im Freizeitbereich normierten und sanktionierten das Privatverhalten der Männer vor Ort. Die in Auschwitz erlebte ‚Privatheit' erfüllte so eine von den Machthabern forcierte pragmatische Funktion und sollte vor allem die Motivation für den gewalttätigen Dienst und die Kameradschaft aufrechterhalten. Privatsphäre in der nationalsozialistischen Diktatur – und insbesondere für die SS-Funktionäre – un-

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18 Eintrag November 1940, in: Danuta Czech, Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939–1945, Reinbek1989, 64; weiters Eintrag vom 17. März 1941, in: ebd., 81 sowie Eintrag vom 25. April 1941, in: ebd., 89; vgl. auch Deborah Dwork/Robert Jan van Pelt, Auschwitz. Von 1270 bis heute, Zürich u. a. 1998.

19 Schwarz, Frau an seiner Seite, 118.

20 Sybille Steinbacher, „Musterstadt" Auschwitz. Germanisierungspolitik und Judenmord in Ostoberschlesien, München u. a. 2000, 189.

21 Jutta Mühlenberg, „… als junge Mädels andere Interessen hatten." Das SS-Helferinnenkorps im Umfeld der Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslager 1942–1945, in: Angelika Benz/Marija Vulesica (Hg.), Bewachung und Ausführung. Alltag der Täter in nationalsozialistischen Lagern, in: Geschichte der Konzentrationslager 1933–1945. Band 14, Berlin 2011, 123.

22 Standortbefehl Nr. 14/44 vom 8. Mai 1944, in: Frei (Hg.), Standort und Kommandanturbefehle, 445 f; Robert Sommer, Die Häftlingsbordelle im KZ Komplex Auschwitz-Birkenau, in: Akim Jah/Christoph Kopke/Alexander Korb/Alexa Stiller (Hg.), Nationalsozialistische Lager. Neue Beiträge zur NS-Verfolgungs- und Vernichtungspolitik und zur Gedenkstättenpädagogik, Münster 2006, 101.

23 Stephan Lehnstaedt, Okkupation im Osten. Besatzeralltag in Warschau und Minsk 1939–1944, München 2010.

terlag oftmals der Kontrolle und der Sozialdisziplinierung durch das Regime. Abweichungen von der Norm und individuelles Verhalten waren verpönt. Freizeit im eigentlichen Sinne – als dienstfreier Zeitraum, über den der Einzelne tendenziell frei bestimmen kann – existierte für die Lager-SS kaum. Ständig der Kontrolle von Vorgesetzten, aber auch ihresgleichen ausgesetzt, waren die Möglichkeiten selbst bedingt private Räume ‚auszuhandeln‘ kaum gegeben: In ihrer Funktion als „politische Soldaten"[24] waren sie stets für den „Schutz der Heimat"[25] im Dienst. Jedes Zugeständnis an Privatheit suggerierte letztlich den Tätern aber auch, dass sie in Auschwitz einer ‚normalen‘ Arbeit nachgingen – was nicht ausschließt, dass sie diese tatsächlich auch als eine solche wahrnahmen.

Der Handlungsrahmen der Lager-SS war durch das soziale Umfeld in direkter Nähe zu den Lagergrenzen meist vorgegeben. Weil sie sich um den laufenden Betrieb von Auschwitz-Birkenau kümmerten, hatten sie keine geregelten Dienstzeiten und mussten bei Bedarf am Tag oder bei Nacht arbeiten. Da viele SS-Mitglieder in Gemeinschaftsunterkünften wie Kasernen oder Wohnheimen untergebracht waren, in der allgemeinen Kantine speisten oder an vorgegebenen Freizeitveranstaltungen teilnahmen, war ihr Leben vor Ort einer beträchtlichen Anzahl von Regeln und Restriktionen unterworfen. Die Männer wurden durch die SS-Führung ganz bewusst an ihre Unterkünfte gebunden, um zum einen die Kameradschaft zu fördern und sie zum anderen von den einheimischen Lokalitäten, wie beispielsweise Gaststätten, oder den polnischen Bewohnern fernzuhalten. Generell sollten die Männer am Dienst- und Wohnort stets die ‚deutsche Herrenrasse‘ vertreten und damit einen elitären Habitus zur Schau stellen. Primär galt es, das Ansehen der ‚höherwertigen‘ SS-Organisation keinesfalls zu beschädigen.[26] Die Männer konnten darüber hinaus auch in ihrer Freizeit kaum unbehelligt kommunizieren, galten sie doch als Geheimnisträger und waren so zur Verschwiegenheit verpflichtet.[27] Interne Kommunikationswege und die Mitwisserschaft stärkten eine vermeintliche ‚Gemeinschaft‘ und suggerierte den Tätern einem exklusiven Zirkel anzugehören.[28]

Die Lager-SS musste meist die vorgegebenen Freizeitveranstaltungen, wie Theater- oder Kinovorführungen, Konzerte oder Sportwettkämpfe, wahrnehmen und feierte die Feste, die mit der nationalsozialistischen Ideologie konform gingen. Die Freizeitgestaltung war nicht das einzig strategische Element zur ‚Gemeinschaftsstiftung‘ der SS-Führer. Auch andere Anlässe, wie zum Beispiel Gedenkfeiern oder Begräbnisse von Kameraden, wurden gemeinsam zelebriert.[29] Der Rückhalt in der Kameradschaft war fern der Heimat umso wichtiger, konnte familiäre Bindungen stellenweise ersetzen, entledigte sie aber auch jeglicher externer Kontrolle.[30] Oft waren Kameradschaftsabende Pflicht für die SS-Männer in Auschwitz. Die Täter bewegten

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24 Bernd Wegner, Hitlers Politische Soldaten. Die Waffen-SS 1933–1945. Leitbild, Struktur und Funktion einer nationalsozialistischen Elite, Paderborn/Wien 1997.

25 Rede von Heinrich Himmler vor SS-Gruppenführern am 8. November 1938, in: Bradley F. Smith/Agnes F. Peterson (Hg.), Heinrich Himmler, Geheimreden 1933 bis 1945 und andere Ansprachen, Frankfurt am Main 1974, 31 f.

26 Kommandanturbefehl Nr. 7/42 vom 8. April 1942, in: Frei (Hg.), Standort und Kommandanturbefehle, 121 sowie Kommandanturbefehl Nr. 9/44 vom 6. September 1944, in: ebd., 491.

27 Kommandanturbefehl Nr. 3/44 vom 28. Januar 1944, in: ebd., 399.

28 Lehnstaedt, Okkupation, 23.

29 United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), Photograph #34793: *Beisetzung von SS Kameraden nach einem Terrorangriff*; USHMM, Photograph #34794: *Beisetzung von SS Kameraden nach einem Terrorangriff.*

30 Thomas Kühne, „… aus diesem Krieg werden nicht nur harte Männer heimkehren." Kriegskameradschaft und Männlichkeit im 20. Jahrhundert, in: Ders. (Hg.), Männergeschichte – Geschlechtergeschichte. Männlichkeit im Wandel der Moderne, Frankfurt am Main 1996, 184 f.

sich nur in sehr engen Zirkeln, der persönliche Umgang war fast ausschließlich von Mittätern bestimmt.[31] Durch das Zusammensein mit Kameraden auch außerhalb der Lagergrenzen wurde das Kollektivbewusstsein, ein Überlegenheitsgefühl und generell die Handlungsmotivation ge- und verstärkt. Wenn sich die SS-Täter mit anderen deutschen Bewohnern aus dem Umfeld des Lagerkomplexes, die zwar oft nur unmittelbar in das Verbrechen verstrickt waren, zu feierlichen Veranstaltungen in der Stadt trafen, traten sie aus ihrem unmittelbaren alltäglichen Umgang heraus.[32] So war zum Beispiel am *Tag der Wehrmacht* im März 1943 die gesamte zugezogene zivile „deutsche Einwohnerschaft von Auschwitz" zu einem „Gemeinschaftsessen mit anschließendem ‚Großen bunten Nachmittag' geladen".[33]

Die konstante rassisch-weltanschauliche Schulung, die die SS-Männer seit Beginn ihrer Tätigkeit begleitete, wirkte sich auf ihr Leben außerhalb der Lagergrenzen aus. Die weltanschaulichen Lektionen für die SS-Männer sollten in erster Linie eine ‚Haltung' an die Hand geben.[34] Neben ideologischer Indoktrinierung während der Veranstaltungen in Auschwitz wurden mit dem Beginn der Massenmorde Ablenkungen, insbesondere durch emotionale und meist seichte Unterhaltung für die Männer geschaffen, etwa im Rahmen der Truppenbetreuung.[35] Motivierende Ansprachen von SS-Führern und die ‚Nachbereitung' der Arbeit auf der Rampe in Birkenau mithilfe von Feiern und Kameradschaftsabenden, halfen den Tätern, sich persönlich, gegenseitig und ihren Angehörigen die Notwendigkeit ihres Dienstes zu vermitteln. Letztlich diente das Freizeitangebot, die indoktrinierenden Veranstaltungen – aus heutiger Sicht – nur dazu, die Männer funktional für den Wachdienst, die unmenschliche Behandlung der Häftlinge, vor allem aber für das Morden zu stärken. Oder wie es Heinrich Himmler ausdrückte, sollten die SS-Männer „ohne Rücksicht jeden Herd des Widerstandes beseitigen und in schärfster Form Feinde des deutschen Volkes der gerechten Todesstrafe zuführen konnten". In einem geheimen Befehl verpflichtete er die SS-Führer, persönlich sicherzustellen, „dass keiner unserer Männer, die diese schwere Pflicht zu erfüllen haben, jemals verroht oder an Gemüt und Charakter Schaden erleidet". Dies sei durch „schärfste Disziplin bei den dienstlichen Obliegenheiten" sowie „durch kameradschaftliches Beisammensein am Abend eines Tages zu erreichen, der eine solche schwere Aufgabe mit sich gebracht

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31 Hausverfügung Nr. 27 vom 14. April 1942. Osobyi Archive (Moscow) Records USHMM RG-11.001M_03 Reel 20, Folder 25, 582.

32 Steinbacher, „Musterstadt", 183-186.

33 Rundschreiben vom 23. März 1943, in: Frei (Hg.), Standort und Kommandanturbefehle, 235 f.

34 So fanden beispielsweise 1944 im Februar eine Schulung über *Die politische und militärische Bedeutung der Bandenkämpfe auf dem Balkan* statt und im Oktober eine weitere zum Thema *Die politische Lage und die Vordringlichkeit der weltanschaulichen Führungsaufgabe*, vgl.: Schulung und Truppenbetreuung für das SS-Personal und -Gefolge im KZ Auschwitz. Rekonstruiert von Hans-Christian Harten basierend auf den BArch-Beständen NS3/395-399; 409; 1571 und 1579 und den Standort- und Kommandanturbefehlen des Konzentrationslagers Auschwitz-Birkenau, in: ders, Himmlers Lehrer, Die Weltanschauliche Schulung in der SS 1933–1945, Paderborn 2014, 298 ff.

35 Eine Auswahl an Veranstaltungen für das SS-Personal: Am 15. Februar 1943: *Goethe – ernst und heiter* gesungen und gesprochen von Kammersängerin Inger Karen, Staatsschauspieler Horst Bogislav von Smelding am Seiler-Konzertflügel, Kapellmeister Rolf Schröder (sämtliche Mitglieder des Sächsischen Staatstheater Dresden); am 15. März 1943: *Die drei Eisbären* (Lustspiel, Schauspielhaus Breslau); am 5. April 1943: Schwank Gitta hat einen Vogel (Städtische Bühnen Kattowitz/Königshütte); am 21. Mai 1943: *Stunde heiterer Musik* (Haydn, Mozart, Schumann, Dvorak, Boccherini) (freiw.); 24. Mai 1943: Varieté-Revue *Zwei Stunden bunt und heiter* (Dienst); vgl. Schulung und Truppenbetreuung für das SS-Personal und -Gefolge im KZ Auschwitz. Rekonstruiert von Hans-Christian Harten basierend auf den BArch-Beständen NS3/395-399; 409; 1571 und 1579 und den Standort- und Kommandanturbefehlen des Konzentrationslagers Auschwitz-Birkenau, in: Harten, Himmlers Lehrer, 298 ff.

hat".[36] Auch an diesem Beispiel ist erkennbar, welchen Wert die SS-Machthaber der Freizeit und Geselligkeit hinsichtlich der Aufrechterhaltung von dienstlichem Pflichtbewusstsein einräumten und wie sehr diese Art der gemeinsamen Freizeitgestaltung eine Kontrollfunktion hatte.

Auch der Sport war Teil des normierten Alltages in Auschwitz und besaß einen hohen Stellenwert. Den Machthabern war es ein Anliegen, die SS-Männer nach Dienstende zu körperlicher Betätigung anzuhalten. Diese war nicht nur zur Ertüchtigung gedacht, sondern diente auch dem Erhalt der ‚Willensstärke‘, der ‚Disziplin‘ und dem ‚Kampfeswillen‘, der ‚Härte gegen sich selbst‘ und dem Aufbau eines Zugehörigkeitsgefühls.[37] Für die aktive Freizeitgestaltung der SS-Männer wurden auch die Häftlinge für das Sportprogramm eingesetzt. Zum Beispiel wurden ab und an Lagerinsassen zu Boxkämpfen gezwungen, die die SS-Männer von den Zuschauerplätzen verfolgten. In den Erinnerungen an den Auschwitz-Häftling und Boxer Hertzko Haft schrieb sein Sohn: „Hertzko schaute auf die Soldaten, die um den Ring herumstanden. Es herrschte eine beängstigende Fröhlichkeit. Die Menge wartete auf das Spektakel. Und er war da, um diesen perversen Bastarden einige schöne Stunden zu bescheren. Für die war es ‚Sport‘ – zuzuschauen, wie ein Jude den anderen umbrachte."[38]

Solche Vorführungen dienten der Belustigung der SS und bedeuteten für die Häftlinge eine weitere Erniedrigung und teilweise buchstäblich einen Kampf auf Leben und Tod. Auch zur kulturellen Unterhaltung der Täter mussten die Häftlinge beitragen. Musikalische Gefangene sollten beispielsweise klassische Musik vorspielen oder sangen Lieder bei privaten Tanz- und Trinkveranstaltungen.[39]

Um den Männern den Massenmord in Auschwitz körperlich und psychisch zu erleichtern, gestand ihnen die SS-Führung Erholungsaufenthalte zu. Eine Bilderserie im *Höcker-Album* dokumentiert solche Aufenthalte von SS-Männer auf der Sola-Hütte in der Hohen Tatra im Sommer 1944.[40] Laut Sybille Steinbacher wurden solche Rückzugsräume systematisch und in durchaus ‚pragmatischer‘ Absicht zugestanden, weil dadurch die psychische Stabilität der Täter erhöht wurde. Dies wiederum war direkte Voraussetzung für das individuelle Funktionieren im Vernichtungsprozess.[41]

Die nationalsozialistische Führung gestattete auch gezielt individuelle Freiräume und machte Zugeständnisse hinsichtlich des Familienlebens. Gerade durch ihren normierten Dienstalltag, der sich noch bis in den Feierabend erstreckte, erschienen die Aktivitäten umso bedeutender, die die SS-Männer selbstbestimmter gestalten konnten. Private Beschäftigungen, beispielsweise Lesen, Kinobesuche oder Radiohören, waren Tätigkeiten mit eher autonomem Charakter. Beliebt waren Unterhaltungsprogramme, die vom Dienstalltag ablenkten und dementsprechend in die Kategorie „zugestandene Selbstbestimmung"[42] fielen. Allein 1943 fanden knapp 20 Aufführungen statt. Dazu zählten unter anderem Lustspiele, Varieté-Revuen, Ope-

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36 Geheimer SS-Befehl von Heinrich Himmler vom 12. Dezember 1941, in: Wolfgang Benz/Konrad Kwiet/Jürgen Matthäus (Hg.), Einsatz im Reichskommissariat Ostland. Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum und in Weißrußland 1941–1944, Berlin 1998, 28 f.

37 Halina Jastrzebska, Sport bei den SS-Wachmannschaften im KL Auschwitz vor dem Hintergrund des sozialen Programms von Partei und Staat im Dritten Reich, in: Hefte von Auschwitz 25 (2012), 61 ff.

38 Haft, Eines Tages werde ich alles erzählen, Göttingen 2009, 62.

39 Hermann Langbein, Menschen in Auschwitz, 435 ff.

40 United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) Photograph # 42797; #42784 *Auf der Solahütte*.

41 Sybille Steinbacher, Auschwitz. Geschichte und Nachgeschichte, München 2007, 36.

42 Christian Packheiser, Heimaturlaub: Soldaten zwischen Front, Familie und NS-Regime, Dissertation, München, 87, (Drucklegung in Vorbereitung).

retten, Schwänke, Schauspiel- und Filmvorführungen.[43] Zwar konnten diese Aktivitäten den SS-Männern gewisse Freiräume einer individuellen oder familiären ‚Entfaltung' bieten, letztlich dienten sie doch nur der Erhaltung der Funktionalität des Lagers und der Einsetzbarkeit für den Massenmord. Es gab aber durchaus Handlungen, Aktionen und Verhalten der Lager-SS, die von den Befehlshabern zwar nicht erwünscht waren, aber auch nicht sanktioniert wurden.[44] Ein Beispiel dafür war der exzessive Alkoholkonsum: Obwohl die Männer während ihrer Arbeit im Lager gezielt Spirituosen erhielten, fürchtete die SS-Organisation gerade nach Dienstende die negativen Folgen von überhandnehmendem Trinkverhalten ihrer Mitglieder. Zum einen, weil es die Männer dienstuntauglich werden ließ und zu einer Abhängigkeit führen konnte und zum anderen, weil sich die SS-Männer nicht in angetrunkenem Zustand in der Öffentlichkeit präsentieren sollten. Vor allem ihr Besuch in örtlichen Kneipen und alkoholisierte Schlägereien in der Stadt Auschwitz wollte die SS-Führung verhindern. Doch die häufige Kritik in den Standort- und Kommandanturbefehlen lässt darauf schließen, dass der Alkohol für die Männer eine zu wichtige Rolle auch in ihrem Privatleben spielte und daher Verbote meist ignoriert wurden.[45] Der Konsum kann als individuelle Verhaltensmöglichkeit, sprich als normüberschreitender Handlungsspielraum außerhalb des Dienstalltags betrachtet werden. Gleichwohl die SS-Organisation ihren Mitgliedern Korruption untersagte, war die Ausbeute für die SS im Lagerkomplex äußerst lohnend.[46] Sie bereicherten sich an geraubten Gütern der Opfer und handelten mit diesen. Solange dies im Stillen geschah und mengenmäßig nicht auffiel, wurde die Raubpraxis kaum sanktioniert.[47] Nur wenn solche Vorfälle über die Grenzen von Auschwitz hinaus publik wurden, mussten die Männer mit Strafen rechnen. So ermittelte 1944 der SS-Richter Konrad Morgen in Auschwitz wegen größerer Korruptionsvergehen der Lager-SS.[48] Auch nutzten die Täter Dienstleistungen von Häftlingen in ihren Haushalten. Diese Bereicherungsformen zählten zu den engsten Verknüpfungen zwischen dem Leben der Lager-SS nach Dienstschluss und dem Leben der Häftlinge hinter den Lagergrenzen.

Familienleben der SS-Männer in Auschwitz

Insgesamt vermischten sich die Parallelwelten von Freizeit und der mörderischen Arbeit durch die räumliche Nähe zum Lager. Allein der oftmals beschriebene Geruch von verbrennendem Menschenfleisch, den die Krematorien in Birkenau verströmten, oder die Geräusche von Schüssen waren Tag und Nacht präsent. Hinzu kamen die in Auschwitz allgegenwärtigen Epidemien, an denen auch die SS-Männer erkrankten.[49] Trotz ihrer Überzeugung für den rassisch-weltanschaulichen Vernich-

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43 Schulung und Truppenbetreuung für das SS-Personal und -Gefolge im KZ Auschwitz. Rekonstruiert von Hans-Christian Harten basierend auf den BArch-Beständen NS3/395-399; 409; 1571 und 1579 und den Standort- und Kommandanturbefehlen des Konzentrationslagers Auschwitz-Birkenau, in: Harten, Himmlers Lehrer, 298 ff.

44 Lehnstaedt, Okkupation, 157 f.

45 Kommandantursonderbefehl vom 15. Januar 1941, in; Frei (Hg.), Standort und Kommandanturbefehle, 18; sowie Kommandanturbefehl Nr. 3/44 vom 28. Januar 1944, in: ebd.. 18 und 399.

46 Franciszek Piper, Arbeitseinsatz der Häftlinge aus dem KL Auschwitz, Oświęcim 1995, 179-185.

47 Lehnstaedt, Okkupation, 165 ff.

48 Aussage des Zeugen Konrad Morgen im 1. Frankfurter Auschwitz-Prozess am 9. März 1964. „Strafsache gegen Mulka u. a.", 4 Ks 2/63 Landgericht Frankfurt am Main.

49 Archiv des International Tracing Service, Bad Arolsen (ITS), Tagebucheintrag von SS-Arzt Johann Paul Kremer vom 14. September 1942 und 13. Oktober 1942, Nr. 122, Bl. 6-8.

tungskrieg und ihrem oftmals brutalen Umgang mit den Lagerinsassen ist verschiedentlich überliefert, dass die seelischen Belastungen bei einigen Akteuren im Massenmordprozess hoch waren und es zu psychischen Erkrankungen und Nervenzusammenbrüchen kam. Dies wirkte sich auf das Leben der SS-Männer als Privatmenschen aus.[50] Insa Eschebach bezeichnet die direkte Nähe der SS-Siedlung und einzelner Wohnstätten der Täter zum Konzentrationslager als „brutale Gemütlichkeit".[51] Obwohl in vielen Fällen vermutlich ein Gewöhnungseffekt bestand, klagten einige Täter in ihrem Privatleben über Unbehagen.

Die SS-Führung hatte früh erkannt, dass die Psyche der SS-Männer durch den Dienst im Lager und die persönliche Verantwortung im Vernichtungsprozess in höchstem Maße beeinträchtigt war, dass es eines ‚Ausgleichs' bedurfte. Neben den vielen bereits beschriebenen Aktivitäten war eine weitere Vorgangsweise, den SS-Männern ein privates Leben im Kreise ihrer Ehefrauen und Kinder zuzugestehen, die ihnen teilweise nach Auschwitz gefolgt waren.[52]

So gestattete die SS-Organisation es den Angehörigen, den Lebensmittelpunkt zu ihren Männern nach Auschwitz zu verlegen oder sie zu besuchen. Dies galt insbesondere für verheiratete SS-Männer. Voraussetzung war, dass die Betreffenden für eine längere Zeit im Konzentrationslager eingesetzt waren. Für die Anwesenheit der Familienmitglieder vor Ort bedurfte es lediglich der Genehmigung des Lagerkommandanten.[53] Kurz- oder langfristig lebten nicht nur Angehörige von hochrangigen SS-Führern in Auschwitz, sondern auch diejenigen von Männern in niedrigeren Hierarchiestufen. Das Zusammensein mit Ehefrauen oder Verlobten erfüllte für die SS-Führung auch eine pragmatische Funktion hinsichtlich der Fortpflanzung für die „SS-Sippengemeinschaft".

In der Fremde waren die eigenen vier Wände im Kreise der Familie für die Männer ein Rückzugsraum, mit dem sie Entspannung und Vertrautheit assoziierten. Während seiner Dienstzeit nahm sich Lagerkommandant Rudolf Höß weiterhin als Familienoberhaupt wahr: „Selbst als ich die Ausrottungsaufgabe durchführte, führte ich ein normales Familienleben und so weiter."[54] Gemäß dem Familienbild, das die Nationalsozialisten propagierten, kümmerten sich die zugezogenen Ehefrauen um das Wohlergehen ihrer Männer, damit diese ihrer Arbeit im KZ nachgehen konnten. Sie sollten deren ‚Belastung' nach dem täglichen Einsatz im Konzentrationslager ‚verringern' und suggerieren, dass trotz des Mordes an den Häftlingen, Auschwitz ein gewöhnlicher Arbeitsplatz sei. Außerdem waren die Angetrauten dazu angehalten, das gesellschaftliche Leben durch Freizeitaktivitäten, gegenseitige Einladungen, Teilnahme an Schulungen und kulturellen Aufführungen zu fördern. Sie sollten dafür sorgen, dass das gemeinsame Heim für den SS-Führer einen sicheren Zufluchtsort bot, wo er sein Privatleben führen konnte, ohne ständig an die ‚Pflichten' in Auschwitz-Birkenau erinnert zu werden. Nichts galt als so hinderlich für die Karriere in der SS, als wenn der SS-Mann als zu „weich" charakterisiert wur-

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50 Kommandantursonderbefehl vom 15. Januar 1941, in: Frei (Hg.) Standort und Kommandanturbefehle, 18; Kommandanturbefehl Nr.11/41 vom 5. Juni 1941, in: ebd., 44; Kommandanturbefehl Nr. 3/44 vom 28. Januar 1944, in: ebd. Frei (Hg.), Standort und Kommandanturbefehle, 18, 44 und 400.

51 Insa Eschebach, Das Aufseherinnenhaus. Überlegungen zu einer Ausstellung über SS-Aufseherinnen in der Gedenkstätte Ravensbrück, in: Gedenkstätten Rundbrief 75 (1997), 3 f.

52 Archiv Institut für Zeitgeschichte (IfZ-Archiv), Nürnberger Dokumentenkarten PS-1919, Rede Heinrich Himmlers bei der SS-Gruppenführertagung in Posen am 4. Oktober 1943; vgl. auch: Smith/Peterson (Hg.), Heinrich Himmler, Geheimreden 1933, 169.

53 Standortbefehl Nr. 12/42 vom 15. April 1943, in: Frei (Hg.), Standort und Kommandanturbefehle, 246; Standortbefehl Nr. 9/43 vom 10. April 1943, in: ebd. 242.

54 Gustave Gilbert, Nürnberger Tagebuch, Gespräche der Angeklagten mit dem Gerichtspsychologen, Frankfurt am Main 2004, 252.

de.[55] Ihre emotionale Seite konnten die SS-Führer also vorrangig im Kreise ihrer Familien ausleben und so die vermeintlich notwendige Härte im Mordprozess aufbringen. Zum Beispiel erfuhr die ebenfalls dort arbeitende polnische Haushaltsgehilfin der Familie von Gerhard Palitzsch erst von den dort arbeitenden Lagerinsassen, welchen grausam berüchtigten Ruf der Rapportführer im Lager besaß. Zuhause hatte sie ihn als treusorgenden Familienvater wahrgenommen.[56] Der SS-Standortarzt Eduard Wirths gab in einem Verhör nach Kriegsende an: „[…] mir haben die Besuche meines Bruders und meines Vaters und das Zusammensein mit meiner Familie im Grunde genommen möglich gemacht, in Auschwitz durchzuhalten."[57] Obwohl diese Aussage einen nachträglichen Rechtfertigungsversuch darstellt, zeigt sie, welch großen Stellenwert die Täter dem Zusammensein mit ihren Familien beimaßen. Viele Ehefrauen unterstützten den beruflichen Ehrgeiz und das Geltungsstreben ihrer Ehemänner, das zu Lasten der Lagerinsassen ging.[58] Ein Großteil der Angehörigen akzeptierte die Gewaltverbrechen ihrer Männer und profitierte von deren Machtstellung. Somit zählten sie zum erweiterten Täterkreis in Auschwitz. Familien von SS-Mitgliedern zogen ihren persönlichen Vorteil aus dem Arbeitseinsatz der Häftlinge in ihrem privaten Umfeld.[59] Die Gefangenen, die in den Haushalten der SS-Führer eingesetzt waren, waren in hohem Maße vom Wohlwollen der Bewohner abhängig.[60] Agierten die Lagerinsassen nicht so wie von den SS-Führern und ihren Angehörigen erwünscht, zog dies Konsequenzen – teilweise auch sehr schwerwiegende, von Misshandlungen bis zum Mord – nach sich.[61]

Ebenso wie ihre Männer bereicherten sich die Ehefrauen an Hab und Gut der ermordeten Häftlinge. Neben dem Leben in Unterkünften, die zuvor enteignet worden waren, bediente sich ein Großteil an Einrichtungsgegenständen und Kleidung von Häftlingen für ihren Privatbesitz. Der Auschwitz-Überlebende Jerzy Rawicz beobachtete, wie auf Befehl der SS-Männer Arbeiten für den privaten Bedarf durchgeführt wurden.[62] Die polnische Hausangestellte Alfreda Babiuch gab nach 1945 an, dass sich die Familie von SS-Zahnarzt Willi Frank an gestohlenen Gütern bereichert und Lebens- und Genussmittel aus dem Lagermagazin für die Bewirtung privater Feierlichkeiten organisiert habe. Frank habe seine Familie mit Gegenständen aus dem Lagerareal versorgt, unter anderem mit Möbeln für die private Unterkunft.[63]

Kommandant Höß selbst profitierte von den Annehmlichkeiten, die seine Position in Auschwitz mit sich brachte. Nach dem Krieg notierte er, dass es seiner Familie in Auschwitz gut ergangen sei: Jeder Wunsch sei seiner Frau und den Kindern von den Bediensteten – unter ihnen viele Lagerinsassen – erfüllt worden. Die fünf

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55 Schwarz, Eine Frau an seiner Seite, 105.

56 Zeugenaussage von Helena K. zitiert in: ebd.165.

57 Verhör von Eduard Wirths durch Colonel Draper, in: Konrad Beischl, Dr. med. Eduard Wirths und seine Tätigkeit als SS-Standortarzt im KZ Auschwitz, Würzburg 2005, 235.

58 Herberg Jäger, Verbrechen unter totalitärer Herrschaft. Studien zur nationalsozialistischen Gewaltkriminalität, Frankfurt am Main 1982, 69.

59 Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimiu [Archives of the State Museum at Auschwitz-Birkenau] (APMO) Syg D-AU I 3a Band 4, Schreiben von Kaltenbrunner an Himmler vom 15. Juni 1943 hinsichtlich der Entlassung von Bibelforscherinnen die in SS-Haushalten oder an anderen Arbeitsstellen zur Arbeitsleistung eingesetzt sind, Bl. 341.

60 Aussage von Maria Pawela, in: Piotr Setkiewicz (Hg.), The Private Lives of the Auschwitz-SS, Oświęcim 2014, 42.

61 Der Auschwitz-Überlebender Hermann Langbein schrieb nach 1945, dass beispielsweise die Ehefrau von SS-Rapportführer Gerhard Palitzsch sich bei ihm darüber beklagte, dass ein zu Reparaturen bestelltes Häftlingskommando seiner Aufgabe nicht zufriedenstellend nachgekommen sei. Die betreffenden Insassen seien deshalb aufgehängt worden, die Hände auf den Rücken gefesselt. Vgl.: Langbein, Menschen in Auschwitz, 516.

62 Aussage von Jerzy Rawicz in: Bezwinska/Czech, Auschwitz in den Augen, 20.

63 Aussage von Alfreda Babiuch. in: Piotr Setkiewicz (Hg.), The Private Lives of the Auschwitz-SS, 19.

Kinder hätten frei und ungezwungen spielen können und seine Frau Hedwig hatte ihr Blumenparadies.[64] Generell hatten die SS-Männer und ihre Frauen vor Ort großes Interesse daran, ihren Nachwuchs von den Gräueltaten im Lagerkomplex abzuschirmen. Da sie in der Nähe zum Konzentrationslager heranwuchsen, lernten die Kinder dennoch schon frühzeitig, die Häftlinge nicht als gleichwertige Menschen wahrzunehmen und dass folglich ihr Leben auch nicht viel wert sei. Zum Beispiel hatten die polnischen Hausangestellten der Familie Höß insbesondere an den ältesten Sohn Klaus negative Erinnerungen, weil er mit den Häftlingen schlecht umsprang und sich als zukünftiger SS-Mann generierte.[65]

Zusammenfassung

Insgesamt vermengten und bedingten sich in der Realität die beiden individuellen Lebens- und Wahrnehmungswelten der Männer während des Dienstes und in jenen Phasen, die graduell von normierter Freizeit über individuelle Handlungsoptionen bis hin zu echten Rückzugsmöglichkeiten in den eigenen vier Wänden reichten. Verglichen mit heutigen Vorstellungen lässt sich kaum von einem Privatleben der SS-Mitglieder inklusive Freizeitwert sprechen. Nicht nur die direkte Nähe zum Lagerkomplex erschwerte eine individuelle Entfaltung nach Dienstende. Hinzu kam die stets omnipräsente SS-Organisation, die eine freie und eigenverantwortliche Freizeitgestaltung nur stellenweise zuließ. Als wichtig erachtet wurden viel eher eine normierte Geselligkeit, eine konstante ideologische Schulung und eine umfassende Truppenbetreuung nach Dienstschluss, um den Tätern die Sinnhaftigkeit für die Gewaltverbrechen und die Morde zu vermitteln. Doch trotz des überwiegend organisierten Alltags gestand die SS-Führung ihren Mitgliedern in pragmatischer Absicht bewusst private Räume zu, um die Motivation für den Dienst im Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslager zu fördern und aufrechtzuerhalten. Generell vermittelte die umfassende organisatorische Alltagsbetreuung durch ihre Vorgesetzten der Lager-SS, dass sie ein ‚normales‘ Leben inklusive Freizeitwert und Privatvergnügen führen konnten und auch sollten. Dazu zählte auch das soziale Umfeld vor Ort. Denn die Geselligkeit mit den Kameraden und die Teilnahme an zahlreichen Veranstaltungen bot den SS-Angehörigen Ablenkung. Die emotionale Unterstützung der Ehefrauen, der Kinder und anderer Angehöriger in Auschwitz ermöglichte es den Tätern, sich selbst als Privatperson wahrzunehmen und nicht nur als Akteur im Massenmordprozess. Ausgehend von der subjektiven Selbstdeutung anhand erfahrener individueller Handlungsoptionen, nahmen sich die Männer weiter als autonome Individuen wahr und setzten so zufriedenstellend die Direktiven der SS im Konzentrationslager um. Insgesamt schuf das Leben der Täter nach Dienstende einen Referenzrahmen für die Vernichtungsaktionen im Lagerkomplex. Dementsprechend ermöglicht die Betrachtung des privaten Alltags der SS-Mitglieder in Auschwitz einen anderen Blick auf ihr mörderisches Wirken im Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslager.

Der Aufsatz stellt einen Ausschnitt aus dem Dissertationsprojekt zur Handlungspraxis von Rudolf Höß und der Lager-SS in Auschwitz-Birkenau dar. Diese entsteht derzeit am Zentrum für Holocaust-Studien am Institut für Zeitschichte in München. Das Ziel der Promotion wird nicht

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64 Zitiert nach: Bezwinska/Czech (Hg.), Auschwitz in den Augen, 14.
65 APMO-B, Zeugenaussagen, Vol. 34, 13-18; Aussage von Aniela Bednarska.

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sein, das gesamte SS-Personal, die weiblichen Aufseher oder andere Tätergruppen zu analysieren. Im gesteckten Zeitrahmen der Promotion wird viel eher der Versuch unternommen, sich auf die SS-Führung vor Ort zu fokussieren. Daher wurde auch in diesem vorliegenden Aufsatz die Betrachtung der weiblichen Bewacher ausgeklammert.

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Anna-Raphaela Schmitz
Historikerin, Institut für Zeitgeschichte München
schmitz@ifz-muenchen.de

Article

Nicola D'Elia

Far-Right Parties and the Jews in the 1930s

The Antisemitic Turn of Italian Fascism Reconsidered through a Comparison with the French Case

Abstract

The Italian fascist turn toward antisemitism is a very controversial topic, which especially in recent decades has provoked much debate among historians. By adopting a transnational approach that compares the Italian and French cases, this article aims to show that it is a mistake to equate Benito Mussolini's movement with Adolf Hitler's National Socialism with regard to their approaches to the 'Jewish question', as antisemitism is not inextricably linked to fascism. Above all, it suggests that a key factor driving the Italian fascist regime toward antisemitism was the increasing influence that Nazi Germany began to exert upon the entire far-right movement in Europe after 1933.

For a long time, Italian historiography neglected to deal with fascist antisemitism, even after the publication in 1961 of Renzo De Felice's pioneering monograph,[1] which followed shortly after the first attempt by the Israeli historian Meir Michaelis to approach the 'Jewish question' in fascist Italy.[2] Only since the late 1980s, in reaction to the fiftieth anniversary of the enactment of the Racial Laws in Italy in 1938, has the antisemitic policy of Benito Mussolini's regime begun to awaken interest among Italian scholars and, in subsequent years, to stimulate considerable research.[3]

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1 Renzo De Felice, Storia degli ebrei italiani sotto il fascismo History of Italian Jews under Fascism, Preface by Delio Cantimori, Turin 1961. In the following, I cite the English translation: The Jews in Fascist Italy. A History, translated by Robert Lawrence Miller, Preface by Michael A. Ledeen, New York 2001.

2 Meir Michaelis, On the Jewish Question in Fascist Italy. The Attitude of the Fascist Regime to the Jews in Italy, in: Yad Vashem Studies 4 (1960), 7-41, an extended version of which was published in Italian: I rapporti italo-tedeschi e il problema degli ebrei in Italia (1922–1938) [Italian-German Relations and the Problem of the Jews in Italy (1922–1938)], in: Rivista di studi politici internazionali [Journal of International Political Studies] 28 (1961) 2, 238–282. From then onward, Michaelis carried out extensive research on the topic, culminating in a fundamental monograph published in the late 1970s: Mussolini and the Jews. German-Italian Relations and the Jewish Question in Italy, 1922–1945, Oxford 1978.

3 Though an overview is necessarily limited to the most general studies, the following must at least be mentioned: Alberto Cavaglion/Giampaolo Romagnani (ed.), Le interdizioni del Duce. Le leggi razziali in Italia [The Interdictions of the Duce. The Racial Laws in Italy], Preface by Piero Treves, updated and expanded second edition (=Libertà e giustizia [Freedom and Justice], 2), Turin 2002; Roberto Chiarini (ed.), L'intellettuale antisemita [The Antisemitic Intellectual], Preface by Stefano Folli (=Ricerche. I colloqui di Salò [Research. Salò Talks], 4), Venice 2008; Enzo Collotti, Il fascismo e gli ebrei. Le leggi razziali in Italia [Fascism and the Jews. The Racial Laws in Italy], Rome 2003; Conseguenze culturali delle leggi razziali in Italia [Cultural Consequences of the Racial Laws in Italy] (=Atti dei convegni lincei [Proceedings of the Lincei Conferences], 84), Rome 1990; Francesco Germinario, Fascismo e antisemitismo. Progetto razziale e ideologia totalitaria [Fascism and Antisemitism. Racial Project and Totalitarian Ideology], Rome 2009; Giorgio Israel, Il fascismo e la razza. La scienza italiana e le politiche razziali del regime [Fascism and Race. Italian Science and Racial Politics of the Regime], Bologna 2010; La legislazione antiebraica in Italia e in Europa [Anti-Jewish Legislation in Italy and Europe], Proceedings of the Conference on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Racial Laws (Rome, 17–18 October 1988), Rome 1989; Roberto Maiocchi, Scienza italiana e razzismo fascista [Italian Science and Fascist Racism], Florence 1999; Daniele Menozzi/Andrea Mariuzzo (ed.), A settant'anni dalle leggi

At the same time, relevant contributions on this topic have continued to appear outside of Italy,[4] including miscellaneous works produced through cooperation between Italian and foreign scholars.[5]

Therefore, a lively debate has been sparked about the meaning of the Racial Laws within the historical experience of fascist Italy. In this regard, crucial questions have been addressed, such as:

(a) Are racism and antisemitism as intrinsically linked to the ideology and politics of Italian fascism as they are to those of German National Socialism;

(b) why did Mussolini pursue anti-Jewish persecution; and

(c) what did he aim to achieve through this decision?

In discussing the various interpretations advanced by the scholarship on this topic, this paper tries to provide an answer to these questions. In particular, it suggests on the basis of a comparison between the Italian and French cases that the powerful force of attraction that Nazi Germany began to exert upon the entire far-right movement in Europe after 1933 played a key role in driving Mussolini's regime toward antisemitism. For Italian fascism, adopting antisemitism was made necessary by the Axis alliance and also made use of the crucial importance of anti-Jewish policy as a mobilising device for the totalitarian transformation of society, along the lines of the Third Reich.

The Debate on the Origins of Italian Fascist Antisemitism

Although most scholars agree that the Racial Laws of 1938 marked a turning point in the history of Italian fascism, several of them question whether they represented a fundamental departure from the Mussolini regime's previous attitude toward the 'Jewish question'. In this respect, De Felice's and Michaelis' approach, which explain the Racial Laws mainly as a consequence of Italy's choice to join the Axis alliance with Germany, has been openly challenged. Both these historians, indeed,

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razziali. Profili culturali, giuridici e istituzionali dell'antisemitismo [Seventy Years after the Racial Laws. Cultural, Juridical, and Institutional Aspects of Antisemitism] (=Studi storici Carocci [Carocci Historical Studies], 162), Rome 2010; La menzogna della razza. Documenti e immagini del razzismo e dell'antisemitismo fascista [The Lie of Race. Documents and Images of Fascist Racism and Antisemitism], Bologna 1994; Michele Sarfatti, Mussolini contro gli ebrei. Cronaca dell'elaborazione delle leggi del 1938 [Mussolini against the Jews. A Chronicle of the Development of the 1938 Laws], Turin 1994; Michele Sarfatti, The Jews in Mussolini's Italy. From Equality to Persecution, translated by John and Anne C. Tedeschi, Madison, Wisconsin 2006; Mario Toscano, Ebraismo e antisemitismo in Italia. Dal 1848 alla guerra dei sei giorni [Judaism and Antisemitism in Italy. From 1848 to the Six-Day War], Milan 2003; Angelo Ventura, Il fascismo e gli ebrei. Il razzismo antisemita nell'ideologia e nella politica del regime [Fascism and the Jews. Antisemitic Racism in the Ideology and Politics of the Regime], Introduction by Sergio Luzzatto, Rome 2013.

4   See in particular Aaron Gillette, Racial Theories in Fascist Italy, London 2002; Michael A. Livingston, The Fascists and the Jews of Italy. Mussolini's Race Laws, 1938–1943, Cambridge 2014; Marie-Anne Matard-Bonucci, L'Italie fasciste et la persécution des Juifs [Fascist Italy and the Persecution of Jews], Paris 2007, now available in Italian: L'Italia fascista e la persecuzione degli ebrei, Bologna 2008; Alexander Stille, Benevolence and Betrayal. Five Italian Jewish Families under Fascism, New York 1991; Klaus Voigt, Zuflucht auf Widerruf. Exil in Italien, 1933–1945, 2 vols., Stuttgart 1989–1993.

5   See above all Franklin H. Adler (ed.), Italian Jews and Fascism, special issue of Telos, 164 (Fall 2013); Laura Fontana/Georges Bensoussan (ed.), L'Italie et la Shoah. Vol. 1. Le fascisme et les Juifs [Italy and the Shoah. Vol. 1. Fascism and the Jews], special issue of Revue d'histoire de la Shoah [Review of the History of the Shoah], 204 (March 2016); Gudrun Jäger/Liana Novelli-Glaab (ed.), "… denn in Italien haben sich die Dinge anders abgespielt." Judentum und Antisemitismus in modernen Italien (=Frankfurter kulturwissenschaftliche Beiträge, 2), Berlin 2007; Daniel Tilles/Salvatore Garau (ed.), Fascism and the Jews. Italy and Britain, London 2011; Robert S. Wistrich/Sergio Della Pergola (ed.), Fascist Antisemitism and the Italian Jews, Jerusalem 1995; Joshua D. Zimmerman (ed.), Jews in Italy under Fascist and Nazi Rule, 1922–1945, Cambridge 2005.

argued that Italian fascism, before its alignment with Hitler's National Socialism, had neither racist nor antisemitic inclinations. According to De Felice,

> "the decision made by Mussolini to introduce state-sponsored antisemitism into Italy stemmed from the belief that, in order to give credibility to the Axis, it was necessary to eliminate the most glaring difference in the policies of the two regimes".[6]

Michaelis arrived at similar conclusions in analysing the impact of the Italian/German relationship on the genesis and development of racism in fascist Italy: "Until the birth of the Rome-Berlin Axis there was no attempt whatever on the part of the Fascist authorities to create a 'Jewish problem' in Italy",[7] he pointed out, adding that "it was only when [Mussolini] became totally committed to the Axis alliance that the Fascist dictator decided to sacrifice the Jews on the altar of German-Italian friendship".[8]

This interpretation was challenged by Michele Sarfatti, who argued that Italian fascism, as soon as it came to power, launched a religious policy aimed at undermining equality between different communities in order to grant Catholicism a dominant position in the state.[9] Moreover, Sarfatti emphasised that the fascist rise to power in Italy was followed by violent – albeit isolated and not directly encouraged from above – incidents against the Jews, as well as by increasing anti-Jewish propaganda.[10] Particularly significant, in his view, was the antisemitic campaign launched by the fascist press in 1934. This event proved that, even before the German/Italian rapprochement, "a true antisemitic current existed in Fascism, but also that its leader, even though he did not publicly support it, considered it legitimate and entitled to exist".[11] The conquest of Ethiopia two years later marked the transition from the attack on religious equality and the autonomy of Italian Judaism to the persecution of individual Jews and their rights, culminating in the Racial Laws. Such a result, Sarfatti pointed out, was the logical conclusion of the development of fascist politics from 1922 onward, not the consequence of a metamorphosis towards racism and antisemitism that Mussolini would undergo due to the Axis alliance.[12]

Explaining the Duce's decision to persecute Jews in the context of rapprochement with Nazi Germany also seemed too easy an argument to Angelo Ventura. He claimed that antisemitic racism, far from being a marginal component of fascist ideology, "was, however, nascent in the genetic code of fascism" and represented "the logical development" of its nationalist and hierarchical views, which repudiated "humanistic values and the liberal democratic principles of Western civilisation".[13] Therefore, Ventura saw racism and antisemitism as features common to the entire phenomenon of fascism. Associating Italian fascism and German National Socialism, he definitively rejected De Felice's thesis that, until Mussolini's anti-Jewish turn, these factors distinguished fascist Italy from the Third Reich.[14]

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6   De Felice, Jews, 231.
7   Michaelis, Mussolini, 27-28.
8   Michaelis, Mussolini, 102. Using words very similar to De Felice's, Michaelis also explained the Duce's decision by referring "to his desire to cement the Axis alliance by eliminating any strident contrast in the policy of the two Powers", Michaelis, Mussolini, 126.
9   Sarfatti, Jews, 42-48.
10 Sarfatti, Jews, 48-52.
11 Sarfatti, Jews, 68.
12 Sarfatti, Jews, 97-100.
13 Ventura, Il fascismo, 9.
14 See De Felice, Jews, xl.

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Ventura's conclusion has been regarded as unacceptable by other scholars, such as Roberto Vivarelli, who stressed that for a long time fascist Italy showed a different attitude toward Jews than did Nazi Germany. Before embracing racism, fascism did not consider Jews its enemies, nor did most Jews have hostile feelings toward Mussolini's regime. This is proven by the significant participation by Italian Jews in public life, with some even holding prominent positions as a result, not in a few cases, of their strong fascist views.[15] In this regard, Sarfatti himself, when discussing the Jewish presence in the ranks of Italian fascism, admitted that it "for many years was not in general anti-Semitic".[16] Indeed, it is difficult to deny that the decade after the March on Rome was marked by overall cordial relations between the new authorities and the Italian Jewish community. It is also a fact that there was no antisemitic campaign throughout the 1920s, a period during which, as Michaelis pointed out, "Italy was still a model of tolerance as far as treatment of her Jewish minority was concerned".[17]

Obviously, this does not mean that Italian fascism was entirely free of anti-Jewish feelings. Mussolini himself had prejudices toward Jews that were reflected in some of his statements. However, as Luc Nemeth rightly noted, these anti-Jewish stances "appear to be not so much an expression of a racial hatred […] as connected with the stereotypical image of the Jews as bankers or of the Jews as masters of the world, either through capitalism or bolshevism".[18] It is true that some of Mussolini's utterances sounded like warnings to Jews not to antagonise the fascist regime by giving rise to doubts as to their sense of belonging to the Italian nation.[19] However, it should not be forgotten that there is no shortage of public statements in which the Duce condemned racism and antisemitism. Therefore, one can agree with Michaelis that "Mussolini's attitude toward the Jews was inconsistent and mostly opportunistic, influenced by circumstances".[20]

In light of such considerations, it seems incredibly hard to put German National Socialism and Italian fascism on the same footing with regards to their approaches to the 'Jewish question'. Hitler "loathed the Jews more than anything else in the world" – Michaelis again argued – and made racialism "the foundation and corner-stone of his whole being".[21] By contrast, until the second half of the 1930s, Italian fascism did not include antisemitism as a core element of its ideology. It can be said, using Nemeth's words, "that antisemitism, even if consistent with fascist ideology, is not part of it".[22] Should one then conclude that Mussolini's racist turn has to be exclusively attributed to the requirements of the Axis alliance?

Other studies suggest a different explanation, focussing on the internal development of the fascist regime. Franklin H. Adler argued that the Racial Laws were enact-

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15 See Roberto Vivarelli, Le leggi razziali nella storia del fascismo italiano [The Racial Laws in the History of Italian Fascism], in: Rivista Storica Italiana [Italian Historical Review] 121 (2009) 2, 738-772.

16 Sarfatti, Jews, 15.

17 Michaelis, Mussolini, 55.

18 Luc Nemeth, The First Antisemitic Campaign of the Fascist Regime, in: Stanislao G. Pugliese (ed.), The Most Ancient of Minorities. The Jews of Italy (=Contributions in Ethnic Studies, 36), Westport 2002, 247-258, here 248.

19 In this regard, it is worth recalling the harsh attack launched in late November 1928, following the Zionist congress held in Milan, by the newspaper *Il popolo di Roma* [The People of Rome] with an anonymous article (the author of which was almost certainly Mussolini himself) entitled Religione o nazione? [Religion or Nation?]. The article, which was directed at the Italian Jews, led many, including prominent cultural personalities, to send declarations of patriotism and loyalty to fascism to the newspaper. On this episode, see De Felice, Jews, 86-88; Michaelis, Mussolini, 30-31; and Sarfatti, Jews, 59-60.

20 Meir Michaelis, Mussolini, Benito, in: Israel Gutman (ed.), Encyclopedia of the Holocaust, Vol. 3, New York 1990, 1026-1027, here 1027.

21 Michaelis, Mussolini, 183.

22 Nemeth, The First Antisemitic Campaign, 247.

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ed in pursuit of two complementary ends: to strengthen the alliance with Germany and to support the totalitarian aspirations of Mussolini, which included an anthropological revolution aiming to create the 'New Fascist Man'. Jews were seen as inextricably linked to the old liberal order that fascism intended to overcome and therefore appeared to be an obstacle to such a project. According to Adler, there is a close connection between the anti-Jewish turn and the antibourgeois campaign launched by Mussolini in the same period.[23]

This approach has also been adopted by other scholars such as Aaron Gillette, who regarded antisemitism as a device used by the Duce in order to achieve his aim of changing the character of the Italian people. In other words, Jews were targeted as representatives of the epitome of the decadent bourgeois, lover of the easy life, given to laziness, and lacking the virtue of sacrifice and martial feelings.[24] In this regard, Giorgio Israel, in his well-researched study *Il fascismo e la razza* (Fascism and Race), emphasised that even in the late 1920s Mussolini began to develop the intent "to turn Italian people, too unwarlike, peaceful and mild, into a tough people, sure of themselves and their own destiny, able to impose their will and to decide their future".[25] Studies like this stress that fascist racism did not rise suddenly as a consequence of the Axis alliance, but was a product of a long period of development that started long before 1938.[26]

Such a perspective, explaining the racial turn of Italian fascism as a result of its revolutionary and totalitarian aspirations, deserves to be considered with attention and may help to better understand the reasons for Mussolini's decision to persecute the Jews.[27] It is worth noting that De Felice himself, in the most recent edition of his book on Jews in fascist Italy, partially adopted this view. He confirmed his previous point that Mussolini's turn toward racism and antisemitism was mainly due to the alignment with Nazi Germany, yet also emphasised another important factor: the view – arising in the Duce's mind after the conquest of Ethiopia and the proclamation of the Italian Empire – that fascism had to bring about a 'new civilisation'. Mussolini had become convinced, De Felice observed,

> "that the historical mission of Fascism was to fight the bourgeois spirit and mentality, which was responsible for the decay of the spiritual race of Judeo-Christianity, and also to fight against the Jewish spirit and therefore the Jewish race because its culture was at the root of the bourgeois mentality".[28]

However, this approach needs to be integrated into a transnational analysis exploring another crucial factor in instigating anti-Jewish feelings within various fascist movements across Europe after 1933: the powerful force of attraction of Nazi Germany.

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23 See Franklin H. Adler, Why Mussolini Turned on the Jews, in: Patterns of Prejudice 39 (2005) 3, 285-300.

24 Gillette, Racial Theories, 52-59.

25 Israel, Il fascismo, 111.

26 Maiocchi, Scienza.

27 I do not find Vivarelli's criticism entirely persuasive that the scholars who take seriously Mussolini's totalitarian project and his aim to create a 'new Italian' therefore also accept the propaganda slogans of the fascist regime as reality. Vivarelli, Le leggi razziali, 761-765.

28 De Felice, Jews, 227-228. De Felice's change in perspective is also evident in the introduction to the fourth edition of his book, published in 1987, in which he openly criticised Michaelis' approach. According to De Felice, Michaelis' work "has one serious limitation, which is to reduce the Jewish policy of the Fascist regime to a foreign policy 'event', and in particular to relations with Germany", ibid., xxxvii. Such an approach, De Felice continued, "underestimates and, at times, ignores […] the reality and the inner working of Fascism itself, and how these changed in time, as well as the repercussions that these changes had on the attitude towards the Jews, and on the autonomous developmental process of a home-grown antisemitism on the part of Fascism in general, and by Mussolini in particular", ibid., xxxvii-xxxviii.

The Value of a Transnational Perspective

In her extensive research on anti-Jewish policy in fascist Italy, Marie-Anne Matard-Bonucci also explained Mussolini's Racial Laws mainly as a response to the requirements of domestic policy, arguing – like other authors cited above – that the Italian fascist regime saw antisemitism as an extremely effective mobilising device to revitalise itself and to fulfil the revolutionary project of the 'New Man'.[29] However, her analysis does not ignore the role played by the international context. Firstly, Matard-Bonucci pointed out that other south-east European countries led by authoritarian and fascistic regimes had also adopted anti-Jewish legislation. This showed that antisemitism had become an almost inevitable component of the ideology and policy of fascist regimes.[30] Above all, Matard-Bonucci shed light on the growing influence of Nazi Germany on the far-right and nationalist European organisations, which made the relationship between fascism and antisemitism increasingly inescapable. Such developments affected Italian fascism as well, as Matard-Bonucci rightly stressed, drawing attention to "the attraction exerted by Hitler's regime on the fascist elites", in whose eyes "Germany had become the model […] of a totalitarian regime".[31] According to her, Nazi Germany therefore played an important role in the antisemitic turn of Italian fascism, even though Mussolini's decision was not primarily dictated by reasons of foreign policy, as suggested by De Felice and Michaelis.

Matard-Bonucci's approach is similar to that followed by Francesco Germinario, who also argued that Italian fascism used antisemitism as a powerful driving force in the process of building a totalitarian system and overcoming the bourgeois values seen to be embodied by 'the Jew'.[32] Moreover, he remarked that adopting antisemitism involved relevant changes to traditional fascist beliefs, such as the view of the nation as a spiritual entity. Through the antisemitic turn, such a view was abandoned, and the nation was identified with race.[33] As a consequence, Germinario emphasised, Mussolini's regime progressively fell "into the ideological orbit of Nazi Germany", a development that he qualified as a "*nazification of fascism*".[34]

Matard-Bonucci's and Germinario's studies suggest that, even if one explains the origins of fascist antisemitism mainly by referring to the requirements of domestic policy, the role of German influence can hardly be ignored. Analysing it more broadly than the purely Italian context, Arnd Bauerkämper and Aristotle Kallis demonstrated how the radicalisation of European far-right movements after 1933 went hand in hand with their increasing admiration for Hitler's regime. From the United Kingdom to Belgium, from the Netherlands to Norway, and from France to Italy, the force of attraction exerted by Nazi Germany drove fascistic organisations to adopt antisemitism as a central tenet of their ideology and politics. As Bauerkämper pointed out:

> "after they had rapidly established their undisputed dictatorship in 1933–1934, the Nazis considerably increased their influence among European fascists. The seemingly unbeatable Third Reich emerged as the dominant model, surpassing Italian Fascism, with the turn to antisemitism as a keynote of its growing attractiveness".[35]

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29 Matard-Bonucci, L'Italia fascista, 124-134.
30 Matard-Bonucci, L'Italia fascista, 138.
31 Matard-Bonucci, L'Italia fascista, 120-121.
32 Germinario, Fascismo, 13-14.
33 Germinario, Fascismo, 51-76.
34 Germinario, Fascismo, 58 (emphasis in the original).
35 Arnd Bauerkämper, Transnational Fascism. Cross-Border Relations between Regimes and Movements in Europe, 1922–1939, in: East Central Europe 37 (2010) 2-3, 214-246, here 233.

Nazi Germany provided a very influential model for political forces that shared a vision of the future of Europe as a rebirth of civilisation, to be achieved by removing the perceived threat of socialism as well as the harmful influence of plutocratic capitalism, and above all by cleansing "'alien' and detrimental communities".[36] This goes some way toward explaining why even countries in which antisemitism had hitherto been marginal, such as Italy, succumbed to the drive of Nazi racialist ideology: "The Fascist regime's seemingly incongruous introduction of racial anti-Jewish legislation in 1938–39", Kallis claimed, "is indicative of the sway that the Nazi racial antisemitic paradigm – and the regime as a whole – had come to exercise across Europe by the late 1930s."[37]

Scholarship has not yet provided extensive research findings illustrating the influence of Nazi Germany on the politics and culture of Italian fascism. However, some points, which will be explained in the next section, suggest that the approach proposed by Bauerkämper and Kallis – and partially adopted by Matard-Bonucci and Germinario – is probably accurate and worthy of further development.

The Impact of Hitler's Rise to Power on Fascist Italy

In the late 1950s, the well-known historian of antiquity Arnaldo Momigliano, who had lost his position at the University of Turin in 1938 due to the Racial Laws and had been forced to leave Italy, described the period 1933 until 1943 as a "decade not only of Nazism in Germany, but also of nazification in Italy".[38] This statement is not entirely correct, as it overlooks the conflict (concerning above all the Austrian question) that marked the relationship between fascist Italy and the Third Reich until the mid-1930s. Moreover, one can observe that, in the period following Hitler's rise to power, the official attitude of the Italian regime toward the 'Jewish question' did not substantially change: From April 1933, Italy hosted German Jews who fled Nazi persecution while at the same time Italian Jews continued to hold prominent positions in the public life of the country.[39] However, Momigliano was right in recognising the dangerous repercussions of the Nazi triumph in Germany within Italian fascism. In this regard, he recalled the first antisemitic campaign unleashed in 1934 and the rise of personalities with strong racist beliefs, such as Telesio Interlandi, Giovanni Preziosi, and Julius Evola, who until then had only played marginal roles in the fascist regime.[40]

De Felice also emphasised the increase of antisemitism in some fascist quarters after the Nazi rise to power, attributing this development explicitly to "the example of what was happening in Germany". He explained that

> "this originated both in the anti-Jewish policy as well as the much more totalitarian character, when compared to Italy, adopted by the Nazi regime, leading many Fascist extremists to think it a good idea to import, in whole

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36 Aristotle Kallis, Fascism and the Jews. From the Internationalisation of Fascism to a "Fascist Antisemitism", in: Tilles/Garau (ed.), Fascism and the Jews, 16-37, here 34.

37 Kallis, Fascism, 29.

38 Momigliano made this statement in the first draft of an obituary of Carlo Antoni that was to be published in the *Rivista Storica Italiana*. It provoked an indignant reaction by Federico Chabod and led to a dramatic exchange of letters between the two historians. See Federico Chabod/Arnaldo Momigliano, Un carteggio del 1959 [Correspondence of 1959], edited and introduced by Gennaro Sasso, Afterword by Riccardo Di Donato, Bologna 2002, 89.

39 On this point, see Vivarelli, Le leggi razziali, 744.

40 Letter from Momigliano to Chabod, 10 November 1959, in: Chabod/Momigliano, Un carteggio, 111.

or in part, the German model to finally give rise to the much-awaited 'second wave'. If, however, it could not simply be transplanted […] at least it could use antisemitism to pressure Mussolini to restart the 'forward march of the revolution'".[41]

This interpretation was affirmed by Germinario, who claimed that, in the eyes of many radical fascists, Hitler's regime represented "what fascism should have been".[42] The example of Nazi Germany made clear that adopting an antisemitic platform would speed up the process of building a totalitarian system in Italy.

It is not by chance that the antisemitic campaign of 1934 was particularly fuelled by Interlandi's newspaper *Il Tevere* (The Tiber), which the year before had welcomed "the advent to power of Hitler, loyal friend of fascist Italy, admirer of Mussolini".[43] The anti-Jewish offensive first targeted Zionism, charging its supporters with anti-patriotism. Yet over time it became more and more antisemitic, especially after March 1934, when a group of antifascist activists from Turin – most of whom had Jewish names – were arrested. The attacks were subsequently extended to all Italian Jews, with the entire press joining in. During that summer, however, the campaign suddenly stopped, coinciding with the Nazi putsch attempt in Austria that resulted in the murder of the Austrian chancellor, Engelbert Dollfuß. Such dramatic events marked the moment of maximum tension between fascist Italy and the Third Reich, leading Mussolini to take explicit anti-German and anti-racist stances. In this troubled situation, it was not convenient for the Duce to let the anti-Jewish press attacks continue.[44] However, as De Felice stressed, the Nazi victory in Germany as well as the first antisemitic campaign in Italy had serious consequences for Italian fascism by legitimising groups hostile to the Jews within it:

> "Antisemitism was no longer a marginal and individual occurrence within the Fascist party; although it still had few supporters, it had become one of the most motivating issues of some groups. For the moment, Italian foreign policy and the struggle between forces within the party kept these groups at a disadvantage; however, external conditions and power plays could change all this in the not too distant future. Fascism, in any event, had to deal with them, because of a reality that could no longer be ignored: Hitler's rise to power in Germany and the commitment demonstrated by Nazism to replace Fascism as the leader of Fascist-type political parties by using antisemitic and racist ideology."[45]

Nazi Germany's challenge to the leadership role of fascist Italy was another important factor that drove Mussolini's regime to move toward antisemitism, as Kallis also pointed out:

> "Sensing that the Nazi Regime had started to eclipse his own in terms of influence on the European ideological-political landscape, Mussolini anxiously tried to compete against National Socialist Germany in the highly influential domain of racial politics, and to match the dynamism of the German regime in the eyes of international supporters."[46]

Therefore, Nazi influence affected fascist Italy on two levels:

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41 De Felice, Jews, 128-129.
42 Germinario, Fascismo, 65.
43 Hitler, la nuova Germania e l'Europa [Hitler, the New Germany, and Europe], in: Il Tevere, 31 January 1933, quoted in Nemeth, The First Antisemitic Campaign, 249.
44 On these events, see Nemeth, The First Antisemitic Campaign, 250-254.
45 De Felice, Jews, 137.
46 Kallis, Fascism, 28.

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(a) by strengthening the most radical components within Mussolini's party, which pushed for a totalitarian turn of the regime, and

(b) by forcing Italian fascism "to make some concessions"[47] in order "to stonewall the ambitions of the Third Reich"[48] of achieving hegemony over the other fascist movements.

In both cases, this led to an increase in anti-Jewish feelings in fascist Italy. More extensive research exploring the role of Nazi Germany's impact on Italian fascism could prove helpful for better understanding Mussolini's turn toward antisemitism. In this regard, important suggestions have also come from the analysis of French fascism. Indeed, the context of interwar France was marked by the rise of several extreme-right groups, which over the 1920s showed an overall generally tolerant and inclusive attitude toward French Jews. Hitler's rise to power produced a radical change, driving most of the nationalist movements to embrace antisemitic ideology.

French Fascism and the Jewish Question

Before discussing the development of the approach to the 'Jewish question' adopted by French far-right leagues, it is useful to summarise the view of fascist Italy that circulated among the Jewish population in France. It is perhaps surprising, and therefore worth noting, that although most French Jews held progressive political views – rooted in the values of equality, justice, and democracy launched by the Revolution that had brought about their emancipation in 1791 – large segments of the Jewish population were sympathetic to Italian fascism. To all but the most leftist of French Jews, Mussolini's regime appeared, until 1938, to be friendly toward Jews, and the Racial Laws implemented that year came as an appalling surprise, not as the result of an inevitable development. Focussing on the concrete political action of Italian fascism from 1922, the conservative and moderate Jewish press in France reported any act of goodwill toward Jews, emphasising that some were appointed to prestigious offices. Moreover, the presence of Jews within Mussolini's party (even at the highest level) proved that Jewishness and fascism were by no means mutually exclusive. Even in the early 1930s, the majority of French Jews held the belief that fascist Italy was immune from antisemitism, as their Italian coreligionists' approval of the Duce's policy seemed to demonstrate. Therefore, they thought, Italian fascism would never join other fascist movements based on racism, like German National Socialism. In the eyes of most French Jews, racism radically distinguished Hitler's movement from Mussolini's. In the years 1933 until 1936, they continued to regard fascist Italy as a bulwark against antisemitism; however, the division between leftist and moderate elements within the French Jewish community increased. The antifascist Jews, gathered in the Ligue internationale contre l'antisémitisme (International League against Antisemitism), lamented that the situation of their coreligionists in Italy was taking a turn for the worse. To them, the beginning of the antisemitic campaign by the Italian regime was proof that there was an irreducible opposition between fascism and Jewishness. On the other hand, the more conservative French Jews explained Mussolini's racial turn by referring to his alignment with Nazi Germany. In their eyes, the anti-Jewish persecution launched by the Duce totally contra-

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47 De Felice, Jews, 138.

48 Bauerkämper, Transnational Fascism, 235.

dicted not only the Italian tradition of tolerance toward Jews but also the policy adopted by the fascist regime until that point.[49]

In conclusion, the attitude of the French Jewish community toward fascist Italy provides interesting context to the understanding of the relationship between fascism and antisemitism. In particular, this view of Italian fascism from abroad contradicts the overly simplistic comparison between Mussolini's regime and the Third Reich, as Jérémy Guedj rightly pointed out: "Generalisations and simplifications arouse confusion. Italy was not Germany. Antisemitism was not as much linked to Italian fascism as it was to Nazism, in reality as well as in the minds of contemporary observers."[50]

The French case is also helpful in understanding the reasons for Italian fascism's turn toward antisemitism. Indeed, several far-right leagues emerged in France during the 1920s that looked with admiration toward fascist Italy and adopted an approach to the 'Jewish question' very similar to that of Mussolini's movement. Obviously, comparing a unified political force that seized power and turned itself into a regime – as Italian fascism did – with heterogeneous groups such as those of the French extreme right, which never unified or came to power, is problematic. It is worth considering, however, that neither in Italy nor in France did fascism reflect a compact ideology and a consistent system of beliefs.[51] Any comparison must focus on the specific political actions implemented by each fascist movement within its own context. In this regard, one can observe that in the France of the 1920s significant far-right leagues welcomed Jews as members, just as Italian fascism did, and regarded Jews (except those with leftist views) as an integral part of the different spiritual families of France. At that time, the country was still deeply marked by the spirit of the Union sacrée (Sacred Union) achieved in the Great War. The patriotic attitude held by French Jews in the war and their participation in the Union sacrée were widely acknowledged and valued. However, this situation radically changed in the 1930s, when a new wave of antisemitism erupted in France. The development of the far-right leagues' attitude toward Jews in interwar France is effectively illustrated through the cases of some particularly important organisations such as the Jeunesses Patriotes (Young Patriots), the Faisceau (Fasces), the Mouvement Franciste (Francist Movement), and the Solidarité Française (French Solidarity).[52]

The league of the Jeunesses Patriotes, founded in late 1924, was – at least in the first years of its existence – the most deeply permeated by the spirit of the Union sacrée. Although the Jeunesses Patriotes were openly xenophobic and conducted violent attacks against leftist Jews, they rejected antisemitism, which appeared to the majority of their members as an internal enemy that divided the country. The Jeunesses Patriotes' approach to the 'Jewish question' was not different from that of

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49 On the attitude of French Jews toward fascist Italy, see the extensive and well-researched study by Jérémy Guedj, Le Miroir des désillusions. Les Juifs de France et l'Italie fasciste (1922–1939) [The Mirror of Disillusionment. The Jews of France and Fascist Italy (1922–1939)], Preface by Ralph Schor, Paris 2011. Useful remarks can be also found in Ralph Schor, L'Antisémitisme en France pendant les années trente [Antisemitism in France during the 1930s], Brussels 1992, 291-292.

50 Guedj, Le Miroir, 18.

51 On this point, see the remarks of Michel Winock, Nationalism, Antisemitism, and Fascism in France, translated by Jane Marie Todd, Stanford, California 1998, 200-201.

52 On the far-right leagues in interwar France, see in particular Samuel Kalman, The Extreme Right in Interwar France. The Faisceau and the Croix de Feu, Aldershot 2008; Paul J. Kingston, Anti-Semitism in France During the 1930s. Organisations, Personalities, and Propaganda, Hull 1983; Richard Millman, La question juive entre les deux guerres. Ligues de droite et antisémitisme en France [The Jewish Question in the Interwar Period. Far-right Leagues and Antisemitism in France], Paris 1992; Robert Soucy, French Fascism. The First Wave, 1924–1933, New Haven 1986; Robert Soucy, French Fascism. The Second Wave 1933–1939, New Haven 1995.

Italian fascism. Unsurprisingly, their leader, Pierre Taittinger, was a convinced admirer of Mussolini and regarded him as a model to be followed. Moreover, the Jeunesses Patriotes shared with Italian fascism the belief in corporatism and the military mystique derived from the First World War.[53]

Another organisation, both strongly rooted in the spirit of the Union sacrée and modelled upon Mussolini's movement, was the Faisceau. Founded in late 1925, the short-lived Faisceau ceased to exist in 1928; it is worth mentioning nonetheless, if only because it was one of the first groups outside Italy that defined itself as fascist. The leader of the Faisceau, George Valois, saw Italian fascism as a revolutionary movement that would replace the liberal and capitalist order. Like the Jeunesses Patriotes, the Faisceau showed hostility towards leftist Jews, but disavowed anti-semitism. Valois explicitly invoked toleration of French Jews:

> "Do you want to kill all the Jews? No one will listen to such a proposition. Do you want to send all the Jews to Palestine? That is not serious, as we know well that they would not go. Do you want to create a special regime for Jews? That is no more serious than the previous proposition. Thus you arrive at this conclusion: there are Jews in France who are French. It is necessary to live with them and to see to it that our lives in common are not a trick on anyone, which is perfectly possible."[54]

Moreover, the league counted Jews among its members, some of whom contributed to the group's official paper, *Le Nouveau Siècle* [The New Century].[55] Both the Jeunesses Patriotes and the Faisceau reflected the prevailing atmosphere of the 1920s in France, marked by a decrease in antisemitic feelings.

The 1930s, however, saw a resurgence of antisemitism, due to various factors. According to Ralph Schor, the most crucial were (1) the consequences of the world economic crisis of 1929, (2) the influx of refugees fleeing Germany after Hitler's rise to power, and (3) the victory in 1936 of the Front populaire (Popular Front) and the appointment of Léon Blum, a socialist and a Jew, as prime minister.[56] Moreover, the resumption of a nationalist mythology that had arisen during the time of the Drey-fus Affair, which identified the Jews with the secular Republic, must not be ignored.[57] Another point also deserves to be mentioned. Analysing the trend of anti-Jewish publications over the period, Schor pointed out that the antisemitic wave increased especially after 1933.[58] This suggests that observers should not overlook the impact of the Nazi political victory in Germany as a further key factor in this revival, although the antisemitic front was divided over the Third Reich, as Schor also showed.[59] Paula Hyman remarked that "the triumph of Nazism inspired a shift in emphasis from

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53 On the early years of the Jeunesses Patriotes, see Millman, La question juive, 69-79; Soucy, The First Wave, 39-86.

54 G. Valois, Le Fascisme [Fascism], Paris 1927, 57, quoted in Soucy, The First Wave, 171.

55 On the Faisceau, see Kalman, The Extreme Right; Millman, La question juive, 81-95; Soucy, The First Wave, 87-173. Kalman suggested a different interpretation to those of Millman and Soucy, arguing that antisemitic stereotypes "continually found a place within the doctrine of the Faisceau", Kalman, The Extreme Right, 192. He acknowledged, however, that the anti-Jewish statements of Valois and the members of other leagues were addressed to opponents, whereas the patriotic Jews were not under attack. It seems clear that "the issue concerned adherence to Faisceau doctrine, and not religion or race", ibid., 197.

56 Schor, L'Antisémitisme, 145-180. The reaction of the French Jewish community has been analysed by Paula Hyman, From Dreyfus to Vichy. The Remaking of French Jewry, 1906–1939, New York 1979, 199-232; David H. Weinberg, A Community on Trial. The Jews of Paris in the 1930s, Chicago/London 1977, 72-147.

57 On this aspect, see in particular Pierre Birnbaum, Antisemitism in France. A Political History from Leon Blum to the Present, translated by Miriam Kochan, Oxford 1992, 227-247; Winock, Nationalism, 119-122.

58 Schor, L'Antisémitisme, 28.

59 Schor, L'Antisémitisme, 156-159.

unfocused xenophobia to antisemitism".[60] It is difficult to deny that Hitler's rise considerably affected the far-right leagues' views, as demonstrated by the Jeunesses Patriotes abandoning the spirit of the Union sacrée and moving toward antisemitism. As early as August 1932, Pierre Taittinger published an article in *Le National* [The National] – the official paper of the league – in which he welcomed Hitler's success and praised the extremely dynamic character of his movement:

> "The progress of Hitler's propaganda, the organisation of his shock troops, the creation of a veritable regular army of 300,000 completely militarized men, [the formation of a] select elite who leads, the constant development of racism in all classes of Germans, and the enthusiasm of [Hitler's] troops for a leader who makes their heart beat under their brown shirts – all of this cannot be explained as the simple play of circumstances or luck. It denotes a personal action at every moment on Hitler's part. At the same time that he continues to exert his will, he manoeuvres with a firmness and competence, holding his army between his hands, that allows him to overcome all obstacles, crises and seditions, assuring him of new and thundering successes without end."[61]

Above all, Taittinger remarked that racism had become a "great activating force" in Germany, enabling the rise of the Nazi Party. After its rise to power, *Le National* glorified the new Germany and justified the first anti-Jewish measures. This was a significant departure from the tolerant attitude toward Jews the Jeunesses Patriotes had displayed until then.[62]

Nazi antisemitism also strongly influenced far-right groups that arose in France after Hitler's rise to power in Germany. This is especially true of Francism, founded in September 1933. For a long time, its leader Marcel Bucard had been a fervent supporter of the Union sacrée. Therefore, he had regarded the French Jewish community as part of the nation and rejected antisemitism. At the same time, Bucard admired Mussolini and Italian fascism. However, when Hitler came to power, he welcomed the event and took an ambivalent attitude toward the first anti-Jewish measures implemented by the Nazi regime. During the years 1933 until 1935, the Francist leader swung between traditional belief in the Union sacrée and his admiration of the Third Reich. It is worth noting that there were several Jews among the league's members in the early days, so Francism worked to show that it was not antisemitic, although it harshly criticised foreign and leftist Jews. From June 1935 the movement adopted a definitive antisemitic approach, blaming the Jews for playing a key role within Freemasonry, and Bucard's anti-Jewish feelings escalated in the following years.[63]

What was the reason for Bucard's metamorphosis on the 'Jewish question'? As Richard Millman persuasively argued, the answer lies in "the evolution of fascism" which took place in various European countries as a consequence of the powerful rise of German National Socialism.[64] "The primary instigator of antisemitism in Bucard and in many others was Nazi Germany", Millman claimed.[65] "Hitler shows, then, that antisemitic policy can prove useful" and was able to convert a lot of people to antisemitism, in his country as well as abroad. In France, Millman continued,

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60 Hyman, From Dreyfus to Vichy, 200.
61 Pierre Taittinger, Hitler, l'homme qui vient [Hitler, the Man Who Is Coming], in: Le National, 6 August 1932, quoted in Soucy, The First Wave, 211.
62 See Millman, La question juive, 116-131; Soucy, The First Wave, 211-215.
63 On Francism, see Millman, La question juive, 153-167.
64 Millman, La question juive, 165.
65 Millman, La question juive, 166.

"Pierre Taittinger was among the first to notice the success of National Socialism as partly a result of its Judeophobia", and several personalities were driven to join the antisemitic camp as a result, such as Gaston Bergery, Marcel Déat, Jacques Doriot, Gustave Hervé, Pierre Drieu La Rochelle, and Jean Renaud. "Along with Bucard, they adopted antisemitism for reasons having more or less to do with the increasing importance and influence of Nazism."[66]

This development also affected another influential far-right organisation: the Solidarité Française. This league was launched in June 1933 by François Coty, a businessman who during the 1920s had gained much power over public opinion thanks to media control (he had become the owner of the famous newspaper *Le Figaro* and then had founded the *Ami du peuple* [Friend of the People]). At that time, Coty was also an admirer of Mussolini and fascist Italy; strongly anti-communist, he saw Italy as a natural ally of France against the 'red peril'. However, Coty held deep anti-German feelings too and, at the beginning, did not at all welcome Hitler's National Socialism or his promotion of pan-Germanism. Coty was antisemitic, yet this did not seem to have been the core of his belief system, as his anti-Jewish attitude was mainly a consequence of his anti-communist obsession, while on the other hand some Jewish writers were permitted to publish their articles in *Le Figaro*. Coty radically changed his approach to Germany after Hitler rose to power. The Solidarité Française developed an increasing admiration of the Führer, which drove it to call for a French/German rapprochement. This attitude continued after Coty's death in July 1934, and antisemitic tendencies within the league inevitably grew.[67] In this respect, it seems correct to claim – as Robert Soucy did – that the Solidarité Française between 1933 and 1936 "was closer to German Nazism than to Italian Fascism".[68]

In 1936 the far-right leagues were dissolved by Léon Blum's government. Nonetheless, in the years before the Second World War, the antisemitic trends in French society became stronger, and most of the nationalist movements rejected the Union sacrée.

Final Remarks

The comparison between the attitudes of Italian and French fascism toward the 'Jewish question' suggests some points that are worthy of consideration. First, it seems quite problematic, as Robert O. Paxton rightly noted, "to consider an exacerbated antisemitism the essence of fascism".[69] Even Zeev Sternhell, who regarded antisemitism as a crucial factor in the genesis of fascist ideology at the end of nineteenth century, specified that this was not "a necessary precondition for the development of fascism".[70] Therefore, placing Mussolini's movement (and other fascist groups modelled upon it) on the same footing with Hitler's National Socialism – at least with regards to their approaches toward Jews – does not prove convincing. In this regard, Soucy's conclusion is persuasive:

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66 Millman, La question juive, 165.
67 On Coty and the Solidarité Française, see Millman, La question juive, 171-186; Soucy, The Second Wave, 59-103.
68 Soucy, The Second Wave, 74.
69 Robert O. Paxton, The Anatomy of Fascism, London 2005, 9.
70 Zeev Sternhell, Le fascism, ce "mal du siècle" … [Fascism, this "Evil of the Century" …], in: Michel Dobry (ed.), Le mythe de l'allergie française au fascisme [The Myth of the French Allergy to Fascism], Paris 2003, 361-406, here 376.

> "Whereas the Hitlerian variant of fascism was deeply racist and assigned Jews a central role in its demonology, Italian fascism was neither racist nor antisemitic during its first fifteen years in power. And most French fascist movements were not racist either during the interwar period."

For a long time, Soucy emphasised, "the major bonds between German, Italian, and French fascism [...] were anti-Marxism and antiliberalism, not racism and anti-semitism".[71]

Above all, a transnational approach provides useful elements for better understanding the reasons that drove Mussolini's regime down the road of antisemitism. Explaining fascist Italy's turn toward racism simply in terms of requirements of the Axis alliance does not seems satisfactory. Even if one accepts as more convincing an approach focussing on the internal development of Italian fascism, committed to achieving its totalitarian aims, one feels that such an interpretation remains incomplete. As the events of various fascistic leagues in interwar France show, the power and ascendancy of Nazi Germany played a key role in instigating antisemitism among far-right organisations across Europe. In this way, the Third Reich was able to replace Mussolini's Italy as the universal model of fascism after 1933. This point is effectively stressed by Millman:

> "After Hitler's rise to power, and increasingly over the years, the benevolence of powerful Germany was often essential in order to thrive within the fascist world or, in some cases, simply to survive. Sooner or later, fascists [...] who wanted to avoid its anger or to gain its trust submitted to the Nazi doctrine, the hatred of the Jews."[72]

Fascist Italy, in the end, could not escape such a destiny either, and the consequences were devastating – for the Jews, the regime and, ultimately, the country as a whole.

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71   Soucy, The Second Wave, 152.
72   Millman, La question juive, 166.

ARTICLE

Nicola D'Elia
Historian, Independent scholar
wulfgar2@hotmail.com

Article

Copy Editor:
Tim Corbett

Rebecca Jinks

Representing Genocide:
The Holocaust as Paradigm?

Abstract

This lecture will explore the ways in which representations of the Holocaust have influenced how other genocides are understood and represented in the West. It will take as examples the four canonical cases of genocide in the twentieth century – Armenia, Cambodia, Bosnia, and Rwanda – and explore how they have been represented in film, literature, photography, and memorialisation. It will argue that most 'mainstream' representations of genocide largely replicate the mainstream representational framework of the Holocaust – including the way in which the latter resists recognising the rationality, instrumentality, and normality of genocide, preferring instead to present genocide as an aberrant, exceptional event in human history. The lecture will conclude by discussing a contrasting series of more nuanced, engaged representations of genocide: these tend to revolve precisely around the ordinariness of genocide and the structures and situations common to human societies, which can become the crucible for genocidal violence.

Introduction

In his 2008 book, *Identity Politics in the Age of Genocide*, David B. MacDonald wrote:

> "[T]he Holocaust has become the pre-eminent symbol of evil in the modern world, encouraging other groups to copy its vocabulary and imagery, while sometimes contesting its significance […]
> Representation of the past and present can thus become a contest […] In so doing, they trivialize the Holocaust and the unique suffering of the group they represent."[1]

A year later, Michael Rothberg argued in his well-known book *Multidirectional Memory* that

> "far from blocking other historical memories from view in a competitive struggle for recognition, the emergence of Holocaust memory on a global scale has contributed to the articulation of other histories […] Ultimately, memory is not a zero-sum game."[2]

These two quotations demonstrate that as well as the memory battles being fought *within* the arena of Holocaust memory – over what should be remembered, by whom, and how – battle is also being done over the place of Holocaust memory within wider memory cultures, between groups who refer to the Holocaust when they tell their own histories of oppression and suffering, and others who would jealously guard

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1   David B. MacDonald, Identity Politics in the Age of Genocide. The Holocaust and Historical Representation, Abingdon 2008, 15, 196.
2   Michael Rothberg, Multidirectional Memory. Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization, Stanford 2009, 6, 11.

against this sort of 'plagiarism'. MacDonald is evidently one of the latter.[3] In *Identity Politics in the Age of Genocide*, he was largely concerned with listing and criticising those groups whom he accused of "copying" the vocabulary of the Holocaust, or of "cloaking" and "framing" their own suffering in the "vestments of the Holocaust", in order to gain recognition for their own histories of oppression. He used the examples of Armenians, indigenous groups in Australia, America, and New Zealand, and the various ethnic groups in the former Yugoslavia.[4] It is true that explicit references to the Holocaust are sometimes made by activists and artists in their work on other genocides: Relatively crude equations between Hitler and other genocidal leaders are not uncommon – such as a poster which places quotes from Talaat Pasha and Hitler alongside one another, or references to Pol Pot or Milošević as an "Asian" or "Balkan" Hitler respectively.[5] Other authors have written of a "Rwandan Nazism", and the Armenian American writer Peter Balakian has described his childhood on a "very Jewish" road in the suburbs of New York, feeling, he says, like an "Armenian Jew" before he later came to understand "the real kinship Armenians and Jews shared".[6] So MacDonald and other scholars who take this approach are correct: This kind of Holocaust-referencing does happen. But what is often implicit, if not explicit, within their critiques is a form of border patrol, an indignation at the 'appropriation' of the Holocaust as a strategy of identity politics. For MacDonald, such plagiarism risks trivialising and minimising the Holocaust and its uniqueness.

I would like to follow the spirit of Michael Rothberg's *Multidirectional Memory*, however, and take a more open (and less moralising) approach to these overlaps and intersections between representations of the Holocaust and representations of other genocides. Rothberg's book explored the interaction of memories of the Holocaust, decolonisation, and racism, but I am primarily interested in representations of other genocides. The scholarly literature on comparative genocide studies has over the past couple of decades been debating the "conceptual constraints" of using the Holocaust as the "paradigm" of genocide and the conceptual distortions and silences that this analytical position can produce.[7] Likewise, in the last few decades we have seen an outpouring of scholarly analyses of Holocaust literature, films, memorials, and graphic novels, but few scholars have explored where and how these theories and

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3   MacDonald was largely writing about the memory cultures of the 1990s and early 2000s, when "Holocaust consciousness" had reached new heights, and – not unconnected – more histories of oppression were being articulated in an international context far more sensitive to human rights abuses and personal histories of suffering. At the same time, the genocides in Rwanda and Bosnia gave renewed relevance to these discussions of Holocaust memory.

4   MacDonald, Identity Politics in the Age of Genocide, 17. Other scholars who have taken this approach, though in a more measured fashion, include Angi Buettner, Holocaust Images and Picturing Catastrophe. The Cultural Politics of Seeing, Farnham 2011, and Alan E. Steinweis, The Auschwitz Analogy. Holocaust Memory and American Debates over Intervention in Kosovo and Bosnia in the 1990s, in: Holocaust and Genocide Studies 19 (2005) 2, 276-289. An early, thoughtful exploration was offered by Arlene Stein, Whose Memories? Whose Victimhood? Contests for the Holocaust Frame in Recent Social Movement Discourse, in: Sociological Perspectives 41 (1998) 3, 519-540.

5   See the poster 'Modus Operandi' by Karen Vrtanesyan, available at https://www.armeniangenocideposters.org/ (4 August 2018); for further discursive examples, see MacDonald, Identity Politics in the Age of Genocide.

6   Gil Courtemanche, A Sunday at the Pool in Kigali, Edinburgh 2004, 210, 252; Peter Balakian, Black Dog of Fate. A Memoir, New York 1998, 38-44.

7   David Moshman, Conceptual Constraints on Thinking about Genocide, in: Journal of Genocide Research 3 (2001) 3, 431-50; A. Dirk Moses, Conceptual Blockages and Definitional Dilemmas in the "Racial Century". Genocides of Indigenous Peoples and the Holocaust, in: Patterns of Prejudice 36 (2002) 4, 7-36; Dan Stone, The Historiography of Genocide. Beyond "Uniqueness" and Ethnic Competition, in: Rethinking History 8 (2004) 1, 127-42.

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analyses might also be applied to other genocides.[8] My aim is therefore to bring these two analytical positions together and to explore how representations of other genocides have been constructed, and might be received, when the Holocaust is taken as such a cultural benchmark.

I will focus here on the Armenian, Cambodian, Bosnian, and Rwandan genocides, and explore how they are represented in film, literature, memorialisation, and photography. These four cases are perhaps the best known genocides after the Holocaust, almost a canon in themselves. My intention here is to decode how their representation has contributed to their canonisation, and at the same time to provide a critique of this canonisation. I focus on these four media – film, literature, photography, and memorialisation – in part because they are usually created some time after the event, unlike the news media's instant responses, and as such they also remain in the public domain for much longer. They also give us insights into both the intentions of the artists and the dissemination of ideas throughout Western society, given that filmmakers, writers, and so on are hoping to chime or interact with the public's understandings of genocide. My core questions are: How, and how far, has the Holocaust and its representation influenced the representation of other genocides, especially in the past few decades? How might Westerners respond to these representations, given that Western memory cultures have largely internalised the Holocaust as an essential part of European memory?

Of course, to speak of 'Westerners' and 'the West' is to speak of a vast number of people, divisible many times over by nation, cultural background, religion, gender, generation, education, politics, and so on. The sheer range of this divisibility suggests that the nation is not the only prism through which to view culture and representation, even though national histories and, for example, cinematic or literary traditions do strongly influence individual works. Yet representations are never produced in cultural isolation, and as Sharon Macdonald has argued in relation to museums, they are also refracted through concepts and debates from elsewhere, often "undertaken in awareness of a potential international – and judgemental – gaze".[9] So while Holocaust memory may not be exactly "globalised", I think that Westerners do largely share a basic understanding of how the Holocaust unfolded, and this surely informs responses to other genocides.[10]

Throughout this paper, I will make an analytical distinction between what I call mainstream representations of genocide and more engaged representations of genocide. Mainstream genocide representations appeal to (and have appeal for) a wide popular audience and, I will argue, largely replicate the representational framework of the Holocaust. They follow mainstream Holocaust representations in portraying

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8 However, this is beginning to change. See Robert Eaglestone, "You Would Not Add to My Suffering If You Knew What I Had Seen". Holocaust Testimony and Contemporary African Trauma Literature, in: Studies in the Novel 40 (2008) 1/2, 72-85; Axel Bangert/Robert S.C. Gordon/Libby Saxton (ed.), Holocaust Intersections. Genocide and Visual Culture at the New Millennium, London 2013; Joanne Pettitt, Memory and Genocide in Graphic Novels. The Holocaust as Paradigm, in: Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics (forthcoming, see https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/21504857.2017.1355824, 4 August 2018).

9 Sharon Macdonald, Difficult Heritage. Negotiating the Nazi Past in Nuremberg and Beyond, London 2009, 7.

10 The issue of globalisation is an established debate. See Daniel Levy/Natan Sznaider, Memory Unbound. The Holocaust and the Formation of Cosmopolitan Memory, in: European Journal of Social Theory 5 (2002) 1, 87-106; Daniel Levy, Changing Temporalities and the Internationalization of Memory Cultures, in: Yifat Gutman/Adam D. Brown/Amy Sodaro (ed.), Memory and the Future. Transnational Politics, Ethics and Society, Basingstoke 2010, 15-30, and in the same volume Ross Poole, Misremembering the Holocaust. Universal Symbol, Nationalist Icon or Moral Kitsch?, 31-49. See also Wulf Kansteiner, Sold Globally – Remembered Locally. Holocaust Cinema and the Construction of Collective Identities in Europe and the US, in Stefan Berger/Linas Eriksonas/Andrew Mycock (ed.), Narrating the Nation. Representations in History, Media and the Arts, New York 2008, 153-180, and Duncan Bell (ed.), Memory, Trauma, and World Politics, Basingstoke 2006.

genocide as a fundamentally exceptional, abnormal event. By contrast, the more engaged representations I discuss engage precisely with the ordinariness of genocide. They often, but not always, originate in the countries that have experienced genocide. By following ordinary peoples' lives and experiences, they show that genocide is a process that arises from a conjunction of ordinary factors common to, or possible in, any society: social conflicts, economic difficulties, exclusivist politics, real or perceived crises, and tensions. In this way, more engaged representations also decentre the Holocaust as the paradigmatic genocide. I am thus also concerned throughout with the ways in which genocide is distanced from, or brought closer to, 'normal' Western society.

I will begin by exploring Western public understandings of the Holocaust before turning to mainstream representations of the Armenian, Cambodian, Bosnian, and Rwandan genocides. My argument is that the influence of the Holocaust on representations of other genocides is not really to be found at the level of explicit references to or comparisons with it. Instead, its influence is to be found in the deeper, structural similarities that shape and define many representations of genocide, and thus also Western understandings of genocide. In mainstream representations of genocide, these deeper, structural similarities are to be found in the representation of perpetrators, victims, the process of genocide, and its aftermath – what I call the genocide 'script'. I will then draw some conclusions about what this means for the public understanding of genocide and what the canonisation of these four cases means for other cases that do not 'fit' this script. Finally, I will conclude by showing how more engaged representations of genocide disrupt this framework of representation. Instead of depicting genocide as separate from normal Western lives, they show genocide to be far more ordinary, and far closer, than might be expected.

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I

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Public understandings of the Holocaust have, of course, evolved since 1945. It is equally obvious that the descendants of perpetrators, collaborators, victims, and 'bystanders' will negotiate the *meaning* of the Holocaust very differently. However, amongst the infinite personal and national variations, I argue that a common understanding of the "basic scenario" of the Holocaust has emerged, with relatively set ideas about the perpetrators, victims, process, and aftermath of genocide.[11]

Scholars describing the public's basic idea of the Holocaust often equate it with the film *Schindler's List* (1993) – not without good reason, given the film's phenomenal popularity. While there certainly are overlaps, the public's understanding of the Holocaust is not, however, reducible to *Schindler's List*.[12] Viewers are aware that this story is not the entirety of the Holocaust, even if the deportations, ghettoisation, and the hellish landscape of Auschwitz, which loom around the edges of the Schindler Jews' experiences, has been constructed in order to narrate a seemingly 'typical' Holocaust story. As Christoph Classen has argued, part of the success of *Schindler's*

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11 This phrase, which I will come back to below, is taken from Andrew Strathern/Pamela J. Stewart, Introduction, in: Andrew Strathern/Pamela J. Stewart/Neil L. Whitehead (ed.), Terror and Violence. Imagination and the Unimaginable, London 2006, 1-39, here 2.

12 Even if, as Yosefa Loshitsky noted: "As the first studio film to deal directly with the enormity of the Holocaust, one made by the most commercially successful director in movie history, Schindler's List attempts to provide the popular imagination with a master narrative about the Holocaust." Yosefa Loshitsky, Introduction, in: Yosefa Loshitsky (ed.), Spielberg's Holocaust. Critical Perspectives on Schindler's List, Bloomington 1997, 2.

List is due to the way it invokes our imagination of the Holocaust. Its 'documentary' aesthetic and, importantly, the inclusion of various scenes and stereotypes of haggling Jews, Germans mockingly shearing the beards and locks of orthodox Jews, or piles of bodies create an "atmosphere of familiarity".[13] Classen wrote:

> "[T]hese stereotypes in aesthetics and content trigger effects of recognition; at the same time they are recombined, and their associations are put into the context of the narrative, thus helping to stage those images of the film that could not be made available by documentary material that had been passed down. In doing so the film uses the collective memory (of images) that it helps to consolidate and rewrite at the same time."[14]

Schindler's List is thus in conversation with Holocaust memory, rather than constituting it. As Classen noted, the iconic scenes and images that Spielberg deployed so effectively do in fact "recall associations, myths, and metanarratives that relate to the extermination of the Jews in the broadest sense".[15]

In such scenes and images, the perpetrators are typically crisply uniformed and efficient Nazis, and they display either the cold detachment of a committed ideologue, or the brutality of thuggish murderers. Or both: Spielberg's Amon Goeth does indeed personify both stereotypes. Scott Montgomery remarked that, as "the embodiment of evil", these perpetrators are somehow "faceless" – they are infinitely interchangeable (which is part of the horror).[16] This phrase nicely encapsulates one key aspect of the mainstream representation of the Holocaust: that Nazis are often presented as 'stock characters', necessary within the context of the narrative, but rarely explored in any real depth as historical agents, with motives and psychologies. This is gradually becoming less true – there are some interesting recent examples of museums and films exploring perpetrators in more depth.[17] Nevertheless, this general 'facelessness' persists in other representations and, crucially, continues to contrast with the humanising representation of the victims. Here, we are shown the histories and fates of individuals and encouraged to identify with their suffering as a way of understanding the impact of the genocide. These victims are also depicted as a largely helpless, innocent, and passive community, swept up in the Nazis' plans for extermination.

Alongside this basic and binary understanding of the perpetrators and victims of the Holocaust, a string of extremely recognisable, iconic scenes document the unfolding of the Holocaust. Most chronologically structured narrative books, museum exhibitions, and films begin with the Nazi rallies, propaganda posters, the November Pogrom, and familiar scenes of the degradation of Jews forced to scrub the streets and wear yellow stars, and run through to starvation in the ghettos, the deportation trains and, almost inevitably, the gates, barbed wire, and barracks of the camps, SS officers, striped uniforms, and the gas chambers. Perhaps the most iconic images, those that have most shaped the postwar visualisation of the Holocaust, are the photographs of the mounds of bodies discovered by the liberators of the camps, the crumbling remains of the camps themselves, and the piles of shoes, suitcases, hair,

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13   Christoph Classen, Balanced Truth. Steven Spielberg's Schindler's List among History, Memory, and Popular Culture, in: History and Theory 48 (2009) 2, 77-102, here 91.

14   Ibid.

15   Classen, Balanced Truth, 90.

16   Scott L. Montgomery, What Kind of Memory? Reflections on Images of the Holocaust, in: Contention 5 (1995) 1, 71-104, here 81.

17   For example the museum *Topographie des Terrors* in Berlin; Jonathan Littell's novel The Kindly Ones, translated by Charlotte Mandell, London 2009; or Bernhard Schlink's novel The Reader, translated by Carol Brown Janeway, London 2011, and its 2008 film adaptation by Stephen Daldry.

and ashes. These icons, of course, are not just visual – the deportation trains, for example, are familiar from films, survivor testimonies, and also as physical artefacts in some museums.[18] But what I want to suggest here is that these icons have also helped to create an understanding of how the Holocaust unfolded as a process. In a way, if strung together, these iconic scenes do in fact narrate the Holocaust by themselves, charting a rough chronology from discrimination to extermination. The icons function as familiar staging posts, anchoring narrations of the Holocaust within an expected pattern, and this pattern means that they can be recalled by association even if they do not appear in a particular film, or novel, and so on.[19] In this retrospective view, the Holocaust appears as an inevitable progression through successive stages towards total annihilation. It implies a preconceived plan for genocide, rather than encouraging any reflection on the "twisted road to Auschwitz".[20] And because it does not tend to explore the perpetrators in much depth, it also usually 'explains' the Holocaust through reference to the Nazis' *actions*, rather than their motives.

These, then, are the expected scenes and scenarios of the perpetrators, victims, process, and aftermath of the Holocaust. The recycling of these familiar elements in established formats and conventions means that the Holocaust is instantly "recognisable".[21] In Reinhart Koselleck's phrase, these conventions of narrative, form, and content have produced certain "horizons of expectation" which structure how audiences interpret cultural representations of the Holocaust.[22] Indeed, as Hans Kellner noted, any representation of the Holocaust will have an intended audience that is expected to grasp the author's intended meaning, but that in turn has expectations. Kellner wrote: "We expect to see perpetrators and victims differentiated, atrocities linked together, concepts defined and exemplified. We expect that certain events will not be made comic or absurd: we object when certain events are made tragic."[23] As he argued, for Holocaust representations to be accepted *as* Holocaust representations, they have to be presented according to current social codes, protocols, and conventions of readability: "Genre, *topoi*, and emplotment are the traditional formal devices of rhetoric that are supposed to secure the adherence of a reader to a vision of the subject […] Use of the old, the expected, secures the creation of the new by making its novelty nevertheless recognisable."[24]

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18 See Oren Baruch Stier, Committed to Memory. Cultural Mediations of the Holocaust, Amherst 2003, chapter 2.

19 For an elucidation of this in the case of the Nazi Party Rally Grounds in Nuremberg, see Macdonald, Difficult Heritage, 155.

20 Karl A. Schleunes, The Twisted Road to Auschwitz. Nazi Policy toward German Jews, 1933–1939, Urbana 1990.

21 Scholars who work within reception studies emphasise that individuals do not passively receive the intended meanings of a film, photograph, or museum, but instead actively negotiate with the information and interpretations. A person's prior knowledge, personal and biographical circumstances, and socio-cultural context will influence how they respond to a representation – and individuals also often dismiss aspects of representations which do not match their preconceptions. See Stuart Hall, Encoding/Decoding, in: Simon During (ed.), The Cultural Studies Reader, London 2007, 507-517; John H. Falk/Lynn D. Dierking/Marianna Adams, Living in a Learning Society. Museums and Free-Choice Theory, in: Sharon MacDonald (ed.), A Companion to Museum Studies, Oxford 2006, 323-39, and in the same volume Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, Studying Visitors, 362-376.

22 Reinhart Koselleck, Futures Past. On the Semantics of Historical Time, translated by Keith Tribe, New York, originally published 1979, this edition 2004.

23 Hans Kellner, "Never Again" is Now, in: History and Theory 33 (1994) 2, 127-144, here 140.

24 Ibid.

II

Thus, we turn to the question of other genocides: How far are they only recognisable *as genocide* through recycling the "expected scenes and scenery" of the Holocaust? As I have indicated, most of the scholarship that discusses the relationship between representations of the Holocaust and other genocides has focussed entirely on examples where images and texts directly appeal to the Holocaust or strongly 'echo' it, either verbally or visually. While the "shock of recognition" produced by such similarities is powerful, this is not the only way in which the Holocaust has influenced the representation of other genocides.[25] As anthropologists Andrew Strathern and Pamela Stewart have suggested, films, literature, and other representations resonate with us "not only by presenting visual images […] but by appealing to, and conforming with, basic scenarios in people's minds, mental habitus in the terms of Pierre Bourdieu, connected to cosmic schemes of 'good versus evil' and 'the lessons of history'".[26] Here I argue that Western understandings of other genocides are rooted in the Holocaust because of deeper, structural correlations in their representation. Mainstream genocide representations largely follow the 'basic scenario' of the Holocaust, centering on how the perpetrators, victims, process, and aftermath of genocide are portrayed. These four representational elements recur across films, exhibitions, photographs, and literature about genocide. There are, of course, some differences, such as a stronger focus on sexual violence in representations of the Armenian, Bosnian, and Rwandan genocides than one would expect with the Holocaust, or UN peacekeepers' failure to intervene in more recent genocides. However, because audiences are generally far less familiar with the basic historical facts of other genocides, replicating this 'script' means that the case study is still 'culturally legible' or 'recognisable' *as* genocide (and here I am extending Hans Kellner's argument). Moreover, repeating this 'plot' or script, where perpetrators are specifically coded as planning and pursuing the total annihilation of an innocent victim group, is also what distinguishes the representation of genocide from the representation of other atrocities or tragedies. As I will discuss later, this relatively narrow conception of genocide therefore excludes some cases of genocide which fall outside the audience's horizons of expectation.

In mainstream genocide representations, the perpetrators of genocide – like most Holocaust perpetrators – are depicted in highly stereotypical terms, as unambiguously 'evil'. This representation tends to serve as an *explanation* for their actions: Here, too, they are rarely explored in any real depth. As such, perpetrators remain distanced from the audience, driving the genocidal process without a proper explanation of *why*.

Across films, literature, museum exhibitions, and photography, the leaders are demonised. The names of Talaat, Enver, and Djemal Pashas, or Pol Pot, Nuon Chea, and "Comrade Duch", or Slobodan Milošević, Radovan Karadžić, and Ratko Mladić become the anchors of the process.[27] They are given names like "the Butcher of Bosnia"[28] or "Master of the Forges of Hell",[29] and they are depicted as driven, cold, and

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25 This phrase was used by *Time* in its response to the images of "skeletal figures behind barbed wire" in Omarska. Cited in Jeffrey Shandler, While America Watches. Televising the Holocaust, New York 1999, 242.

26 Strathern/Stewart, Introduction, 2.

27 Interestingly, the names of the leaders of the Rwandan genocide seem not to form a part of the imaginary of Rwanda in the same way that the leaders of other genocides have.

28 Julian Borger, The Butcher's Trail. How the Search for Balkan War Criminals Became the World's Most Successful Manhunt, New York 2016.

29 Rithy Panh (dir.), Le Maître des Forges de L'Enfer (2012).

uncompromising. In books and museums, they are often accompanied by police mug shots, framing them as criminals visually as well as rhetorically. Atom Egoyan, in his 2003 film *Ararat* about the Armenian genocide, went one step further: In one scene, a venomous Turkish governor who is preparing to have two young Armenian boys tortured is seated at his desk, framed by the flickering fireplace behind him.

The genocidal footsoldiers and collaborators – often unnamed and de-individualised Young Turks, Khmer Rouge, Hutu, or Bosnian Serbs – appear as passive, faceless agents of an unseen and powerful organisation. In Roland Joffé's landmark 1981 film *The Killing Fields*, the Khmer Rouge cadre appear as automata, passive machines following orders. In one scene, the Khmer Rouge children who the main character, Dith Pran, has witnessed being indoctrinated, tear up the tiny garden he is trying to use to stay alive. Haing S. Ngor, the actor who played Dith Pran, later commented that the young girl's expression, without her knowing it, was so true to the behaviour of the real Khmer Rouge children that it triggered traumatic memories in him.[30] The same faceless machinery is true of the Young Turks depicted in Atom Egoyan's *Ararat* and in Terry George's film *The Promise* (2016), who direct the Armenian women and children to their destinations in the Syrian desert. The same is true again of the Bosnian Serb military commanders described by Western journalists in their memoirs of the wars in the former Yugoslavia. The BBC journalist Jeremy Bowen, recalling his time in Bosnia, wrote about the frequent roadblocks and checkpoints at which journalists would receive rough treatment. One day, Bowen recalled, they attempted to reach the UN Safe Area of Goražde:

> "Many times I would turn up at a Serb checkpoint or in a village to be faced with huge hostility and pointed guns. [… T]he men were often big, physically intimidating and heavily armed. Our progress through eastern Bosnia to Goražde was slow. At the last checkpoint before Goražde, the Serbs came up with all sorts of reasons why we could not continue. There were mines ahead, there was shooting around the corner. My notebook says they were 'big men – big boots, big guns, beards, looking tough […] One very angry man with grey hair shouts "nix" at the camera.'"[31]

Similar scenes show up in films about the Balkan wars, for example in Michael Winterbottom's 1997 film *Welcome to Sarajevo,* in which huge, bearded, heavily armed Četniks board a bus which is transporting Sarajevan orphans to safety, and haul all the children with Serb-sounding names off the bus, to keep them with their 'own people'.

Perpetrators often appear in menacing crowds, as at these Bosnian Serb checkpoints, or the gangs of drunk, whistle-blowing Hutu gathered around roadblocks or churches in Rwanda, or the Turkish mob depicted in Terry George's *The Promise*. A similar effect is produced by the structure of one of the best known non-fiction books about Rwanda, Jean Hatzfeld's *A Time for Machetes* (2005).[32] Hatzfeld spent quite some time in Rwanda, interviewing former perpetrators; in his book, the perpetrators' words are organised into thematic chapters, and he has more or less completely removed his own voice as interviewer. As the scholar of Rwanda Lee Ann Fujii has remarked, "the

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30 See https://www.nytimes.com/1984/10/28/movies/in-the-killing-fields-a-cambodian-actor-relives-his-nations-ordeal.html (14 February 2018). On other Cambodian survivors' perceptions of Khmer Rouge children, see David Chandler, "The Killing Fields" and Perceptions of Cambodian History, in: Pacific Affairs 59 (1986) 1, 92-97, here 95.

31 Jeremy Bowen, War Stories, London 2006, 154, 153. "Nix" is not a word in Serbo-Croat; presumably Bowen misheard "ništa" ("no").

32 Jean Hatzfeld, A Time for Machetes. The Rwandan Genocide: The Killers Speak, translated by Linda Coverdale, London 2005.

killers' words therefore seem to spring from a spontaneous and ongoing monologue. This sense of streaming monologue, in turn, helps to render these men as cold-blooded monsters. Once they become monsters, however, they are easy to dismiss as aberrant individuals who would never remind us of ourselve."[33] The same could be said of the portrayal of most génocidaires in mainstream genocide representations.

These perpetrators are further distanced from us by detailed testimonial descriptions by victims of sadistic tortures, cruel beatings, and indiscriminate killings. The Bosnian survivor Kemal Pervanić, who spent time in the concentration camp of Omarska, recalls in his memoir how "the guards at Omarska very quickly turned into beasts, of two breeds": The first would immediately jump on and crush their victims, while the second would toy with and keep their victims alive until the next day.[34] Egoyan's *Ararat* includes scenes where young women are stripped and forced to dance while being doused with petrol and burnt alive. Indeed, we seem to expect such behaviour of perpetrators. The French-Canadian UN General Roméo Dallaire, who oversaw the peacekeeping mission in Rwanda and did everything he could do get a mandate for action, recalled in his memoir his first meeting with the leaders of the *Interahamwe*, a militia group which was instrumental in the genocide. He wrote:

> "I had made my way to the Diplomates, jostling through the ubiquitous roadblocks, drunken and downright mad militiamen, and hundreds of children jumping around, all excited among today's kills. These kids were being egged on to throw stones at our vehicles and yell at us as we stopped for the militiamen to open the gate […] Arriving at the hotel, I took the bullets out of my pistol just in case the temptation to shoot them was too extreme, and went inside.
>
> The three young men Bagosora introduced me to had no particularly distinguishing features. I think I was expecting frothing at the mouth, but the meeting would be with humans."[35]

Dallaire is not alone in his confusion at expecting monsters but meeting humans. Indeed, it mirrors the common idea of Holocaust perpetrators as "cultured demons", as the Auschwitz *Sonderkommando* member Zalman Gradowksi put it. The author Slavenka Drakulić, who as a writer I otherwise find very sensitive and insightful, reproduced this dichotomy in her coverage of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia at The Hague. On the one hand, she insisted that the perpetrators in the dock really were ordinary people who could be found (or made) in any society. On the other hand, her style of writing created a strong aura of dangerousness and deviance around them. She frequently expressed surprise that the perpetrators *looked* ordinary: About one, she wrote that "Kovač really looked like somebody you could trust to give your daughter a lift to the hospital"; about another, Jesilić, she said that he "looks like your best friend, your ideal son-in-law". But she could not understand how "this nice fisherman", Jesilić, "ended up executing Muslim prisoners", and then pointed out that fishing "is not quite the innocent sport it seems. Fish have to be killed […] The fish would appear from the water, wriggling helplessly on the hook. I can imagine him unhooking the fish and throwing it on the grass. Then watching it gasp for air."[36]

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33 Lee Ann Fujii, Machete Season. The Killers in Rwanda Speak (review), in: African Studies Review 50 (2007) 1, 155-156, here 155

34 Kemal Pervanić, The Killing Days. My Journey through the Bosnian War, London 1999, 74.

35 Roméo Dallaire, Shake Hands with the Devil. The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda, London 2004, 345-346.

36 Slavenka Drakulić, They Would Never Hurt a Fly. War Criminals on Trial in The Hague, London 2004, 48, 59, 67, 64.

In all of these representations, the perpetrators are portrayed as deviant. Because their motives are rarely explored, audiences have to rely on notions of 'evil' or 'ancient hatreds' against minority groups to explain the genocide. Despite the differences between these five cases, there does seem to be a basic similarity in the way that the Holocaust and the other genocides are understood to unfold. Perhaps one of the more peculiar aspects of watching films, reading books, or visiting exhibitions about genocide is that we 'already know' the 'plot', how it will end, and also how we are likely to respond to the narratives and images we are presented with. Most representations either follow or imply the same basic 'plot': Pre-existing tensions in a society deteriorate, more or less rapidly, and those in power – who usually only just came to power – plan and then execute a genocidal scheme which targets part of the population for death, usually an ethnic or religious minority. This understanding of genocide is what I elsewhere called a "closed narrative".[37] It explains genocide by magnifying 'domestic' factors – the perpetrators themselves, their political ideologies and fanaticism, and some supposed tendency to violence in society – and by *ignoring* the international context for genocide, which could be shifts in global power, regional conflict, or the very modern goal of ethnically homogenous nation states. In fact, even their coverage of domestic factors is limited, since there is rarely much discussion of the impact of economic crises, social divisions, political legitimacy, and so on. The effect is to close off genocide, to distance it from anything which happens in 'normal' Western democracies. This, of course, follows the 'intentionalist' interpretation of genocide (and the common representation of the Holocaust), rather than allowing consideration of the structural factors and elements common to all societies which can be radicalised into genocide.[38]

As with the representation of the Holocaust, agency and causation are often embodied in the perpetrators. Guilt is nationalised or extended to the entire perpetrator group of Turks, Khmer Rouge, Hutu, or Serbs – concealing any differences within groups (such as politically moderate Hutu, or Bosnian Serbs who did not identify with 'mother Serbia'). It also conceals any collaboration by other groups, and most obviously the sheer diversity of participants, their motives, and their levels of involvement – all of which would make the ways in which ordinary people become killers more intelligible. The dynamic is reduced to a familiar binary of one clear perpetrator and one clear victim – which means that other victim groups are often left out of the story. For example, the conflict in the former Yugoslavia is often reduced to one-way violence by Serbs against Bosnians, ignoring the Croats (and all other hyphenated ethnicities and political identities) and the wider violence of the civil wars.

These horizons of expectation – particularly of the premeditated plan – are confirmed by the use of foreshadowing in some representations, usually as a device which heightens the sense of foreboding and emphasises genocidal intent. For example, in her 2008 novel *Skylark Farm*, Antonia Arslan adopted the voice of an omniscient narrator. In the middle of her discussion of an Armenian family who were preparing for Easter in 1915, she interrupted to say: "Holy Saturday. The patient trap, agleam with barbed wire and congealed blood, is about to be sprung."[39] In two of the films about Rwanda, a scene is re-enacted where Romeo Dallaire is given informa-

37 Rebecca Jinks, Representing Genocide. The Holocaust as Paradigm?, London 2016, chapter 2.
38 See for example Mark Levene, Genocide in the Age of the Nation-State, Vol. I. The Meaning of Genocide, London 2005, and James Kaye/Bo Stråth, Enlightenment and Genocide, Contradictions of Modernity, Oxford 2000.
39 Antonia Arslan, Skylark Farm. A Novel, London 2008, 57; see also 31, 73, 96-97.

tion about the plans for genocide by a secret informant, well before the plane crash that killed the president in 1994.[40] Dallaire's own account makes heavy use of fore-shadowing, and in the 2004 documentary *Ghosts of Rwanda*, an aid worker who was in Rwanda before the genocide said: "we all knew things were going to blow".[41]

In these films, books, and exhibitions, genocide appears as an inevitable, planned event. Just as the explanatory focus is geographically circumscribed (emphasising domestic factors), so too is the temporality of genocide circumscribed into a period with a very clear start and end point. This is reflected in the use of "1915" to speak of the Armenian genocide, or the phrase used in many Cambodian testimonies that the "Pol Pot time" lasted "three years, eight months, and twenty days", or the "100 days" of genocide in Rwanda.[42] There is usually no sense of the 'stages of deliberation', and the gradual escalation, which produces genocide. Some films and literature, and most photographic works, open *in media res* – with the downing of the president's plane in Rwanda or the clearing of the cities in Cambodia – leaving little chance to explore the backstory.

Similarly, the representation of the space and place of genocide – as in Holocaust representations – also tends to focus on bounded, closed-off spaces. By and large, mainstream Holocaust representations have focussed on the "concentrationary universe"[43] – camps, ghettos, barbed wire, and tight spaces of entrapment like cattle cars, or hiding spaces under floorboards or in sewers. In their own ways, many representations of other genocides – and the physical sites themselves – echo this spatial representation of the Holocaust. The deportation columns of the Armenian genocide have been called a "concentration camp in perpetual movement";[44] the destination of the Syrian desert becomes the concentrationary location of killing. Most representations of Cambodia take the interrogation prison of Tuol Sleng as their subject, not the dispersed, everyday life and death in the Cambodian countryside.[45] Representations of Rwanda focus on the churches, schools, hospitals, and sports stadiums that became sites of mass murder. With Bosnia, most focus on either the experiences of the concentration camps, on the feeling of encirclement and entrapment in Sarajevo, surrounded by Bosnian Serb snipers, or on the other so-called UN Safe Areas like Srebrenica or Goražde. The similarities to the Holocaust are quite clear: In each case, the actual spaces of violence are reduced to spaces of entrapment, and genocide is firmly located and caged within these bounded – and distant – spaces. This telescoping of genocide also focusses attention on the spaces that, because of the stark victim/perpetrator dynamic, offer the clearest moral position. Together, these mainstream representations of genocide tend to give us "the most expected image of the

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40 Terry George (dir.), Hotel Rwanda (2004); Roger Spottiswoode (dir.), Shake Hands with the Devil (2007).
41 Carl Wilkens, in Ghosts of Rwanda (2004). Transcript available at www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/ghosts/etc/script.html (4 August 2018).
42 Overt genocidal violence against various groups continued in Ottoman Turkey until at least 1923. Some Armenian testimonies cover this, too, including Bertha Nakshian Ketchian, In the Shadow of the Fortress. The Genocide Remembered, edited by Sonia I. Ketchian, Cambridge, MA 1988; Euphronia Halebian Meymarian, Housher. My Life in the Aftermath of the Armenian Genocide, London 2004. In general, though, '1915' is the cipher for the genocide; a longer periodization would presumably disturb the simplicity of '1915' and also call attention to other groups' victimisation. For each of these genocides, these periodisations – like the Dayton Accords in representations of the breakup of the former Yugoslavia – posit a clear ending (as well as beginning) to genocide, which occludes the ways in which the structures of violence within a society that helped *produce* genocide often persist in the aftermath.
43 This is a translation of the title of David Rousset's *L'Univers concentrationnaire*, Paris 1946.
44 Balakian, Black Dog of Fate, 197.
45 On the latter, see Thet Sambath and Rob Lemkin's excellent documentary *Enemies of the People* (2010).

'unimaginable'".[46] They tend not to confront audiences with ambiguous situations, instead positioning the audience as a horrified witness whose conclusions about the violence have already been made for them.

The representation of the victims of genocide tends to heighten this sense of moral clarity. As with representations of the Holocaust, the core focus and narrative drive of many genocide representations is the suffering of the victims, rather than the motives of the perpetrators.[47] A common format, as with Holocaust representations, is to portray the experiences of a few individuals as an emotive way of explaining the story – whether in feature films and documentaries, in museums, in novels and witness accounts, or, obviously, in survivor testimonies. These individual stories are recounted against the backdrop of whole families and communities being deported, massacred, incarcerated, or forced into manual labour. The display at Tuol Sleng is a particularly effective example of this: Each room has board after board of photographs of victims, and the visitor quickly gains the sense of scale of killing at Tuol Sleng while being encouraged to study individual faces and emotions. The museum at Srebrenica has selected fifteen representative Bosnian Muslim boys and men of the 8000 who died, and displays a short biography of each together with a personal item found with them in a mass grave.[48] Here, the aesthetics, colour palette, and display techniques are very familiar from Holocaust exhibitions. In general, this oscillation between the individual and the collective is familiar as a way of communicating the enormity of the event. It is also a way of emphasising the scope and extent of the killings – something which can also permit them to be recognised as genocide.

In most of these representations, the victims are shown as helpless, innocent, and vulnerable, with little or no agency – unless they are heroised and valorised as resisters, as in Franz Werfel's novel *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh* (1933) or through the figure of Paul Rusesabagina in the film *Hotel Rwanda*. This general depiction of a one-sided affair is meant to chime with the public's understanding of genocide in terms of 'good and evil'. The representation of *survivors* after the genocide compounds this dichotomy. Most representations draw on a standard set of strategies for presenting loss, trauma, and devastation, inviting intense emotional reactions. The survivors are described as the "surviving remnant", the "leftovers of the sword", and "remnants of the killing field"; they are "lost" or "demoralised, outcast, 'demolished'".[49] Each of these terms connotes brokenness, burden, and sorrow. The survivors' words reinforce this feeling, and they could just as well be Holocaust survivors' words. In the first paragraph of his 2005 testimony of surviving Srebrenica, *Postcards from the*

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46 Amos Goldberg, The Victim's Voice and Melodramatic Aesthetics in History, in: History and Theory 48 (2009), 220-237, here 229.

47 This focus on the victims' experiences – the death of many and the struggles of those who survived – fulfils a vital ethical function; it also helps create sympathy amongst Western audiences and thus to mark genocide as a matter of concern for the international community. I would argue, however, that a *complementary* exploration of the motives of the perpetrators and their collaborators, as well as the multiplicity of factors which lead to genocide, is needed in order to fulfil the different – but no less important – function of demystifying and demythologising the origins of such violence.

48 See Suzanne Bardgett, Remembering Srebrenica, in: History Today 57 (2007), 52-53.

49 The Hebrew term *she'erit hapleta* (the surviving remnant) was employed to describe Holocaust survivors, especially in the European Displaced Persons (DP) camps. "Leftovers of the sword" was used to describe Armenian survivors; see Fethiye Çetin, My Grandmother. A Memoir, translated by Maureen Freely, London 2008, 102. "Khmer are viewed as remnants of the killing fields"; see May M. Ebihara/Carol A. Mortland/Judy Ledgerwood, Introduction, in: May M. Ebihara/Carol A. Mortland/Judy Ledgerwood (ed.), Cambodian Culture Since 1975. Homeland and Exile, Ithaca/London 1994, 1-26, here 4. "[T]he women of Srebrenica are lost", Irfanka Pašagić, quoted in Eric Stover/Gilles Peress, The Graves. Srebrenica and Vukovar, Zurich 1998, 193; see also Jean Hatzfeld, Into the Quick of Life. The Rwandan Genocide: The Survivors Speak, translated by Gerry Feehily, London 2005, viii.

Grave, Emir Suljagić wrote: "I survived and many did not; I lived on in the same way that they died. There is no difference between their death and my survival, for I remained to live in a world that has been permanently and irreversibly marked by their death."[50] Along with the sense of 'living death', there is the evidence of trauma. The Cambodian survivor Haing Ngor, who played the lead role in Joffé's film *The Killing Fields*, wrote:

> "If I thought too much in the daytime about what had happened, I had dreams that night. Huoy died in my arms over and over and over. I saw my father tied to the tree and trying to tell me something, but afraid to speak. It didn't take much to set off my nightmares – the sound of water dripping from the faucet was enough."[51]

This overpowering sense of trauma and grief is reinforced by the aesthetics often used to portray survivors. One visual convention is instantly recognisable: the portrait of a survivor in a kind of mute sorrow, with downcast eyes and head turned slightly to one side.[52] Alternatively, survivors are shown in extreme states of distress: Many films and images about Srebrenica feature Bosnian Muslim widows weeping as they wait for news or visit their loved ones' coffins before burial.[53] These, too, are relatively well-worn conventions of representing victims and survivors within Holocaust representations.

The question of how survivors are portrayed, finally, leads me on to the question of the portrayal of the aftermath of genocides and its overlaps with the Holocaust. Beyond the focus on survivors, there are often iconic images and descriptions of the physical remnants – piles of skulls and bones, personal possessions, and discarded weapons, in the same way that the "icons of extermination" seem to dominate the representation of the aftermath of the Holocaust.[54] With Rwanda and Cambodia, we are shown ordered rows of skulls and bones in the churches and schools of Rwanda and the memorial stupas across Cambodia. We see the exhumations of twisted corpses in the mass graves of Bosnia and Croatia and the bodies of Armenians laid out by the roadside. These often photographic representations are central, I think, because they seem to depict the essence of genocide, and indeed to serve as evidence for it. As I indicated with the Srebrenica museum, most genocide museums (and literature and photography) now also focus on the personal possessions the victims left behind: clothes, bunches of keys, a toy, identification papers. In the Kigali Memorial Centre, a few sets of clothing have been washed and hung in glass cases, dramatically backlit in an otherwise dark room, and at Murambi, a line of clothes hangs in an empty room. In Tuol Sleng, a glass cabinet holds neatly folded clothes of victims. In each of these museums, the personal possessions are displayed separately from any analytical sections: The displays are intended to communicate the enormity of loss, and to facilitate identification with the victims, and visitors are invited to contemplate and to mourn the lives that were lost. This focus on the remnants of genocide is one of the closest points of convergence between Holocaust and genocide representations.

Thus, although the audiences of mainstream representations of genocide may be unfamiliar with the basic history of the events at hand, they are nevertheless quickly

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50 Emir Suljagić, Postcards from the Grave, translated by Lejla Haverić, London 2005, 11.

51 Haing S. Ngor, Survival in the Killing Fields, with Roger Warner, New York 2003, 472.

52 See the front covers of Yolanda Mukagasana/Alain Kazinierakis, Les Blessures du Silence [The Wound of Silence], Arles 2001, and Hatzfeld, *Into the Quick of Life*.

53 See for example the opening scenes of Leslie Woodhead (dir.), A Cry from the Grave (1999), an edited and expanded version of which is also shown in the Srebrenica Potočari Memorial Museum.

54 Cornelia Brink, Secular Icons. Looking at Photographs from Nazi Concentration Camps, in: History and Memory 12 (2000) 2, 135-150, here 138.

familiarised through the use of the 'basic scenario' of the Holocaust. The visual conventions associated with Holocaust representations reappear in genocide representations; and in depictions of the process of genocide, the perpetrators' agency is emphasised over broader structural contexts. As with the Holocaust, these representations all narrate genocide as 'exceptional', as 'extraordinary': In this way, genocide is neutralised, literally 'domesticated'.

III

All of this, I would suggest, has three main outcomes. The first is that by distancing genocide (and the Holocaust) from Western liberal democracies, these mainstream representations repeat and consolidate the central Western interpretation of genocide: that genocide is the product of extraordinary people and politics, in far-away places, and not something which requires any introspection about our own societal or political norms.

Second, and linked to this, are the implications for genocide prevention. In my book, I demonstrated that most of these representations at some level situate themselves as a call to arms against genocide ever happening again.[55] Whether a film or a survivor testimony or a museum, most express hope that by raising awareness of genocide, we can better recognise and prevent it in the future. These are entirely genuine and heartfelt hopes, and the audiences of films, readers of books, and visitors to museums often respond in kind. Indeed, in the visitor books of museums in Rwanda, Cambodia, Bosnia, and Armenia, the phrases "never again" and "never forget!" appear almost everywhere. So this normative framework of responses to the Holocaust has been extended to shape how Westerners respond to other genocides too. However, we must ask whether these representations actually facilitate 'never again' becoming a reality, and my argument is that they often do not. This is because, as I discussed above, they tend to sidestep questions of how and why genocide happens – and thus how prevention might be possible. It is also because representations encourage emotional responses from their audiences – of horror, sorrow, loss, shock, sympathy – without channelling those emotions into a critique of the roots of genocide.

Third, these deeper, structural overlaps between the representation of the Holocaust and the representation of the Armenian, Cambodian, Bosnian, and Rwandan genocides have helped to make a canon out of the latter, and to crystallise a Western understanding of the basic scenario or script of genocide. But this makes it much harder to recognise those other genocides *as* genocide which do not 'fit' this scenario. Thus, if the violence shown is sporadic and drawn-out, is dispersed over a wide geography, or does not necessarily result in mass death, it is even less likely to be recognised as genocide. This is true, for example, of the on-going genocidal violence in Darfur or in Myanmar against the Rohingya today, where "slow-burning genocide" is cast as interethnic violence and as a "refugee crisis", rather than as genocide.[56]

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55   Jinks, Representing Genocide, chapter 5.

56   On labelling and conceptualising the events in Darfur as genocide, see Scott Straus, Darfur and the Genocide Debate, in: Foreign Affairs 84 (2005) 1, 123-133, and Julie Flint/Alex de Waal, Darfur. A New History of a Long War, London 2008. On labelling and conceptualising the events in Myanmar as genocide, see Zarni Maung/Alice Cowley, The Slow-Burning Genocide of Myanmar's Rohingya, in: Pacific Rim Law & Policy Journal 23 (2014) 3, 683-754; Azeem Ibrahim, The Rohingyas. Inside Myanmar's Hidden Genocide, Oxford 2016; Penny Green/Thomas MacManus/Alicia de la Cour Venning, Countdown to Annihilation. Genocide in Myanmar, London 2015 (available at www.statecrime.org/data/2015/10/ISCI-Rohingya-Report-PUBLISHED-VERSION.pdf, 4 August 2018).

It is also true for the settler-colonial genocides in North America and Australia, or in cases where children are forcibly removed from their parents and transferred to another group. Certainly, I think films like Philip Noyce's *Rabbit Proof Fence* (2002), which follows the fate of three "mixed-race" Aboriginal children in Australia, would struggle to be recognised as a genocide film. In this film, set in the 1930s, three girls are removed from their Aboriginal family and transported thousands of miles to a boarding school, where they are to learn to assimilate into White culture and society and ultimately be biologically and culturally absorbed into Australian society. The film focusses on the girls' escape and daring efforts to walk home, pursued by police and an Aboriginal tracker, along the eponymous Rabbit Proof Fence. Although the practice of transferring children from one group to another – here, biological and cultural assimilation – is squarely recognised in the UN Genocide Convention as genocide, the fate of the "stolen generations", as they are known, does not easily fit into the paradigmatic 'basic scenario' of the Holocaust: The removals are geographically and temporally spread out, there is no mass killing, and indeed the perpetrators claim they are removing the children to give them a 'better' life.[57] *Rabbit Proof Fence* rightly focusses on the girls' resistance to these plans – and as such fits rather more into the genre of films about determined escapes through the wilderness than in the 'genocide' genre. In this way, the representational framework which takes the Holocaust as paradigm, while permitting (some) representations of genocide to be recognised *as* genocide, has simultaneously helped create a canon and helped exclude other cases from recognition.

However, to end I want to discuss some of the 'more engaged' representations of genocide. There are many of these, and they reshape audience understandings of genocide in subtly different ways: by presenting survivors differently, by presenting perpetrators differently, or by encouraging us to see how the structures of violence which produced genocide in the first place often lingered past 1915, 1979, 1994, or 1999. I will focus on a few examples where authors unsettle the usual representation of perpetrators, since it is here that more engaged representations diverge most clearly from the mainstream paradigm.

Instead of demonising the perpetrators, these representations show that perpetrators are ordinary people making choices and decisions who are often not unknown to the victims: Indeed, they are sometimes even the victims' friends and neighbours. I believe the literature and films coming out of the former Yugoslavia are often the most successful at portraying this intimate element. They often focus on neighbourly violence and the way that ethnicity suddenly wrenched apart friendships. Semezdin Mehmedinović's 1998 book *Sarajevo Blues* portrays the sharp break that occurred on the first night of the war. On his way home on the tram in Sarajevo after football practice, he wrote,

> "[a] bunch of guys with stockings over their heads and Kalashnikovs aimed at us stopped the trolley. As I got out, I took a look at this motley crew only to recognize the guy from my team who hadn't shown up. I was so taken by surprise that I had to repeat my question twice: 'Šljuka, is that you?' Embarrassed, he kept quiet behind his stocking.
> My confusion lasted for a while. Instead of a guy I was supposed to hang out with over a few beers after a game, I found myself facing a real terrorist occupying the very trolley I happened to be riding in. I couldn't figure out how

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57   On the stolen generations, see A. Dirk Moses (ed.), Genocide and Settler Society. Frontier Violence and Stolen Indigenous Children in Australian History, New York 2004.

to explain this to myself, this fundamental physiognomic change. But when the number of people began to multiply – the number of people who, like Šljuka, started wearing stockings on their heads instead of their feet – I was no longer confused."[58]

Mehmedinović here portrayed the sharp, disorienting break of the first night of the war through this story of broken friendship. Srđan Dragojević used a similar technique in his 1996 film *Lepa sela, lepo gore* (Pretty Village, Pretty Flame). The story follows Milan and Halil, two best friends whose friendship and history is annihilated by the war. Dragojević chose to explore not the war but the people involved in it, using flashbacks to show how the Serb soldiers (including Milan) trapped in a tunnel by Muslim forces (Halil amongst them) came to leave their former lives to fight due to a variety of explicable but not excusable reasons. There are two ignorant nationalists convinced of the necessity of war by propaganda and political myth. There is a dubious salesman who goes to war instead of his conscripted nerdy younger brother (who clearly would not last a minute at the front). There is a professor of literature, a former army colonel, and a drug addict who (quite literally) falls into soldiering. Between these stories, Dragojević offered a potentially authentic account of "how people get drawn into events and are changed by them", rather than providing us with 'faceless', unexplored perpetrators.[59]

Danis Tanović's 2001 film *Ničija Zemlja* (No Man's Land) also used the tropes of friendship, neighbourliness, and dark humour. The two main protagonists are Nino, a Serb, and Čiki, a Bosnian Muslim. They are thrown together by chance: In the middle of the war, both sides try to take a trench overnight in no man's land, between Serbian and Muslim front lines. It all goes wrong and as the sun comes up – trapping them – they have to wait for UN help, along with a third man, Cera, who is lying on top of a mine. Nino and Čiki fight about who started the war – there is only one gun, and the one with possession of it at each point forces the other to agree that his 'side' started it – but Nino is not the usual demonised Serb, and Čiki is a wiry, resourceful adversary. Tanović ridicules the supposed differences between them: They speak the same language, come from the same region, and even know the same girl back at home, and they end up sharing cigarettes. In this way, both *No Man's Land* and *Pretty Village, Pretty Flame* are a far more intimate portrait of the conflict, which fully confronts the ordinariness of the perpetrators.

Cambodia is another case study for which there are numerous more complex, engaged films and books, each of which attempts to humanise and to explain the perpetrators. François Bizot has written two books about Duch, the leader of the prison and interrogation centre at Tuol Sleng (who was labelled "Master of the Forges of Hell" by Rithy Panh). Bizot is a French anthropologist who was captured by the Khmer Rouge before they took power in 1975 and was interrogated by Duch before – extraordinarily – being released. Both of his books humanise, and attempt to understand, Duch. In his first book, Bizot insisted that Duch was not "a monster from the abyss but a human being […] his masters employed him as a cog in a vast timepiece beyond his comprehension".[60] The second book, *Facing the Torturer*, is an extended reflection on Duch since he was put on trial in Cambodia: Bizot carefully pulled apart the choreography of the trial, showing how its central role was to demonise, not to understand, the perpetrator, in order to sustain our comforting illusions

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58 Semezdin Mehmedinović, Sarajevo Blues, translated by Ammiel Alcalay, San Francisco 1998, 14.
59 Milena Michalski/James Gow, War, Image and Legitimacy. Viewing Contemporary Conflict, Abingdon 2007, 36.
60 François Bizot, The Gate, translated by Euan Cameron, London 2004, 115.

about the extraordinariness of perpetrators. "Of course", he wrote, "every major trial resorts to these sorts of confirmations, especially when the psychological evaluation has provided no reassuring conclusions; in the present case, the results were even so ordinary, so discouraging, that Duch's evaluation was the sort of thing that might be a cause of alarm for each and every one of us."[61] Through frank reflections, Bizot asked his readers to look beyond myth and stereotype – and paradigmatic representations – to understand perpetrators differently.

Similarly, Rob Lemkin and Thet Sambath's 2010 documentary *Enemies of the People* wove together interviews with a number of Khmer Rouge perpetrators. The film's main informants, who were both village leaders, were candid in their explanations of why and how they came to kill. They described how their killing affected them in the present day, and while the film does not encourage us to empathise with these perpetrators, their unsettled memories help to humanise them. There are also interviews with mid-level leaders, and with 'Brother Number Two', Nuon Chea. Chea was careful with his words, but occasionally showed real emotion – anger – when he described the need to eliminate the party's enemies. Viewers are therefore left with a realistic sense of how the killing was possible, and indeed understood as necessary, throughout the hierarchy of perpetrators.

These are just a few examples of more engaged representations which disrupt 'mainstream' ideas about perpetrators. What is striking about the engaged representations I discuss in my book is that they are almost all concerned with ordinary people and experiences. They tend to use a close individual perspective, or microhistory, to expose the diversity of experiences, to show how social and political conditions influence choices, and the way that identity is enveloped by war and genocide. Crucially, they do not tell their audiences what to think or encourage a horrified denunciation of the perpetrators: They leave their audiences to negotiate the issues of responsibility and guilt for themselves. Thus, while mainstream genocide representations follow the Holocaust paradigm in shielding their western audiences from understanding genocide as a process which involves very ordinary people, and very common factors, more engaged representations of genocide aim to unsettle that familiar, but problematic, paradigm.

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61   François Bizot, Facing the Torturer. Inside the Mind of a War Criminal, translated by Charlotte Mandell and Antoine Audouard, London 2011, 121.

Rebecca Jinks

Historian, Royal Holloway, University of London

Rebecca.Jinks@rhul.ac.uk

SWL-Reader

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WIENER WIESENTHAL INSTITUT
FÜR HOLOCAUST-STUDIEN (VWI)

Michal Frankl

Refugees and Citizens.
New Nation States as Places
of Asylum, 1914–1941
Introduction

The three papers published in this section originate from the workshop "Refugees and Citizens. New Nation States as Places of Asylum, 1914–1941" organised by the host editors together with the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies (VWI) in June 2016.[1] By focussing on new nation states created as a result of the First World War in Eastern and Central Europe and beyond, this workshop intended to extend the perspective of refugee studies to a region typically not considered welcoming to refugees. We aimed to examine how refugees influenced the formation of the new states and how exactly the often increasingly nationalist and authoritarian regimes became places of asylum, even if only temporary ones, for many refugees from Nazism. Moreover, we were interested to learn more about the intrinsic relationship between the categories of refugees and citizens. The workshop aimed to take citizenship in the 'East', even in its shifting and disputed forms, seriously.

Yet, the workshop also exposed important gaps in our knowledge and methodological perspectives on the 'East' as a place of refuge. Both the paper proposals and the papers themselves demonstrated that the examination of such countries as places where refugee protection was provided and negotiated and where refugees were received and categorised is only slowly emerging and that, in many cases, even basic research is still lacking. The picture presented by the state of current research would appear to suggest that connecting East-Central Europe, with its troubled history, to the provision of protection (or asylum) was in many situations beyond imagination, thus preventing historians from engaging with the region's refugee pasts. This (self-)perception is guided by entrenched ideas about the 'East': In this respect, the workshop was also a contribution to the discussion of notions concerning West/East political, social, and cultural divides, Western forms of Orientalism, and Eastern Europe as a part of global history.

With few exceptions, the historiography continues to reflect the unruly history of the region, depicting it as a place to leave rather than to search refuge in. After all, due to its history of mass emigration in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, freedom and agency might have been more associated with the right to emigrate (see for instance Tara Zahra's excellent *Great Departure*).[2] Given the multi-ethnic character of the region, much of the research to date has focussed on ethnic conflicts and forced population transfers, such as the expulsion of Germans from Czechoslovakia and Poland, or the consequences of conflicts in former Yugoslavia. Communist rule over

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1   For the full workshop programme, see http://www.vwi.ac.at/images/Veranstaltungen/SWW/2016_Refugees-and-Citizens/Einladung-Refugees_WEB.pdf (7 January 2019).

2   Tara Zahra, The Great Departure. Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World, New York 2016.

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CONTEXT

a large part of the region after the Second World War, and the refusal of most social-ist states to sign the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, only reinforced the perception of the 'West' as a refuge, in contrast to the 'East'. With global refugee studies newly energised[3] and with refugee history becoming increasingly recognised as an indis-putable companion of the social science approaches to migration,[4] refugee history in Eastern and Central Europe remains understudied.

Refugee research in post-communist countries is often framed by nationality and political identity and centred on group exile activism. Refugees tend to be perceived as smaller or larger diasporas waiting to return to their liberated and reconstructed homes. As a result, transnational and comparative approaches still remain marginal and examining protection seems to have little meaning for such a tested region.[5]

Nothing characterises the refugee historiography of the region better than the largely absent debate about the reactions of nation states during the Holocaust.[6] A critical reflection of the policies of Western liberal democracies resulted in a number of excellent studies driving forward refugee research as well as public debate. Anal-yses of restrictive policies such as the effects of the US quota system, the strict appli-cation of the requirement to prove that the refugees would not burden the social sys-tem, or of the Évian Conference exposed what many considered to be failures of the liberal democracies when confronted with genocide.[7] The turning back of refugees at the Swiss border in 1938 and again during the deportations from France in 1942 dented the celebratory image of Switzerland as a place of asylum.[8] From this perspec-tive, it is hardly surprising that the widely conceived comparative project on Euro-pean refugee policies in the 1930s, organised and edited by Frank Caestecker and Bob Moore, covered only Western Europe.[9]

While the moral lessons of these debates were also informed by the a posteriori knowledge of the physical extermination of European Jews and the conclusions were at times overly critical, they contributed significantly to thinking about the nation state with its exclusive citizenship and restrictive border and administrative policies as a source of the twentieth-century refugee experience. Much in the sense of the now celebrated philosophers Hannah Arendt,[10] a refugee herself, or Giorgio Agamben,[11] historians have focussed on the processes pushing refugees from Nazi

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3 Peter Gatrell, The Making of the Modern Refugee, Oxford 2013.

4 See for instance the introduction to a special issue of the Journal of Refugee Studies: J. Olaf Kleist, The History of Refugee Protection. Conceptual and Methodological Challenges, in: Journal of Refugee Studies 30 (2017) 2, 161-169.

5 Michael G. Esch, Migration. Transnationale Praktiken, Wirkungen und Paradigme, in: Frank Hadler/Mat-thias Middell (ed.), Handbuch einer transnationalen Geschichte Ostmitteleuropas. Band 1: Von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg (= Transnationale Geschichte 6), Göttingen/Bristol, CT 2017, 131-187.

6 Only few studies deal critically with the reception of Jewish refugees during the Holocaust. See for instance Kinga Frojimovics, I Have Been a Stranger in a Strange Land. The Hungarian State and Jewish Refugees in Hungary, 1933–1945, Jerusalem 2007; Jerzy Tomaszewski, Auftakt zur Vernichtung, Osnabrück 2002; Kateřina Čapková/Michal Frankl, Unsichere Zuflucht. Die Tschechoslowakei und ihre Flüchtlinge aus NS-Deutschland und Österreich 1933–1938, Cologne 2012.

7 In lieu of a much more extensive historiography, see Arthur D. Morse, While Six Million Died. A Chronicle of American Apathy, Woodstock/New York 1998; David S. Wyman, Paper Walls. America and the Refugee Cri-sis 1938–1941, Amherst 1968; David S. Wyman, The Abandonment of the Jews. America and the Holocaust, 1941–1945, New York 1984.

8 Alfred A. Häsler (ed.), Das Boot ist voll ... Die Schweiz und die Flüchtlinge, 1933–1945, Zurich/Stuttgart ²1968; Die Schweiz und die Flüchtlinge zur Zeit des Nationalsozialismus, Bern 1999.

9 Frank Caestecker/Bob Moore (ed.), Refugees from Nazi Germany and the Liberal European States, New York 2010. The editors of this volume originally wished to include Czechoslovakia, as the only 'liberal democracy' east of Nazi Germany.

10 Hannah Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism, New York 1973.

11 Giorgio Agamben, Homo Sacer. Sovereign Power and Bare Life, Stanford 2004.

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Germany into illegality, statelessness, or the state of exception. More broadly, how-ever, the studies in Holocaust-era refugee policies marked a departure from or exten-sion of such exile studies that often foregrounded group identities, national and/or political.

* * *

This section of S:I.M.O.N brings together diverse contributions which are all, however, unified by a sense that we gain much by examining refugeedom from below rather than through the national and political categories which often inform the existing historiography. By focussing on specific cases and with attention to detail, these three studies help to thematically and methodologically expand refugee stud-ies in the region. The transnational, after all, often materialises in the form of a detail, or microhistory. The three authors probe refugeedom from three perspectives: through terminology, the microhistory of a border, and a hospital; or, put more broadly: through language, space, and welfare.

Alina Bothe approaches the subject through the power of the word. Building on *Begriffsgeschichte*, or conceptual history, and noting that the term "refugee" was in fact absent in the celebrated work *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*,[12] she analyses the uses and meanings of the labels deployed by contemporaries and later commentators for the expulsion of Jews with Polish citizenship from Germany. An intriguing vari-ety of terms were applied to the 'Polenaktion', such as deportation (or first deporta-tion, in the words of later historians) and expulsion. Were those who were abruptly imprisoned, handed expulsion orders, and put on trains towards the Polish border to be labelled as deportees, expellees, or refugees? By documenting the terminological fluctuation, Bothe manages to capture the dramatic shift which these events encap-sulated, as well as the radicalisation of persecution and exclusion from society.

Yet, semantic differences notwithstanding, the terms were also complementary in that they captured different perspectives on the same set of events and actors. Max Karp, one of those driven out of Berlin, for instance reflected on how the physical de-portation was accompanied by a semantic shift: from "arrest" and "transport" to "ref-ugees". By entering Poland, the deportees turned into refugees – and by implication into people in search of protection. However, accepting the refugee status as identity can have a different effect: instead of empowerment, it can – as expressed for instance by Hannah Arendt – stand for the loss of rights and freedom. Bothe's article demon-strates how refugees grappled with terminology, consciously or not, to re-establish their position as useful members of human society and to reconfirm their agency.

Wolfgang Schellenbacher relocates the story of Austrian social democratic refu-gees to Czechoslovakia in 1934 from a political plane to its microhistory. Instead of focussing on the programme and political activity of the leadership of the Austrian exiles, he pays attention to the everyday struggle of ordinary refugees: how to cross the border, to maintain contact, to make ends meet, and to persist in the absence of a meaningful (not only political) activity. He shows the demoralising effect of the pro-longed stay in camps run with military-style discipline and a lack of perspective. While some aspects of this story have previously been documented, the integration of Czechoslovak and Austrian archival materials and the close reading of sources result in an innovative perspective.

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12 Otto Brunner/Werner Conze/Reinhart Kosseleck (ed.), Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland, Stuttgart 1975.

CONTEXT

The story of Austrian refugees is deeply embedded in the region of Lower Austria and Southern Moravia – the refugee activists demonstrated an intimate knowledge of what used to be parts of the Habsburg Monarchy, a highly integrated, interconnected, and permeable space. While the phenomenon of "phantom borders" has received much attention in recent research,[13] this case calls for considering the phantom of non-borders and the persisting connections over the new 'green lines' established in 1918. Contributing to current historiography,[14] Schellenbacher illuminates the role of smuggling in both its material and human forms. The same or similar networks that had been developed to overcome the controls of the nation state in order to bypass tariffs were used to bring refugees across the border. The very extent of the smuggling activities also illustrates the degree to which restrictive state policies contributed to the erosion of borders as clear separators which they were supposed to (re)establish in the first place. While playing out in a limited region and with limited means, these networks were part and parcel of the European networks of migration and political activism. Moreover, the refugee landscapes charted by Schellenbacher were also the stage for refugee trajectories and of spatial separation before and after, for instance during the First World War, when camps for Jewish refugees were established in Southern Moravia to prevent them from reaching Vienna.

Kinga Frojimovics documents another, very different, refugee space: a hospital. She explores a unique source: a card file of the Jewish hospital in Budapest including cards of refugees fleeing from Nazi Germany, Austria after the 'Anschluß', the Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia and from other countries to the relative safety of the authoritarian and antisemitic Hungary. On the larger plane, the article points to the dilemmas attached to providing welfare – for instance, the Budapest Jewish Hospital as well as other Jewish aid bodies were obliged to report supported foreigners to the authorities. More significantly, it shows the role of welfare as a major field in which refugee protection was played out and negotiated, in the context of the growing social obligation of the states, or social citizenship.[15] As elsewhere, Jewish communities in Hungary considered assistance to Jewish refugees a duty and built on existing welfare infrastructure, in particular the Wanderfürsorge assisting poor Jewish migrants. Yet, by doing so, refugees also fell visibly outside of the scope of responsibility of the state, making a possible integration and eventually acquisition of citizenship unlikely. Instead of a spatial separation, or in addition to it, Jewish refugees were set apart through welfare. Finally, Frojimovics' article illustrates the need to devote more attention to humanitarianism and its local structures in East-Central Europe. Often seen as a largely Western phenomenon, with accounts based on reports of Western refugee workers, this article by implication calls for further research into humanitarian activities and actors in the 'East'.

* * *

The workshop and the articles in this section make clear the need for a detailed study from below of refugeedom in East-Central Europe, extending the state and/or nation centred research. In fact, since the workshop, spurred among other things by the public debates in the wake of the 2015 refugee 'crisis', other promising activities

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13 Béatrice von Hirschhausen/Hannes Grandits/Claudia Kraft/Dietmar Müller/Thomas Serrier, Phantomgrenzen. Räume und Akteure in der Zeit neu denken, Göttingen 2015.

14 See for instance Gabriele Anderl/Simon Usaty (eds), Schleppen, Schleusen, Helfen. Flucht zwischen Rettung und Ausbeutung, Vienna 2016.

15 Thomas Humphrey Marshall, Citizenship and Social Class, and Other Essays, Cambridge 1950.

Michal Frankl: Refugees and Citizens. New Nation States as Places of Asylum, 1914–1941

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and publications started to appear.[16] The editors therefore hope to continue an inter-disciplinary conversation around the subject in the future issues of S:I.M.O.N as well as in other journals, workshops, and projects.[17]

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16 It is not surprising that more attention is devoted to Austria as a country of immigration. See Börries Kuz-many/Rita Garstenauer (ed.), Aufnahmeland Österreich. Über den Umgang mit Massenflucht seit dem 18. Jahrhundert, Vienna 2017; Philipp Ther, Die Außenseiter. Flucht, Flüchtlinge und Integration im modernen Europa, Berlin 2017; see also a special issue dedicated to refugee history: Hungarian Historical Review 6 (2017) 3.

17 The project "Unlikely Refuge. Refugees and Citizens in East-Central Europe in the 20th Century", funded by a consolidator grant of the European Research Council (819461), principal investigator Michal Frankl, will begin in September 2019 and will explore the region as a place of refuge.

Michal Frankl: Refugees and Citizens. New Nation States as Places of Asylum, 1914–1941

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Michal Frankl
Historian, Masaryk Institute and Archives of the Czech Academy of Sciences
michal.frankl@vwi.ac.at

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Copy Editor:
Tim Corbett

Wolfgang Schellenbacher

From Political Activism to Disillusionment

Austrian Socialist Refugees in Czechoslovakia, 1934–1938

Abstract

The political exile of approximately 2,000 Austrian socialists in Czechoslovakia after the Austrian "civil war" in February 1934 stands apart from other refugee movements in Central Europe of the time, most noticeably due to the initially sympathetic approach Czechoslovakia took towards those who fled, especially compared to the different approach towards Austrian Jews after the 'Anschluß'. This article combines Austrian and Czech sources to focus on the geography of escape and exile and the smuggling of propaganda as the main part of resistance work. Mapping various networks within the small border region and the individual stories of refugees shows in detail how the initial support for Austrian socialist refugees on behalf of the Czechoslovak social democrats soon gave way to disillusionment by rank-and-file refugees as exile networks dissolved, funds dwindled, a lack of perspectives became apparent, and political radicalisation increased.

In the 1930s, Czechoslovakia became one of the most important destinations for Austrian refugees – both for political refugees after February 1934 and for Jewish refugees after the 'Anschluß' of Austria in 1938. In terms of political exile after 1934, Czechoslovakia was key for the refugees both in terms of numbers and political networks. For former fighters of the Republikanischer Schutzbund (Republican Protection League) – the paramilitary organisation of the social democrats – in southeast Austria, especially Carinthia and Styria, Yugoslavia became an important place of refuge. Maribor/Marburg turned into the key contact point for refugees and political work in Yugoslavia, while additional, smaller centres existed in Ljubljana/Laibach and Belgrade. Since the political decision makers were situated in Brno/Brünn, Maribor functioned as a branch office of Brno.

No full study of Austrian exile in Czechoslovakia has been undertaken to date. This is seen most obviously with the research series *Österreicher im Exil* (Austrians in Exile) by the Documentation Centre of Austrian Resistance (DÖW) that began in 1980 and – although including some documents on refugees in Czechoslovakia – is still missing a volume on Czechoslovakia.[1]

The exile and activities of refugees in the border region – aside from the political and intellectual elite – has not yet been the focus of scholarly research. After 1945, personal memoirs by politically persecuted functionaries were published relating to Austrian political refugees in Czechoslovakia after the February Uprising

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1   So far, the series includes volumes on the Soviet Union, the USA, Mexico, Belgium, France, and the United Kingdom, some of which are referred to below. Even the special case of Spain was formally published within this series.

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1934.[2] Then from the 1970s and 1980s onwards, numerous research was done on the exile experience and illegal work of social democrats, the officials of the Revolutionary Socialists, the Schutzbund, and the Auslandsbüro der österreichischen Sozialdemokraten (Foreign Office of the Austrian Social Democrats, ALÖS) in Brno.[3] However, these descriptions of the exile of Austrian and German refugees in Czechoslovakia between 1933 and 1939 often focussed on the activities of politicians, artists, and intellectuals.[4] Recent literature such as *Unsichere Zuflucht* (Uncertain Refuge), published in 2012 by Kateřina Čapková and Michal Frankl, is an exception to this trend, as it concentrates on ordinary refugee experiences.[5] Their research, however, concentrates on German refugees after 1933, rather than on Austrian political refugees. The history of Austrian refugees in 1934 coincides with a general shift from a sympathetic approach towards refugees to a more restrictive refugee policy, both in Czechoslovakia and in Central Europe more widely. This shift was experienced by the rank-and-file refugees involved in political work by smuggling propaganda material and who later, once political and social networks began to disintegrate, found themselves facing ever worsening living conditions. This article will therefore focus on the situation of refugees who were not part of the political and intellectual elite. In order to look at the refugee networks and the activism as well as the growing disillusionment of the refugees, the article focusses on activities in the Czechoslovak/Austrian border region – a region soon came to be characterised by illegal border crossings, becoming a gateway for resistance work in Austria and refugee camps.

The Impact of the February Uprising in 1934

In March 1933, the Austrian government under Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuß used a loophole in the parliamentary rules to dissolve the Austrian parliament. The *Kriegswirtschaftliches Ermächtigungsgesetz* (War Economy Empowerment Act)[6] passed in 1917 and intended for use in times of war, was implemented to severely

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2   For example Joseph Buttinger, Am Beispiel Österreichs. Ein geschichtlicher Beitrag zur Krise der sozialistischen Bewegung, Cologne 1953; Otto Bauer, Die illegale Partei, Paris 1939; Julius Deutsch, Ein weiter Weg. Lebenserinnerungen, Zurich/Leipzig/Vienna 1960; Otto Leichter, Zwischen zwei Diktaturen. Österreichs Revolutionäre Sozialisten 1934–1938, Vienna/Frankfurt/Zurich 1968.

3   For example Karl R. Stadler, Opfer verlorener Zeiten. Geschichte der Schutzbund-Emigration, Vienna 1974; Vojtech Blodig, Die tschechoslowakischen politischen Parteien und die Unterstützung der deutschen und österreichischen Emigration in den 30er Jahren, in: Peter Glotz (ed.), München 1938. Das Ende des alten Europa, Essen 1990, 251-270; Barry McLoughlin/Hans Schafranek/Walter Szevera, Aufbruch – Hoffnung – Endstation, Vienna 1997; Manfred Marschalek, Untergrund und Exil. Österreichs Sozialisten zwischen 1934 und 1945, Vienna 1989; DÖW (ed.), volume ed. by Barry McLoughlin/Hans Schafranek, Österreicher im Exil. Sowjetunion 1934–1945, Vienna 1999; Ernst Hanisch, Der große Illusionist. Otto Bauer (1881–1938), Vienna 2011; Christoph Höslinger, Die 'Brünner Emigration' als diplomatischer Konfliktstoff zwischen Wien und Prag, in: Thomas Winkelbauer (ed.), Kontakte und Konflikte, Horn/Waidhofen an der Thaya 1993, 413-428.

4   For example Gertruda Albrechtová, Zur Frage der deutschen antifaschistischen Emigrationsliteratur im tschechoslowakischen Asyl, in: Historica 8 (1964), 177-233; Miroslav Beck/Jiří Veselý, Exil und Asyl. Antifaschistische deutsche Literatur in der Tschechoslowakei, 1933–1938, Berlin 1981; Heinz Spielmann, Kokoschka in Prag, in: Peter Becher/Peter Heumos (ed.), Drehscheibe Prag. Zur deutschen Emigration in der Tschechoslowakei 1933–1939, Munich 1992, 87-96; Jan M. Tomeš, John Heartfield und der Künstlerverein Mánes, in: ibid.

5   Kateřina Čapková/Michal Frankl, Unsichere Zuflucht. Die Tschechoslowakei und ihre Flüchtlinge aus NS-Deutschland und Österreich 1933–1938, Vienna 2012.

6   Das Gesetz vom 24. Juli 1917, mit dem die Regierung ermächtigt wird, aus Anlass der durch den Kriegszustand verursachten außerordentlichen Verhältnisse die notwendigen Verfügungen auf wirtschaftlichem Gebiete zu treffen, available under http://alex.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/alex?apm=0&aid=rgb&datum=19170004&seite=00000739&zoom=0 (19 September 2018).

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limit fundamental democratic rights and to set the country on the path towards an 'authoritative corporative state', based on the model of Fascist Italy.[7]

On 31 March 1933, the paramilitary Schutzbund was banned, followed by the Communist Party on 26 May. Founded by the Social Democratic Workers' Party in 1923 in reaction to the conservative nationalist Heimwehr militia, the purpose of the Schutzbund was to provide security at party demonstrations and to defend the republic. The need to uphold the socialist experiment of Red Vienna and its successes in rapidly improving the living conditions of the working class and the hope to expand this system to all of Austria in the context of an increasingly unsettled political system motivated many workers and members of the manifold socialist organisations – especially workers' sports organisations – to join the Schutzbund.[8] Therefore, the number of Schutzbund members rose quickly, reaching about 80,000 in 1928. By the time it was banned, membership was still around 60,000.[9]

Despite growing pressure, the social democratic party leadership was still taken by surprise when fighting broke out in Linz on 12 February 1934 and quickly spread to other industrial areas – especially Vienna.

The well-armed troops of the Heimwehr fascist paramilitary group – supported by the army and the police – were nevertheless able to quell the revolt quickly. In response to the unrest, martial law was imposed, nine members of the Schutzbund were executed, and mass imprisonment in jails and detention camps followed. Due to the hopelessness of the situation and the fear of persecution under the Dollfuß regime, many people fled while the conflict was still ongoing. Not all of the refugees registered with the exile organisations and refugee committees because they had relatives in Czechoslovakia or Czechoslovak citizenship. This makes establishing the exact number of refugees quite difficult. However, as official Czechoslovak statistics also show,[10] the number is usually estimated to likely be higher than 2,000.[11]

The Organisation of Escape to Czechoslovakia

Czechoslovakia claimed to be neutral to the events in Austria, but state officials such as Zdeněk Fierlinger, the Czechoslovak envoy in Vienna, actively helped leading social democrats escape.[12] This is how the social democratic party theorist Otto Bauer was able to cross the border quickly by car to Bratislava/Pressburg with fake papers.[13]

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7 On the nature of the Austrian regime between 1934 and 1938 and the terminology used, see Emmerich Tálos, Das Austrofaschistische Herrschaftssystem in Österreich 1933–1938, Berlin/Münster/Vienna 2013; Florian Wenninger/Lucile Dreidemy (ed.), Das Dollfuß/Schuschnigg-Regime 1933–1938. Vermessung eines Forschungsfeldes, Vienna/Cologne/Weimar 2013; Ilse Reiter-Zatloukal/Christiane Rothländer/Pia Schölnberger (ed.), Österreich 1933–1938. Interdisziplinäre Annäherungen an das Dollfuß-/Schuschnigg-Regime, Vienna/Cologne/Weimar 2012; Wolfgang Neugebauer/Emmerich Tálos (ed.), "Austrofaschismus". Beiträge über Politik und Kultur 1934–1938, Vienna 1988.

8 Erwin Tramer, Der Republikanische Schutzbund. Seine Bedeutung in der politischen Entwicklung der Ersten Österreichischen Republik, Nuremberg 1969, 36.

9 C. E. Edmundson, Heimwehren und andere Wehrverbände, in: Emmerich Tálos/Herbert Dachs/Ernst Hanisch/Anton Staudinger (ed.), Handbuch des politischen Systems Österreichs. Erste Republik 1918–1933, Vienna 1995, 261-276, here 265.

10 See for example the monthly statistics for the number of Austrian emigrants by the Provincial Office in Prague in: Národní archiv České republiky [National Archives of the Czech Republic, NA], PMV, 1931–1935, X/R/3/2, K. 225-1187-2.

11 See for example Čapková/Frankl, Unsichere Zuflucht, 89; Höslinger, Die 'Brünner Emigration', 418; Blodig, Die tschechoslowakischen politischen Parteien, 269.

12 See Stadler, Opfer verlorener Zeiten, 66.

13 Hanisch, Der große Illusionist, 305.

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This led to the first differences between the experiences of the normal fighters and those of leading social democrats, as normal fighters from the Schutzbund tried to cross the "green border" – the natural land border between official crossings – into Czechoslovakia, often at much greater risk. The proximity of the Czechoslovak border to the industrial regions of Lower Austria, especially Vienna, as well as its familiarity played an important role in why most of the refugees went to Czechoslovakia. Additionally, the border was still quite new, and had not become properly established in people's minds. As pointed out in studies on the borderland regions, inhabitants of these region in Central Europe often considered this a common area of interconnected territories based on shared family ties, landscape, culture, and economic aspects, which were often more crucial than political and national divisions.[14]

Most tried to cross the border at places such as Unterretzbach, Marchegg, Bratislava, and Kaplice/Kaplitz, often in small groups, by sneaking past the border police and Heimwehr troops. In doing so, they utilised existing networks established by smugglers in the border regions.[15]

The refugees were able to take advantage of the fact that this region had been characterised by refugee movements, illegal border crossings, and deportations for decades. In the first months of the First World War, hundreds of thousands of people from Galicia and Bukovina had fled to Moravia and Lower Austria as the Russian front approached. Refugee camps were set up in places such as Gmünd, Oberhollerbrunn, Mikulov/Nikolsburg, Kyjov/Gaya, and Pohořelice/Pohrlitz, where people were accommodated in wooden barracks.

In the late 1920s and early 1930s, 'undesirable' people were often deported over the border by the Austrian police. From 1933 the number of such deportations grew due to the rise to power of the National Socialists in Germany. The groups most affected were German, Polish, or stateless Jews, who fled from Germany to Austria via Czechoslovakia and, if caught, were deported back to Czechoslovakia by the Austrian security forces.[16] These deportations usually took place in the region of Unterretzbach, Šatov/Schattau, Retz, and the River Thaya.[17]

The escape routes used in 1934 were therefore already quite familiar to the border police as well as various local smugglers, who assisted Austrian refugees in crossing the border. This made it relatively easy to cross the border in the beginning. The 17-year-old Joseph Simon managed to find escape routes by hiring local smugglers. He travelled by train from Vienna into Czechoslovakia. He asked his aunt – who was Czechoslovak – to send him an invitation by telegram to hide the fact that he was a political activist from the Austrian authorities. In Znojmo/Znaim, the Deutsche sozialdemokratische Arbeiterpartei in der Tschechoslowakischen Republik (German Social Democratic Workers' Party in the Czechoslovak Republic, DSAP) put Simon in contact with people who – as he would later remember – "dealt with illegal border crossings. They were normal people, poor farmers, who lived at the border and had

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14 See for example Caitlin E. Murdock, Changing Places. Society, Culture, and Territory in the Saxon-Bohemian Borderlands, 1870–1946, Michigan 2010.

15 For further information on the smuggling routes, see Wolfgang Schellenbacher, Fluchtwege und Schmuggelrouten österreichischer Flüchtlinge in die Tschechoslowakei 1934 bis 1939, in: Gabriele Anderl/Simon Usaty (ed.), Schleppen, Schleusen, Helfen. Flucht zwischen Rettung und Ausbeutung, Vienna 2016, 129-145.

16 See for example Čapková/Frankl, Unsichere Zuflucht, 66.

17 For further information on the region of Lower Austria, see: Wolfgang Schellenbacher, Von Flucht und Abschiebung zur Vertreibung. Der Raum Niederösterreich als Beispiel für den Umgang mit Flüchtlingen und Abgeschobenen in Österreich zwischen 1914 und 1938, in: DÖW (ed.), Fanatiker, Pflichterfüller, Widerständige. Reichsgaue Niederösterreich, Groß-Wien (=DÖW Jahrbuch 2016), Vienna 2016, 267-284.

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obviously been supplementing their income through smuggling."[18] With the help of the smugglers he established an escape route via which people were smuggled over the border.

The existing networks of both smugglers and local party members in the border region made a quick border crossing possible: The social democrat Alois Ober, a butcher and winegrower in Seefeld, organised contact points where refugees could report with a password:

> "Some of the refugees who came to us had already been advised beforehand. They came by train or took the post bus; some also got out a stop earlier [at Obritz] and continued on the country road. […] We then led these people – partly through vineyards – to the village of Joslowitz [Jaroslavice] or to Znaim, where they reported to a certain contact point."[19]

One of the people who managed to cross the borders this way was Emil Freireich, a chauffeur and unskilled worker, who joined the social democratic party and the Schutzbund in 1932, becoming a section commander of Alarm Commando VII in Vienna's Favoriten district. In early March 1934, he fled to Czechoslovakia, but returned to Austria only a month later, in early April, and turned himself into police. His police interview transcript does not disclose any of the names of his comrades but does offer an insight into how the Schutzbund fighters managed to get over the border in the Seefeld/Znojmo region:

> "After we held our handkerchiefs in an eye-catching manner in front of us as instructed, we were given two tickets to the Austrian border station of Obritz by an unknown man […]; we were told to pose to two young men the question whether they would wait for Franzl, and they would then take us further."[20]

By mid-February 1934, the party elite in exile headed by Otto Bauer and Julius Deutsch founded the ALÖS.[21] The aim of ALÖS was not to rebuild a party structure, but rather to assist financially and by providing propaganda to those illegal social democrats who had remained in Austria and re-established themselves as Revolutionary Socialists. "ALÖS will not be a new party leadership. The new party leadership will rather have to be built from the comrades still in Austria, as soon as the new organisations have developed. ALÖS will support the comrades still fighting in Austria by sending newspapers, brochures, and pamphlets."[22] ALÖS and the Zentralstelle für österreichische Flüchtlinge (Central Office for Austrian Refugees) – founded in Brno by the DSAP – helped many to flee and found them temporary accommodation. Both of the Czechoslovak social democratic parties supported the work of the Austrian refugee organisation. Two thirds of the funds came from the DSAP, the other third from the Czech social democrats.[23] This meant that by the end of March, family members in Austria of those who had died in the fighting of the February Uprising had already begun to receive financial support.

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18 Joseph T. Simon, Augenzeuge. Erinnerungen eines österreichischen Sozialisten. Eine sehr persönliche Zeitgeschichte (= Zeitdokumente, Vol. 1), Vienna 2008, 110.

19 DÖW, 8831, Memories of the illegal communist group in Seefeld on their activities smuggling newspapers and people.

20 DÖW, 5694, Protocol of the Federal Police Department in Vienna with the former member of the Schutzbund, Emil Freireich, 5 April 1934.

21 Hanisch, Der große Illusionist, 320.

22 Arbeiter-Zeitung 1, 25 February 1934, 3.

23 See Stadler, Opfer verlorener Zeiten, 110.

ALÖS was also quick to establish "border posts" like the DSAP had previously with their "border secretariats"[24]. Such border posts were set up along the Austrian/Czechoslovak border at Znojmo, Bratislava, Kaplice, Nová Bystřice/Neubistritz, České Budějovice/Budweis, and České Velenice/Gmünd-Bahnhof.[25] By the end of February, standard procedures for helping refugees had been established, showing how easy it was in the first weeks and months of 1934 to cross the border into Czechoslovakia.[26] This was due less to a lack of surveillance by the Austrian border police and more to the help provided to refugees by the officially neutral Czechoslovak authorities, who made no secret of their sympathy towards the democratic refugees. This is confirmed by many eyewitness accounts given by refugees who were helped by Czechoslovak gendarmes and border police, who often brought them to the nearest collection point.[27] The new escape routes, however, were soon noticed by the Austrian state. In late February 1934, the Provincial Office in Brno reported on movements of Austrian troops along the Lower Austrian border to Czechoslovakia. Between twenty and fifty men had been deployed to each border village. By 28 February, more than 500 gendarmes and members of the Heimwehr were stationed in the villages along the border between Bernhardsthal and Retz, including 100 men in Bernhardsthal, 60 in Drassenhofen, 56 in Pernhofen, 25 in Kleinhaugsdorf, and 50 in Groß Haugsdorf.[28] This made crossing the border directly at the checkpoints increasingly difficult. Refugees were therefore advised not to openly walk in the direction of the border. Rudolf Schober, a metalworker born in 1910 in Payerbach, Lower Austria, was a member of the Socialist Workers' Youth and the Schutzbund. After participating in the fighting in February 1934 he fled to Czechoslovakia. He took the evening train to Bernhardsthal, the Austrian border station on the line to Brno, on 18 February 1934, where a liaison was waiting for him. "He told me the direction that I should walk in. Not to the Czech border, but on the contrary first to take a wide curve and then walk to the border, because everyone who walked towards the border was conspicuous. And the gendarmerie and the Heimwehr were standing at the station in Bernhardsthal."[29]

Illegal Work – Propaganda Material

One of the most obvious differences between the experiences of the leading social democrats in Brno and those of the majority of the former Schutzbund fighters was the huge amount of illegal work that was carried out by several members of ALÖS together with comrades from the Revolutionary Socialists and smugglers along the border, whilst the Schutzbund members in the camps were prohibited from working and asked to refrain from any political activism.[30]

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24 See Martin K. Bachstein, Die Hilfe der sudetendeutschen Sozialdemokratie für Reichsdeutsche Flüchtlinge, in: Bohemia 28 (1987), 369-376, here 374.

25 See Verein für Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung [Society for the History of the Labour Movement, VGA], Sozialistische Partei 1934 bis 1945, Karton 7 (ALÖS Politik II), Mappe 1, ALÖS Grenzstellen CSR 1934 (ALÖS border posts in Czechoslovakia 1934), reports of the border post Znojmo 1934.

26 Ibid.

27 See for example DÖW, 5694.

28 NA, PMV, 1931–1935, X/R/3/2, K. 1188-1, zpráva presidia zemského úřadu v Brně [Report of the Executive Committee of the Provincial Office in Brno], 28 February 1934.

29 DÖW, Erzählte Geschichte, 80, 1983, interview with Rudolf Schober.

30 See Stadler, Opfer verlorener Zeiten, 113.

A group of Austrian Schutzbund members in the camp at Moravsk´y Šternberk, January 1936.
DÖW Photo Collection, 5064/6.

Once the majority of the refugees had crossed the border, the border posts were used for smuggling propaganda material produced in Czechoslovakia over the border into Austria. Josef Pleyl had fled together with Otto Bauer in a car over the border with the help of the Czechoslovak envoy in Vienna and took over organising the production and smuggling of printed propaganda materials into Austria from Czechoslovakia. In so-called "logistical books", he recorded details about the smuggling of propaganda by the Austrian workers who had fled. Today, his notes make a particularly interesting source, especially as they seem to contravene every rule of conspiracy: Pleyl recorded in great detail the number and weight of the materials, as well as the routes that were used and the people who were involved.[31]

Pleyl's statistics show the sheer volume of propaganda smuggled over the border into Austria by ALÖS: Within the first six months roughly three million propaganda items were smuggled into Austria, of which only 5.8 per cent were intercepted by the Austrian authorities. Aside from 1.86 million leaflets and 51,277 brochures and books, the most important part of the propaganda material consisted of 934,389 copies of the *Arbeiter-Zeitung*. In 1935, ALÖS was able to smuggle 6.6 million items over the border – roughly 7.6 metric tonnes.[32] The ALÖS border stations organised the transport of the materials over the border. Individual refugees worked in cooperation with both Austrian and Czechoslovak smugglers. For 400 crowns it was possible to bring 20-25,000 newspapers from a border post to a depot in Austria, where they would then be picked up by 'illegal' socialists from Vienna or Linz in cars and on motorbikes.[33]

The border station at Znojmo became the most important, with 53 per cent of the material passing through here, followed by Bratislava with roughly 25 per cent and Kaplice with 10 per cent.[34] Whenever possible, particularly in Znojmo, the smugglers used buses, cars, and the railways. The border stations were constantly required to

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31 DÖW, 6800, Expedit-Bücher des ALÖS Brünn [expedition books of the ALÖS in Brno].

32 Ibid.

33 See VGA, Sozialistische Partei 1934 bis 1945, Karton 7 (ALÖS Politik II), Mappe 1, reports of the border post Znojmo 1934.

34 DÖW, 6800, Expedit-Bücher des ALÖS Brünn.

find new ways and methods of smuggling material over the border, since the Austrian authorities took notice of the very busy trade. Soon ox-drawn carts, taxis, and bicycles were also being used, and smugglers even waded across the Morava River to deliver the newspapers to trains running to Vienna.[35] The Czech police soon became aware of these illegal border crossings and documented them accordingly.[36]

Czechoslovakia and Refugees

The illegal activities at the border did not escape the notice of the Austrian authorities either, and plain-clothes criminal police were soon sent over the border to investigate.[37] Vienna then began to send regular complaints to Prague. In late 1934, the Austrian police reported that the political refugees were also being supported by social democratic mayors in the border region, who were issuing Austrians with papers that allowed them to cross the border.[38]

The Austrian foreign ministry complained that the Czechoslovak authorities were well aware of the smuggling activities but were not taking any action against it. They attached cuttings from Czechoslovak newspapers that reported the smuggling to their complaints and questioned how it was possible that the press knew about it and the security forces still did nothing to stop it.[39] Another occasion saw the Austrian embassy in Prague protest that the Czech police in Břeclav/Lundenburg had not intervened to stop the selling of the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* at the border and on trains heading to Austria.[40]

In terms of press coverage at the time, the liberal, social democratic, and communist press in Czechoslovakia were almost entirely positive in their reporting on the political refugees from Austria in 1934. The Austrian ambassador in Prague, Ferdinand Marek, continued to protest, but soon realised that, apart from diplomatic assurances that the newspapers would be asked for moderation, nothing much would change.[41]

The Catholic press supported the authoritative line taken by the Austrian state and voices critical of the refugees from within the fascist circle around the Slovak Catholic priest and leader of *Hlinkova slovenská ludová strana* (Hlinka's Slovak People's Party) Andrej Hlinka in Slovakia became louder. Many right-wing newspapers also suggested the presence of criminals amongst the refugees.[42] Other media attempted to differentiate between 'real' refugees and economic migrants and political subversives. For several newspapers such as the national conservative newspaper *Ludová Politika* the "strains" placed on the labour market by further acceptance of refugees at a time of high unemployment in Czechoslovakia became a much discussed issue. On 2 March 1934, *Ludová Politika* wrote: "Unfortunately, the foreign-

35 Niederösterreichisches Landesarchiv [Lower Austrian State Archive, NÖLA], Kulturdepot, BH Hollabrunn, box 197, 1935 (XI/164), notes by the Security Director of Lower Austria on the smuggling of socialist and communist flyers from Czechoslovakia to Austria, 1935.
36 See for example NA, PMV, 1931–1935, X/R/3, K. 1186-18, 4, Illegální doprava cizinců zRakouska do Čechoslovensko [illegal transit of foreigners from Austria into Czechoslovakia], 3 December 1934.
37 See Höslinger, Die 'Brünner Emigration', 422.
38 Ibid.
39 Österreichisches Staatsarchiv/Archiv der Republik (Austrian State Archive/Archive of the Republic, AT-OeStA/AdR), AAng ÖVB 1Rep Pressburg Pressburg, Konsulat, 1920–1936, report by counsellor Hügel on allegedly subversive activities of social democrat emigrant in Brno, 9 February 1935.
40 Ibid., note on the selling of the Arbeiter-Zeitung at the Břeclav station by the Police Department Brno, 1934.
41 Höslinger, Die 'Brünner Emigration', 416.
42 See Čapková/Frankl, Unsichere Zuflucht, 43.

ers travelling here find strong and influential sponsors who even argue for supporting those aliens at the expense of our unemployed, whom we are at our wit's end with."

The unemployment in Czechoslovakia peeked in 1933 with 738,000 people without work, which led ever more politicians and the media to argue against the "burden" of accommodating more refugees.[43] Otto Bauer was aware of the effects of economic instability on the refugees, both from the perspective of a politician as well as an exile politician. In 1937, after failing to gain an appointment, he wrote in a letter to Antonín Hampl, chairman of the Česká strana sociálně demokratická (Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party) – who no longer found the time to speak to Bauer – that he knew from his time as foreign secretary how hard it had been to deal with Hungarian emigration in 1919: Refugees soon become a burden and one becomes less well-disposed towards them.[44]

Despite protests by Austrian diplomats against articles in socialist newspapers in Czechoslovakia, Ferdinand Marek soon reported back to Vienna that besides the communist and social democratic newspapers, the attitude towards the situation in Austria and the refugees in Czechoslovakia was changing and most of the newspapers were beginning to see Austrian politics in a better light.[45]

The leaders amongst the immigrants understood the position they found themselves in and issued all newly arrived refugees with leaflets in which they were advised about how to behave in Czechoslovakia to avoid the situation worsening:

> "You too, comrade, belong to those who will live in this country as a guest of the labour movement of the Czechoslovak Republic. […] As long as you enjoy the right of asylum in the Czechoslovak Republic and the hospitality of the Czechoslovak labour movement, you must also carry out important duties."[46]

These letters show that the refugee leaders were aware of their dependency on the benevolence of an international labour movement as well as the alleged right of asylum in a sovereign nation state.

Czechoslovakia tried – despite their sympathetic attitude towards the Austrian social democrats – to avoid any major diplomatic inconsistencies.[47] Kateřina Čapková and Michal Frankl described this approach towards refugees from Germany in 1933 and Austria in 1934 as "insecure refuge", as most people were not issued work permits and could not expect any aid from the state.[48] They located the refugee policy of Czechoslovakia within the refugee policies of most European countries at the time, becoming ever more restrictive during the 1930s, and pointed out that after the private aid organisations and parties started to run out of money, the refugees faced harsh conditions. This can be seen especially in the case of the Austrian refugees.

As foreign relations worsened, the social democratic parties in Czechoslovakia lost a fifth of the seats in the election of 1935 and ran out of money, and public opinion seemed to turn against the refugees, even the social democratic ministers of the Czechoslovak Republic began to slowly distance themselves from the Austrian refu-

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43   Alice Teichova, Wirtschaftsgeschichte der Tschechoslowakei 1918–1980, Vienna/Cologne/Graz 1988, 27.
44   Hanisch, Der große Illusionist, 314.
45   AT-OeStA/AdR, AAng ÖVB 1Rep Pressburg Pressburg, Konsulat, 1920–1936.
46   Leaflet issued to Austrian refugees, quoted in: Stadler, Opfer verlorener Zeiten, 113.
47   On the diplomatic relationship between Austria and Czechoslovakia after February 1934, see Höslinger, Die 'Brünner Emigration', 415.
48   Čapková/Frankl, Unsichere Zuflucht, 57.

gees.[49] In 1937, Otto Bauer was invited to the police headquarters in Brno and informed that the continued distribution of printed materials into Austria was undesirable. If they did not put a stop to this, they were to expect reprisals. As a result, the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* was henceforth officially published in Paris, despite continuing to be printed in Česká Třebová/Böhmisch Trübau.[50]

Ordinary Fighters – Disillusionment

Unlike the party elite in Brno, the majority of the refugees from Austria were fighters from the Schutzbund, who lived in several refugee camps spread all over Czechoslovakia. The majority of the camps in long-term use were situated close to the border region to Austria. The biggest camp was situated in the Sportspark Brno-Lužánky (also known as the Augarten), others were accommodated – often only for short periods – in Znojmo, Prague, Bratislava, Ořech/Worschech, Hodonín/Göding, Zbraslav/Königsaal, Žatec/Saaz, Kutná Hora/Kuttenberg, Stod/Staab, Jihlava/Iglau, Poštorná/Unter Themenau, Mikulov, Žilina/Sillein, Nýrsko/Neuern, Trnava/Türnau, Chocerady/Kocerad, Bučovice/Butschowitz, Štěpánov/Stefanau, Moravský Šternberk/Mährisch-Sternberg, and Volary/Wallern.[51]
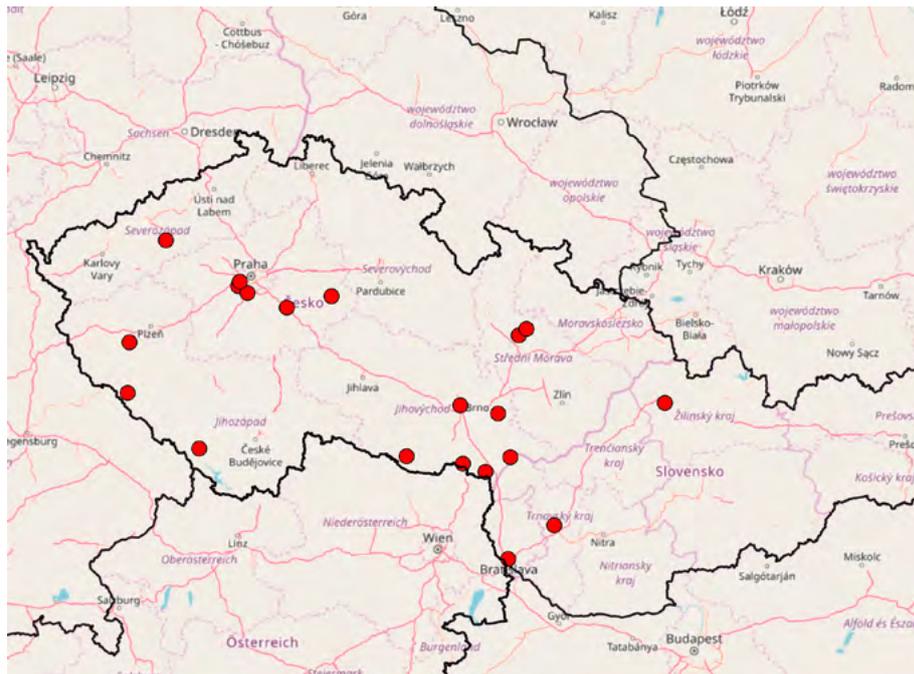
Schutzbund camps in Czechoslovakia, 1934.

49 See Marschalek, Untergrund und Exil, 320.

50 Herbert Exenberger, Das "Auslandsbüro österreichischer Sozialdemokraten (ALÖS)" in Brünn 1934–1938, in: Seliger-Gemeinde (ed.), Arbeiterbewegung und Arbeiterdichtung (=Beiträge zur Geschichte der Sozialdemokratischen Arbeiterbewegung im Sudeten-, Karpaten- und Donauraum, Folge 8), Munich 1987, 26-47, here 42.

51 See VGA, Sozialistische Partei 1934 bis 1945, Karton 8, Mappen 4-5. Flüchtlingsfürsorge 1935–1938 [refugee welfare 1935–1938]; ibid., Karton 8, Mappe 2, Flüchtlingslager 1934 [refugee camps 1934]; Stadler, Opfer verlorener Zeiten, 116.

The camps were subject to strict military discipline, as evident in the rules of the camp in Chocerady, describing the daily regime for the refugees:

> "The highest emphasis is placed on comradery and discipline. Wake up at 6am until further notice. If the weather allows, all physically able comrades are ordered to take part in morning exercise at 7am. Breakfast is at 8am, roll call at 8:30am. Lunch is at midday and until further notice dinner is at 6pm."[52]

A series of threats in the case of noncompliance – such as disbanding the camp leadership – were included at the end of the timetable. While the refugees were allowed to leave the camps, they were subject to a curfew. Due to the restrictive conditions of living in exile, it became increasingly difficult to maintain military and party discipline in the camps.

The cost of smuggling propaganda into Austria as well as financial aid for refugees and their families left behind in Austria soon put a huge strain on the financial resources of ALÖS and led to dwindling financial support for the refugees. Homesickness and the lack of future perspectives for Schutzbund members were important reasons for the disillusionment of many refugees. The military struggle had been lost and it was soon clear that it would not be possible to restart the fight in Austria at any time in the near future. The fact that the Austrian government managed to survive the attempted putsch of Austrian National Socialists in July 1934 made it clear that the hope for a quick downfall of the "Austrofascist" regime was unrealistic.[53] For former workers among the refugees, being unable to work in Czechoslovakia proved particularly demoralising.

The disillusionment of the ordinary Schutzbund fighters was also exacerbated by the weakened financial social democratic structures as funds became ever tighter. Large portions of the remaining money from the Czechoslovak social democrats was invested in supporting the Revolutionary Socialists in Austria through propaganda materials and financial support. Some historians have emphasised that the bulk of the party funds were brought to Brno along with Otto Bauer from Vienna.[54] The situation in exile, however, paints a different picture: As early as mid-1934, the exile organisation was turning people away due to a lack of funds. If those seeking help were only likely to be imprisoned for a few weeks or months, they were advised to return to Austria, serve their sentence, and continue living their lives. In November 1935, the *Generaldirektion für die öffentliche Sicherheit in Österreich* (Head Office for Public Security at the Austrian Federal Chancellery) reported on the situation in Czechoslovakia:

> "Regarding the social democratic emigrants to Czechoslovakia, it can be reported that the financial situation is bad. There are currently only 120 refugees who apparently – as long as they are not expected to have to serve a heavy sentence in Austria – are being sent back [...]."[55]

Many of the refugees therefore sought help from other sources, as a letter to ALÖS from the *Hilfskomitee für jüdische Flüchtlinge* (Committee for Jewish Refugees) in Brno shows:

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52 VGA, Sozialistische Partei 1934 bis 1945, Karton 8, Mappe 2, Flüchtlingslager 1934 [refugee camps 1934], "Heimordnung" [house rules] of the Chocerady camp.

53 On this change in attitude amongst the working class, see Peter Pelinka, Erbe und Neubeginn. Die Revolutionären Sozialisten in Österreich 1934–1938, Vienna 1981, 120.

54 For example Hanisch, Der große Illusionist.

55 AT-OeStA/AdR, BKA BKA-I SL ZGS Mappe 37.

"Unfortunately, several Austrian immigrants have asked us for help as they have not been able to get any support from you. We have – without a word – offered our help, as it is our duty to help all Jews who find themselves suffering due to political circumstances. However, we cannot provide for active fighters. Is not your party – on the grounds of political conviction – obliged to help first?"[56]

Furthermore, extensive correspondence between the border stations concerning the distribution of scarce financial means to those fleeing and the fighters left behind gives an insight into the ever tighter financial situation. The organisation of smuggling activities also suffered from a lack of money, leading to a lengthy correspondence about the confiscation of one fighter's bicycle used for bringing propaganda over the border and how they should finance the small amount of money needed to have the bike released. Eventually, the border station at Mikulov was asked to borrow money from a butcher since ALÖS could not financially afford to have a bicycle released from the customs office at the border.[57]

The camps were also showing signs of financial strain: The daily allowance allotted to refugees was reduced from thirteen crowns to seven.[58] The intensification of the refugee crisis due to refugees from Nazi Germany from 1933 onwards also placed further financial pressure on the Czechoslovak social democratic parties. Therefore, on 24 April 1934 the executive committee of the parties decided that any comrades not in exceptional danger of being sentenced to long-term imprisonment should be excluded from financial support. In February 1935, they wrote to ALÖS that the number of refugees that they were able to support would be dramatically reduced to 100 and further stressed that any comrades who were not in exceptional jeopardy of long prison sentences should be excluded.[59]

The exclusion of more and more refugees and their family members from financial support additionally led to a rejection of the party. As a result, ALÖS started to explain in their correspondence that it was due to the lack of financial support from the Czechoslovak social democratic parties that the support could no longer be maintained.[60]

ALÖS' limited financial resources also affected the Schutzbund family members in Austria who had been included in the financial support. With their breadwinners abroad, the families found themselves in hopeless situations. This also meant that few families could afford to visit their family members in Czechoslovakia. While in April and May 1934, the Austrian and Czechoslovak authorities saw an increase in both legal border crossings of groups of people with border notes (*Grenzscheine*) and illegally via the "green border", these decreased again some months later. This situation worsened the homesickness of the refugees and led many to choose to return to Austria to serve prison sentences or to emigrate further to the Soviet Union.

Another important factor in the disillusionment of ordinary Schutzbund fighters was the weakening of party networks in terms of personnel, as the former Austrian social democratic party haemorrhaged members. Many former members either

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56 VGA, Sozialistische Partei 1934 bis 1945, Karton 8, Mappe 4, Flüchtlingsfürsorge 1935–1936. Correspondence with the Committee for Jewish Refugees, February 1935.

57 VGA, Sozialistische Partei 1934 bis 1945, Karton 8, Mappe 2, Flüchtlingslager 1934, Correspondence with the border post Nikolsburg/Mikulov, 1934.

58 The daily amount was further reduced in autumn 1935 to six crowns. See Marschalek, Untergrund und Exil, 144.

59 Stadler, Opfer verlorener Zeiten, 126.

60 VGA, Sozialistische Partei 1934 bis 1945, Karton 8, Mappe 4, Flüchtlingsfürsorge 1935–1936, letter from ALÖS to Josef Kaut in Prague, 4 September 1936.

turned to the Communist Party or the Nazi Party in Austria. Many of those who had fought in the February Uprising thought that the social democrats had reacted too slowly and waited too long to join the fight. In this radicalised atmosphere, many members of the Schutzbund joined the Communist Party. The communists recognised this and actively sought to recruit Schutzbund members, something that ALÖS sought to prevent.[61]

This hopeless situation forced the leading figures to search in vain for other countries in Scandinavia and the Baltic states who would take Austrian refugees. Many decided to take advantage of the only other destination open to them in mid-1934: the Soviet Union. The Executive Committee of the Communist International in Moscow commissioned the International Red Aid and the All-union Council of the Soviet Unions to facilitate this.[62] The Schutzbund members made lists of those who were willing to leave to the Soviet Union and handed them over to the Central Office for the Austrian Refugees in Brno.[63]

The exiled leaders in Brno, struggling with the lack of funds for the refugees in the camps, found themselves in a defensive situation and tried to assist the transports to begin with. The growing influence of communists amongst the former Schutzbund members soon changed the situation and led to massive conflicts between the party elite in Brno and the Schutzbund camps. A manifest, published by members of the first transport, levelled accusations at the old party. As a result, the Czechoslovak as well as the Austrian social democrats tried to act against communist propaganda and communists in the refugee camps, including their exclusion from financial support.[64]

The disagreement escalated in May 1934 with a letter from several refugees in the Znojmo camp, declaring that they were leaving the camp as a result of the "shame and disgrace" of their elected spokesmen having had all support withdrawn. The sharp tone of the written reply from Brno showed the stark ideological and personal divisions between the party leaders in Brno and the Schutzbund fighters.[65] The few former Schutzbund fighters who decided to stay in Czechoslovakia in the hope of renewed fighting in Austria in the near future soon realised that an imminent regime change in Austria was not realistic.

Both in Austria and in Czechoslovakia, increasing numbers of former Schutzbund members joined the Communist Party, who as a departure from previous practice had advocated for open alliances with left-wing groups for several years, including the Revolutionary Socialists, founded in Austria after February 1934 and led by Manfred Ackermann and later Karl Hans Seiler, and accepted as a successor organisation of the Social Democratic Workers' Party by ALÖS. In the months immediately following February 1934, entire Schutzbund divisions joined the Communist Party, and the communist youth organisation increased tenfold. At several meetings, short-term co-operations were agreed upon between communists and Revolutionary Socialists. While Otto Bauer was not opposed to this, other factions of the Revolutionary Socialists were cautious, fearing the communists would try to liquidate their organisation. Nevertheless, political approaches were made in 1936 when

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61 ALÖS produced anti-communist leaflets for the camps and asked the refugees to sign declarations against the Communist Party. See for example VGA, Sozialistische Partei 1934 bis 1945, Karton 8, Mappe 3, Russentransporte und Berichte über die UdSSR (Russia-transports and reports on the USSR).

62 McLoughlin/Schafranek/Szevera (ed.), Aufbruch – Hoffnung – Endstation, 162.

63 See Stadler, Opfer verlorener Zeiten, 116.

64 Ibid., 117.

65 VGA, Sozialistische Partei 1934 bis 1945, Karton 8, Mappe 3, Russentransporte und Berichte über die UdSSR, correspondence between the Znojmo camp and ALÖS, May 1934.

several joint memoranda were published.[66] Additionally, the Communist Party changed their tactics after the Seventh World Congress of the Comintern in 1935 to form loose alliances with groups including farmers and the middle classes (following the tactics of a popular front) and to undermine the attempts by the "Austrofascist" *Gewerkschaftsbund der österreichischen Arbeiter und Angestellten* (Federation of Unions of Austrian Workers and Employees) from reaching out to the workers.[67]

A letter from two Schutzbund members in Mikulov to ALÖS in summer 1935 offers an insight into the disillusionment:

> "For the one and a half years – as a result of our participation in the February Uprising – we have found ourselves in the Czechoslovak Republic. It is superfluous to describe the bleak and meaningless nature of our lives, as you are already well aware of it. […] We have decided that if there is no change in our situation by the end of this year, we will return to Austria regardless of the consequences. You, comrades, have an occupation, some of you have your families with you, and therefore have something that fulfils your lives. You are unable to understand what it means to live such a bleak, meaningless life, with a total lack of hope or perspectives […]."[68]

A first transport left for Moscow on 23 April 1934, including 305 members of the Schutzbund. A second transport left with 230 people on 1 June 1934. Between September and November further smaller groups followed.[69] Additionally, around 150 Austrian political refugees left Prague for Moscow in the following years.[70] All in all, along with 730 former Schutzbund fighters, almost 300 of their family members went to the Soviet Union.

After the foundation of the International Brigades in Spain in October 1936, approximately 160 of the former Schutzbund members went on to fight in the Spanish Civil War, where most fought in the Primera Brigada Internacional (XI Brigade). Many of the former militarily trained Schutzbund members saw the Spanish Civil War as an opportunity to continue the fight against fascism that had been lost in Austria.[71] Furthermore, despite being initially welcomed in the Soviet Union with open arms, the situation for many Austrian refugees there had worsened. More than half of the Schutzbund members who remained in the Soviet Union fell victim to the Stalinist purges.[72] In 1937, the Austrian Battalion of 12 February was founded. Several former Schutzbund members, such as Leopold Lahl (born 1908), who travelled on from Kharkiv to Spain, were killed in the Spanish Civil War. In February 1939, after the Catalonia Offensive of the Nationalist Army, many of the Austrians again ended up in improvised internment camps such as Saint-Cyprien, Cap d'Agde, or Argelès-sur-Mer along the French Mediterranean coastline and were later sent to Nazi concentration camps after the capitulation of France.[73] Others, like Rudolf Schober, who

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66 Pelinka, Erbe und Neubeginn, 77.

67 Helene Maimann, Politik im Wartesaal. Österreichische Exilpolitik in Grossbritannien 1938–1945, Vienna 1975, 25.

68 VGA, Sozialistische Partei 1934 bis 1945, Karton 8, Mappe 5, Flüchtlingsfürsorge 1935–1936, letter to Otto Bauer, 29 July 1935.

69 Stadler, Opfer verlorener Zeiten, 116.

70 DÖW (ed.), Österreicher im Exil. Sowjetunion, 18.

71 Stadler, Opfer verlorener Zeiten, 261.

72 Barry McLoughlin, Die Schutzbundemigration in die UdSSR. Neue Funde und Erkenntnisse aus Moskauer Archiven, in: DÖW Jahrbuch 1994, 97-105, here 102. For further information on the Austrian victims of the Stalinist purges, see Barry McLoughlin/Josef Vogl, … ein Paragraf wird sich finden. Gedenkbuch der österreichischen Stalinopfer (bis 1945), Vienna 2013.

73 Hans Landauer, Lexikon der österreichischen Spanienkämpfer 1936–1939, Vienna 2008, 15.

had managed to flee to Czechoslovakia with the help of the refugee network in the border region in February 1934, returned to the Soviet Union in 1939.[74]

Many refugees therefore returned to Austria disappointed, something the Austrian authorities observed with concern. In March 1935, the authorities were informed of the impending return of immigrants from the Soviet Union and gave the order that they should be informed of all incoming persons. In June 1935, they had already compiled a lengthy list of returnees.[75]

By 1 November 1935, according to the Czechoslovak Ministry of the Interior, there were still 302 Austrian political refugees in Czechoslovakia, most of them in Moravia.[76] The relatively low number of remaining political refugees also became obvious in the decrease in propaganda activities in Austria. According to the July 1936 report of the *Generaldirektion für die öffentliche Sicherheit am österreichischen Bundeskanzleramt* (Head Office for Public Security at the Austrian Federal Chancellery), which described all the terrorist and propaganda campaigns by the opposition in Austria, in every Austrian federal state there was more activity by Nazis than by leftist groups. Of 103 "propaganda actions" in Lower Austria, 61 were National Socialist and 41 socialist (the latter also including communist campaigns), one "propaganda action" was carried out by unknown sources. Even in former "Red Vienna" in July 1936, there were 27 National Socialist propaganda campaigns as opposed to 24 socialist. In Styria, there were ten times as many Nazi campaigns.[77]

By 1937, around 250 of the fighters from the February Uprising who had lived as refugees in Czechoslovakia had returned to Austria, where they accepted prison sentences in an attempt to resume the lives they left behind. According to the files of the Czechoslovak authorities, by 1 January 1938 only 103 Austrian refugees were still in Czechoslovakia.[78]

Conclusion

This analysis of movements and actions of Austrian refugees in the Czechoslovak/Austrian border region shows how an initial period of support for Austrian socialist refugees by the Czechoslovak social democratic parties, accompanied by an intensive period of propaganda activity and smuggling to Austria, soon gave way to disillusionment by the rank-and-file refugees as a result of dwindling funds, followed by the dissolution of exile networks and increasing political radicalisation.

Lengthy correspondence concerning a bicycle confiscated by the Austrian border police testifies not only to the ever worsening financial situation and decreasing support, but also to the significance of mobility for cross-border political networks and the proximity of operation in close and intimately known landscapes of the border region. This shows that local networks of political activists and smugglers in the Austrian/Czechoslovak border region – which had grown quickly along this new border after 1918 – were integrated and interlaced with transnational political networks. The resulting lack of future perspectives made life for refugees in Czechoslovakia

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74 For further information on the fate of Austrian refugees in the Soviet Union, see DÖW (ed.), Österreicher im Exil. Sowjetunion.

75 NÖLA, Kulturdepot, BH Hollabrunn, box 197, 1935 (XI/164), strictly confidential note by the Security Director for Lower Austria on the return of Austrian citizens to Austria from the USSR, 14 August 1935.

76 NA, PMV, 1931–1935, X/R/3/2, K. 1187-2, 125, Měsíční výkaz o počtu rakouských emigrantů, zdržujících se v ČSR [Monthly reports on the number of Austrian emigrants, staying in Czechoslovakia], 8 January 1935.

77 AT-OeStA/AdR, BKA BKA-I SL ZGS, Mappe 37.

78 NA, PMV, 1931–1935, X/R/3/2, K. 1187-2, Měsíční výkaz o počtu rakouských emigrantů, zdržujících se v ČSR.

even harder: Many chose to return to Austria to serve prison sentences, to emigrate further to the Soviet Union, or to fight in the Spanish Civil War, where many later found themselves again in internment camps in France after defeat.

CONTEXT

Wolfgang Schellenbacher
Historian, Dokumentationsarchiv des österreichischen Widerstandes/
Masaryk Institute and Archives of the Czech Academy of Sciences
schellenbacher@mua.cas.cz

Context

Copy Editor:
Tim Corbett

Kinga Frojimovics

Jewish Refugees from Austria in the Hospitals of the Jewish Community of Pest after the 'Anschluß'

Abstract

This paper analyses the social characteristics of Jewish refugees who fled from Austria to Hungary after the 'Anschluß' through a unique source base: the hospital records of refugees treated in the hospitals of the Jewish Community of Pest. Moreover, the correspondence of Jewish organisations dealing with hospitalised refugees offers a glimpse into the decision-making processes that the Jewish community had to make alone, as the Hungarian state left it to aid and care for refugees. This happened in the years from 1938 onwards, when the Hungarian Jewish community itself was a victim of continuous legal and economic discrimination by the Hungarian state.

From 1933, foreign Jewish refugees came to Hungary in several waves. A first wave from Germany in 1933 was followed by greater numbers beginning in the autumn of 1935 after the passing of the Nuremberg Laws. According to German sources, between Adolf Hitler's assumption of power on 30 January 1933 until 31 December 1935, a total number of 28,850 Jews fled Germany, with approximately 800 coming to Hungary.[1] Thus, following the increase after the passing of the Nuremberg Laws, their number still only lay below a thousand. According to data from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), there were about 3,730 refugees in Hungary at the end of 1939, of whom 3,080 were located in Budapest. Of the refugees in Budapest, 1,840 received permanent JDC aid. 1,380 of them were from Austria (45 per cent), 683 from Germany (22 per cent), 620 from Slovakia (20 per cent), 312 from Bohemia (10 per cent), while the remaining 85 were from other places (3 per cent).[2] According to the Reichssicherheitshauptamt, by 31 October 1941 there were already 6,310 Jewish refugees in Hungary from all the territories of the Third Reich: 4,380 from the 'Altreich' (Germany), 1,310 from the 'Ostmark' (Austria), and 620 from the 'Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia' (the Czech lands).[3]

Austrian Jews began arriving in Hungary from the 'Anschluß' in March 1938 onward. Viennese Jews arrived first, followed by refugees primarily from the Sheva Kehilot (Seven Communities) in Burgenland, which had belonged to Hungary until

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1 Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts, Bonn, R 99359, Bericht der Reichsstelle für das Auswanderungswesen an das Auswärtige Amt, 5 April 1937, quoted in René Geoffroy, Ungarn als Zufluchtsort und Wirkungsstätte deutschsprachiger Emigranten (1933–1938/1939), Frankfurt am Main 2001, 88.

2 JDC Archives, New York, RG 4.30: Hungary, Series 1: Hungary: Administration, File 707: Hungary: Administration, General, 1936–1940.

3 Bundesarchiv Potsdam, 75.C.Re.1.311+ Reichsvereinigung, Bl. 34. See Geoffroy, Ungarn als Zufluchtsort, 91-95 and 109. For more detailed information on the different waves of Jewish refugees in Hungary, see Chapter 4 in Kinga Frojimovics, I Have Been a Stranger in a Strange Land. The Hungarian State and Jewish Refugees in Hungary, 1933–1945, Jerusalem 2007, 44-56.

CONTEXT

the First World War.[4] Most of those who succeeded in crossing the border illegally first went to the larger Jewish communities in western Hungary, where local Jews as well as Jewish communities helped them escape further from the border, usually to Budapest, where they believed the refugees could disappear more easily in the crowds of the capital.[5]

Some of the refugees arriving in Budapest were registered with the Jewish Community of Pest, where they received aid. Unfortunately, the community's personal aid cards have not survived. However, the registration cards of those patients who were unable to pay or only able to partially pay for their hospitalisation – including refugees – and whose cases were therefore sent to the community's legal affairs department, have survived. These registration cards are crucial and to date unexplored sources about Jews who were not Hungarian citizens.[6] With the help of these registration cards, this paper analyses the social characteristics of Jewish refugees who fled from Austria to Hungary after the 'Anschluß'.

The Hospitals of the Jewish Community of Pest

The first small hospital of the Jewish Community of Pest was opened in 1805. A large, representative, and well-equipped hospital befitting the community, which was on its way to becoming the leading Jewish community of the Hungarian Neolog religious movement at the time, was opened in 1889. The hospital, called the General Hospital of the Jewish Community of Pest (hereafter referred to simply as the Jewish Hospital), was equipped with the most modern medical instruments of the time.[7]

The Szabolcs Street facade of the main building, opened in 1889.
Source: Klösz Album: Photo by György Klösz.

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4   The escape of Austrian Jews to Hungary and their fears during the border crossing were recorded in the biography of Sándor Benamy, a Jewish journalist of Hungarian origin living in Vienna during the 'Anschluß'. Sándor Benamy, Állampolgár voltam Közép-Európában [I Was a Citizen in Central Europe], Budapest 1983, 87-90.

5   Szita Szabolcs, Embermentés Sopron megyében, 1944–1945 [Rescue in Sopron District, 1944–1945], in: Soproni Szemle 4 (1993), 393-394. See also Milka Zalmon, Forced Emigration of the Jews of Burgenland. A Test Case, in: Yad Vashem Studies 31 (2003), 301-302.

6   The original records – the debt registry – are kept in the Hungarian Jewish Archives, a microfilm copy of which can be found in the Yad Vashem Archives (YVA). See Hungarian Jewish Archives (Budapest), PIH iktatott iratok, 1938–1944, and YVA, JM/28586-18628. This research is based on the microfilms kept in the YVA.

7   Concerning the short history of the Jewish Hospital, see Imre Strausz, Egy zsidó kórház 1944-ben. Emlékezésvázlat ötven év múltán [A Jewish Hospital in 1944. Memoir Sketch after Fifty Years], in: Múlt és Jövő [Past and Future] (1994). Available online: www.multesjovo.hu/en/aitdownloadablefiles/download/aitfile/aitfile_id/1224/ (6 October 2018) and http://egykor.hu/budapest-xiii--kerulet/pesti-zsido-korhaz/3988 (6 October 2018).

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The Jewish Hospital developed dynamically from the turn of the century and into the interwar period. In 1897, the Adél Bródy Children's Hospital was opened and in 1910 the Alice Weiss Birthing Home started to offer its services to poor women.[8] The latter was managed by the Jewish Women's Association of Pest, a part of the Jewish Community of Pest.[9] The Aladár Kaszab and Józsa Weiszkopf Polyclinic was the last hospital to be built. It served the ambulant patients of the Jewish Hospital. It opened its doors in 1925.[10]

Due to the Neolog policy of integration into Hungarian society at the turn of the century, every department of the Jewish Hospital from the outset treated non-Jewish patients as well. In 1910, for example, of the 25,098 patients of the Jewish Hospital, 62 per cent were not Jewish.[11] Following the great changes in the social and political climate in the second half of the 1930s, the ratio of Jewish to non-Jewish patients had changed. Henceforth, two thirds of the 14,000 patients who were treated each year in the Jewish Hospital belonged to a Jewish denomination, while the remaining third belonged to one of the Christian denominations. The ratio at the Bródy Children's Hospital was 53 per cent Jewish to 47 per cent Christian.[12] The hospitals of the Jewish Community of Pest (with the exception of the Alice Weiss Birthing Home) operated as private hospitals as opposed to the so-called public hospitals, which meant that the existing public welfare organisations did not contribute anything for patients who had poverty certificates. The Alice Weiss Birthing Home was a public hospital and consequently treated women with poverty certificate free of charge.[13]

In 1936, Lajos Lévy (1875–1961) became the directing chief physician of the Jewish Hospital. He was one of the leading internists in Budapest in the 1930s and belonged to the inner circle of friends of Sigmund Freud and his family. Lévy's wife, Katalin Freud, was an analytic psychiatrist and Sigmund Freud's niece. In 1954, Dr. Lévy emigrated to London, where he became the physician of Sigmund Freud's daughter Anna.[14]

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8   There is a short newsreel from 1919 about the Bródy Children's Hospital entitled Mesedélután a Bródy Adél kórházban [Story Time in the Adél Bródy Hospital], Vörös Riport Film4 (Red Reporter Film4), April 1919. Available online: http://filmhiradokonline.hu/watch.php?id=5240 (6 October 2018).

9   Sándor Eppler, A budapesti zsidóság szociális munkája [The Social Work of the Jews in Budapest], in: Magyar Zsidó Szemle [Hungarian Jewish Review] 55 (1938) 1-4, 1-44, here 16-17.

10   The Hungarian state nationalised the Jewish Hospital in 1950. In 1956, the Orvostovábbképző Intézet (Medical Training Institute) was opened there. The building complex served as a hospital until 2007. Nowadays, a medical centre for the homeless operates in one part of the run down building block. There are plans for the central storage of the planned Museum Quarter of Budapest to be housed in the building of the former Jewish Hospital.

11   A pesti izr. hitközség elöljáróságának jelentése az 1910-iki közigazgatási évről [Report of the Governing Body of the Jewish Community of Pest Concerning the Fiscal Year 1910], Budapest 1911, 14-19. Quoted in Miklós Konrád, Zsidó jótékonyság és asszimiláció a századfordulón [Jewish Charity and Assimilation at the Turn of the Century], in: Történelmi Szemle [Historical Review] 43 (2001) 3-4, 257-285, here 272.

12   Sándor, A budapesti zsidóság szociális munkája, 16-17.

13   Ibid., 17-18.

14   On the biographies of Lajos Lévy and Imre Strausz, see István Préda, A zsidókórház. Belgyógyászat, kardiológia a Szabolcs utcában 1889–2005 [The Jewish Hospital. Internal Medicine and Cardiology at Szabolcs Street 1889–2005], in: Remény [Hope] 2006. Available online: http://www.remeny.org/remeny/2006-tavasz-5766-adar-niszan-ijjar/prof-dr-preda-istvan-a-zsidokorhaz (24 October 2018). Concerning Lévy, see also Ágnes Drelyó, Ma született 137 éve Lévy Lajos [Lajos Lévy Was Born 137 Years Ago], https://hu-hu.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.415915011790767.86951.103088633073408&type=1 (6 October 2018). Imre Strausz became a famous cardiologist after the Second World War. In the second half of the 1940s, he realised that many former deportees and POWs were suffering from bacterial endocarditis. Since penicillin was hardly available for the purposes of treatment at the time, many of them died from this infectious heart disease. Bacterial endocarditis was one of the central topics of Imre Strausz's dissertation entitled *A negatív haemokulturájú subacut septikus endocarditis esetek háború utáni halmozódásának kérdései* [Questions about Post-War Cumulative Subacute Septic Endocarditis Cases in Negative Hemocultures]. See Strausz, Egy zsidó kórház 1944-ben, 59.

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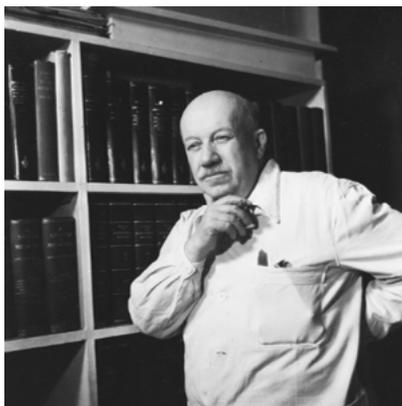
Dr. Lajos Lévy, chief internist, 1954.
Source: FORTEPAN/The Archive of the Semmelweis University.

Dr. Lévy was known for his leftist convictions and treated poor Jewish patients free of charge in his private practice alongside his well-to-do patients. In the hospital, he also tried to help those in need. In the beginning, he helped mainly the so-called "stateless" people who had been registered by the Külföldieket Ellenőrző Országos Központi Hivatal (National Central Alien Control Office, KEOKH) and, after the 'Anschluß', he helped the refugees who arrived in Hungary in increasing numbers.

Jewish Refugees from Austria in the Hospitals of the Jewish Community of Pest

The charity department of the Jewish Community of Pest dealt with issues concerning Jewish refugees. The department included, among other entities, the so-called Wanderfürsorge fund. The Hauptstelle für jüdische Wanderfürsorge was originally a German Jewish aid organisation which helped Jews who were forced to leave their homeland and places of residence.[15] The organisation created stations within Jewish communities in various countries, with refugees visiting these stations along the way. In Hungary, only the Jewish Community of Pest operated such a station with the help of the community's burial society, the Chevra Kadisha.[16]

The hospital fees of Jewish refugees from Germany were paid by the Pest Wanderfürsorge station, which also created their registration cards. The documents show, however, that the Jewish Community of Pest did not exclusively use the resources of the Wanderfürsorge fund for paying the hospital expenses of the refugees arriving from the Third Reich. Although the majority of the recipients undoubtedly arrived from Nazi Germany and Austria after the 'Anschluß', there were also numerous Slovak and Polish refugees. From 1940 onwards, as a result of the large wave of Polish refugees arriving in the autumn of 1939, the community created a separate fund, which also covered hospitalised Polish Jewish refugees.[17]

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15 Concerning the Hauptstelle für jüdische Wanderfürsorge, see: Scholem Adler-Rudel, Jüdische Selbsthilfe unter dem Naziregime 1933–1939 im Spiegel der Berichte der Reichsvertretung der Juden in Deutschland, Tübingen 1974, 94-97.
16 Eppler, A budapesti zsidóság szociális munkája, 21.
17 Concerning the hospitalisation aid of the Polish fund of the Jewish Community of Pest, see for example YVA, JM/28606, 1293-1296.

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The present phase of this research project allows for a sketch of the characteristics of those patients who were hospitalised from 1938 until 1941 at the expense of the Wanderfürsorge fund.[18] The majority of the Jewish refugees from the territories of Germany, Austria, and the Czech lands were relatively well-off, or had relatives or business relations in Hungary. Most of them did not require assistance from Jewish aid organisations and, as a result, they were not registered. That is why the hospital registration cards are such important sources, because they contain the only information concerning some refugees who arrived in Hungary.

According to the hospital records, about 400 refugee patients were cared for in the Jewish Hospital and the Adél Bródy Children's Hospital between the spring of 1938 and the summer of 1941.[19] The exact number can be determined only with difficulty, because some of the patients were hospitalised repeatedly during the years under examination.

Of the approximately 400 refugee patients, 25 came from Germany and 67 from Austria.[20] The remaining refugee patients hospitalised at the expense of the Wanderfürsorge fund had fled or emigrated from Slovakia, Poland, Romania, the Czech lands, the Soviet Union, and Italy.

The overwhelming majority of the patients arriving from Austria and admitted to the hospitals of the Jewish Community of Pest had been born in Vienna or in Burgenland. The oldest patient among them was born in 1864, the youngest in 1938. The latter was admitted to the Department of Infectious Diseases of the Jewish Hospital in January 1941, when he was not yet three years old. The duration of the hospitalisation of the refugees varies greatly: between 2 and 432 days. Three of the refugee patients died in the hospital, a three-and-a-half-year-old boy among them.

One group of the refugees from Austria consisted of well-to-do people, who had to leave all their belongings behind and to flee from the Nazis to Hungary. István Halász's story exemplifies this kind of fate. Since 1922 he had worked in Vienna as chief accountant of the famous Zsolnay publishing company. Halász wrote a letter to the leaders of the Jewish Community of Pest in February 1939, stating:

> "As a consequence of the known circumstances, I was forced to suddenly leave not only my job, but also the city, and I was lucky in the sense that even though I had to leave without a penny, I could at least bring my movable belongings with me.
>
> Unfortunately, trouble does not strike only once. I became seriously ill, and I have been hospitalised in the Szabolcs Street hospital since September last year, where I have been operated upon on three occasions. In addition to the Almighty, I owe my survival only to the selfless and endlessly conscientious treatment of the doctors, though I am still in such a serious condition that I still require medical treatment and hospitalisation.
>
> I am ill and penniless and I cannot expect financial support from anywhere. My family lives on gradually selling any belongings of value.
>
> […] Today, though not through any fault of my own, I am the one who has to ask for something, and I have to turn to the venerated presidential body with

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18 The topic of refugees in the hospitals of the Jewish Community of Pest forms part of the monograph on the history of the community between 1938 and 1945 that I am currently working on.

19 The statistical data presented in this paper is drawn from a database I compiled on the basis of the patient cards.

20 The terms Austrian and German have to be clarified in this context: The refugees' place of birth and refugee status are registered in the sources, whereas the place they arrived from are not. In our database we categorised as Austrian refugees those who according to the community registers were born in Austria and had been hospitalised in any of the hospitals of the Jewish Community of Pest.

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the respectful request to please be so kind as to arrange that the costs of my hospitalisation until now and the costs of my future hospitalisation be paid from the fund for the assistance of refugees from Germany and which is, according to my knowledge, under the management of the revered Jewish Community."[21]

In addition to those arriving individually, other refugees were taken to the Jewish Hospital from one of the detention barracks in Budapest under the control of the KEOKH, where they had been imprisoned because they had arrived in Hungary illegally. Of those refugees coming from Austria, 26 were taken to the Jewish Hospital from one of the detention barracks: 19 from the barracks at 39 Szabolcs Street, next to the Jewish Hospital, two from the auxiliary detention barracks at Páva Street, four from the barracks at Rumbach Street, and one from the barracks at Columbus Street. Among them were people in a life-threatening state.

The stateless persons and refugees in treatment had to be reported to the KEOKH by the Jewish Hospital. The staff at the admission office of the hospital called the patients under KEOKH supervision "kályhások" (stove-fitters), a word that, although it meant nothing in this context, had some meaning as an ironic paraphrase of the sinister and threatening acronym "KEOKH".

A physician from the KEOKH also sometimes inspected patients under its jurisdiction. In the summer of 1941, for example, a young cardiologist, Imre Strausz (1909–2000) who had worked in the Jewish Hospital since 1936, had to accompany the supervising KEOKH physician. Without any examination, the physician stated that the condition of about 20 patients, mainly elderly women, did not require hospitalisation, and they were taken back to the detention barracks.[22] He did not consider them to be genuinely ill. Yet a letter from the Magyar Izraeliták Pártfogó Irodája (Welfare Bureau of Hungarian Jews, MIPI), then the top organisation of the Jewish denominational aid work in Hungary, sheds a different light on the physical condition of refugees arriving from Austria. The MIPI turned to the governing body of the Jewish Community of Pest on 17 March 1941:

> "As you know, the situation of the Viennese Jews has recently become intolerable, because on the orders of the authorities our Viennese brothers are being transported to Poland in groups. The situation of the Jews who were relocated to Poland is the most deplorable according to the reports sent to relatives, which have become well-known by now. Their belongings have been taken away from them, so that they cannot help themselves in the absence of financial means. They are virtually starving and they become infested with lice in their places of accommodation.
>
> As you also know, all of those who are able try to escape this suffering illegally and to get to the territory of Hungary. Therefore, the numbers of Viennese Jews in our homeland are growing. Many from among these unfortunates turn to the MIPI daily and ask for our help. The MIPI obviously reports their presence to the authorities as is its duty, and we are trying, with the consent of the authorities, to accommodate our unfortunate brothers-in-faith in any of the camps to avoid them being incarcerated in the detention barracks.

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21 Letter from István Halász to the presidential body of the Jewish Community of Pest, 17 February 1939, YVA, JM/28606, 501-502.

22 Strausz, Egy zsidó kórház 1944-ben, 50.

As you can imagine, the circumstances of getting through [the border to Hungary] illegally are most difficult.

They are attempting to escape from their former homeland trudging through forests, meadows, and bogs for long hours, during which they are living in constant uncertainty and dreading the thought of being returned. We are only able to receive them and care for them within the limits of our possibilities when they physically arrive and are physically completely broken and ill.

Day after day it happens that the unfortunate Viennese refugees arrive here so ill that it is not enough for them to be placed in a camp, but medical care must also be provided.

On the basis of the above, we are turning to the esteemed governing body with our request to make available a so-called sickroom in the Jewish hospital to us for the purpose of allowing the Viennese refugees arriving here ill to be able to rest for a few days and receive medical care, so they can go afterwards to the detention barracks."[23]

In their letter dated 23 March 1941, the Jewish Community of Pest rejected the idea of a sickroom for refugees as practically impossible, but assured the MIPI that it would continue to admit the refugees in need in its hospitals, as far as possible.[24]

This exchange of letters offers a glimpse of how the largest Jewish community of Hungary, by drawing upon its institutions, tried to aid the foreign Jewish refugees arriving in increasing numbers from 1938. We learn the sad fact that the Hungarian state, at the time, did not extend humanitarian aid to the refugees; it was merely interested in their immediate internment. Giving the most basic humanitarian aid meant a large burden for the Jewish organisations – particularly for the Jewish Community of Pest and the MIPI – which had already been heavily deprived of both rights and financial means as a consequence of the Hungarian state's official anti-Jewish policy.

Unfortunately, there are no easily available sources on the further fate of the refugees in the hospitals of the Jewish Community of Pest. However, future systematic research can hopefully allow at least some of them to be traced, through whose example we can gain insight into the fates of Jewish refugees fleeing from abroad to Hungary during the Holocaust.[25]

Conclusion

The hospitals together with the other institutions of the Jewish Community of Pest engaged heavily in the assistance of the refugees, who were either illegally on Hungarian soil or who were interned in Budapest. The Jewish Community of Pest, uniquely in Hungary, set up a fund to provide for the refugees arriving from the Third Reich. This fund made it possible to take care of refugees who required medi-

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23   A MIPI levele a PIH Elöljáróságának, 1941. március 17 [Letter from MIPI to the Governing Body of the Jewish Community of Pest, 17 March 1941], YVA, JM/28620, 786.

24   A PIH főtitkárának levele a MIPI Vezetőségének, 1941. március 23 [Letter from the Chief Secretary of the Jewish Community of Pest to the Directorate of the MIPI, 23 March 1941], YVA, JM/28620, 787.

25   In the future, I would like to compare my database of about 400 people (at the time) with the databases of the major Holocaust collections in the world: the International Tracing Service in Germany, Yad Vashem in Israel, and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

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cal treatment. Until the end of 1939, when a large wave of Polish refugees reached Hungary due to the outbreak of the Second World War, the Jewish Community of Pest assisted all the refugees staying in Hungary by drawing upon the Wanderfürsorge fund regardless of whether the refugees were from Germany, Austria, the Czech lands, or even from Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Italy, or the Subcarpathian region. They also helped everybody irrespective of Jewish religious orientation. The Jewish Community of Pest thus expressed solidarity and even managed to disregard the deep antagonisms that otherwise characterised Jewish communities and religious movements in Hungary and helped all Jews (treating them, if needed, in their hospitals) regardless of whether they had Orthodox, Neolog, or Hassidic backgrounds.

During the German occupation of Hungary, the hospitals of the Jewish Community of Pest operated in their established ways. In April 1944, the occupying German forces seized the Jewish Hospital. It subsequently had to move into two schools of the Jewish Community of Pest: one on Wesselényi Street and another at Bethlen Square, where it operated as an emergency hospital. They were not allowed to remove any equipment from the seized hospital buildings. Lajos Lévy became the director of the emergency hospital at Wesselényi Street; the minimum equipment necessary for the operation of the hospital was collected from private clinics and consulting rooms of Jewish physicians. The hospital of the ghettos of Pest ceased to operate as an emergency institution when the Pest side of the capital was liberated in January 1945.[26] Before liberation, the emergency hospital also treated those who were shot and thrown into the icy Danube by Arrow Cross men during the winter of 1944/45. They were amongst those very few lucky people who were less seriously injured and managed to swim to the riverside and ultimately to reach the hospital. After liberation, the survivors found the buildings of the Jewish Hospital completely looted, so it took several months for them to resume the treatment of patients at the same level as in previous years.

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26 Concerning the activities that went on in the hospital after the German army occupied Hungary, see the testimony of Mrs. Lajos Lévy, Magyar Zsidó levéltár [Hungarian Jewish Archive], DEGOB jegyzőkönyv 3596, and Imre Strausz's memoir cited above.

Kinga Frojimovics
Historian, Vienna Wiesenthal Institute
kinga.frojimovics@vwi.ac.at

Context

Copy Editor:
Tim Corbett

Alina Bothe

Refugees or Deportees?

The Semantics of the First 'Polenaktion', Past and Present

Abstract

In the last weekend of October 1938 approximately 17,000 Jews with Polish citizenship, many of them born in Germany, were arrested all over the Reich, transported to different towns at the Polish border and forced to cross at gunpoint. Using the method of conceptual history, this article shows how contemporaries talked and wrote about the events from very different standpoints: victims of this persecution, Jewish help organizations as well as perpetrators. By using a very wide array of sources the shift in persecution policies, which is marked by the 'Polenaktion', can at the same time be traced as a shift in the concepts used to understand the events. One can literally observe a *coming to terms* with the unique events. Informed by writings of Hannah Arendt and Elie Wiesel as well as Kurt Grossmann and Arieh Tartakower, this contribution pays special attention to the term "refugee".

"Polish Jews' Plight" – the headline of *The Times* on 1 November 1938 – was as correct as it was misleading.[1] Even though the political and economic situation of millions of Jews in Poland was deteriorating, the title referred to just a very small group, namely 17,000 Polish Jews who had been expelled from the Third Reich, many of whom were stuck between the borders. They were victims of the first bureaucratically organised mass expulsion from the Reich, foreshadowing later deportations.

The role of the first 'Polenaktion' within Holocaust/Shoah scholarship still remains to be determined. This article uses a novel methodological approach, as it looks into the terminology used to describe both the events and those who fell victim or were affected by the unprecedented phenomenon of a mass expulsion bordering on deportation. Two terms were already in use as early as November 1938 – refugees and deportees. Delving into a conceptual history of these terms, bound to the history of the Shoah, allows for different perspectives on the events to become visible, both within their historical context as well as in later historiography.

As I will show, terminology was unstable in 1938/39, as the novelty, the rupture of the event could only be perceived as such in retrospect. So, this article enquires: How does the struggle to find an adequate term to describe the experience of the 'Polenaktion' help to identify this moment as a turning point? Since the extermination of the European Jewries, a *coming to terms* has become observable in a literal as well as a metaphorical sense. There has been scholarship on the concepts of Shoah, Holocaust, Churban and the terms "victim" and "survivor" as well as difficult discussions over who was a perpetrator. There have been discussions of the present-day use of terminology as well as of the interpretation of the events. But conceptual history as a method has only very slowly been introduced into Holocaust scholarship.[2] This arti-

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1   Polish Jews' Plight, in: The Times, 1 November 1938, 1.
2   Alina Bothe/Markus Nesselrodt, Survivor. Politics and Semantics of a Concept, Leo Baeck Institute Year Book 61 (2016), 57-82.

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cle uses as its main method the analysis of the semantic content of concepts in their chronological context. It will allow for an analysis of historical as well as the contemporary aspects and shed light on the understanding and interpretation of these by different actors. Conceptual history is a theoretical approach for analysing the semantic changes or continuities of and within given concepts, for example "the people", "marriage", or "history".[3] It is normally bound to one language and one national context, even though first attempts have been made for a more complex approach. One such example is the discussion of the term "survivor" after the Shoah. My approach diverges in its multilingual approach from classical conceptual history, in that it offers both a diachronic and a synchronic analysis of a term in one language, including the surrounding concepts used, and moreover looking into the semantic depths of the term used in translation in different languages. This approach aims to understand the different meanings of terms in the historical context of an acute situation as well as in the longer term. Classical conceptual history has not explored terminology relevant to the field of Shoah history, while most scholars in the field of Holocaust history mostly abstain from the methodology of conceptual history in reflecting on historical as well as contemporary language. Through this approach, conceptual history brings together the history of events with the experiences of those persecuted. Furthermore, it allows for a reflection of the personal level of individual experience within a forced collective as well as of the 'meta' level of international and institutional politics.

Unfortunately, in the 1970s Reinhart Koselleck and his team had other concepts in mind when they thought of the key concepts in the history of the twentieth century, which were mostly derived from social and economic history. Nowadays, concepts such as "refugee" or "expulsion" would be seen as dominant concepts of the twentieth century.[4] Therefore, conceptual history also reflects eminent historiographic changes. As the term "refugee" is not discussed in the work *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, we have to turn to other texts to explore the concept and the consequences of being a refugee. The victims of the 'Polenaktion' were turned into refugees and/or deportees first by Nazi persecution policies that cut them off from their personal, social, and economic networks, in which they had still been embedded in 1938. Second, they became refugees or deportees in the eyes of the different actors who assumed responsibility for them: Polish-Jewish relief organisations, the Polish Red Cross, the broad public in the UK donating goods and money through *The Times*, the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), as well as different Polish state agents involved in maintaining and solving the crisis caused by Nazi brutality. This was a sudden transformation for those who expelled from Germany: One day, they were shopkeepers, heads of their families, and agents of their own fate within the conditions of toughening persecution, and the next day, they were helpless and had to be taken care of.

The main questions this article tackles are: How did different actors and those affected in 1938/39 see the events, as reflected in the concepts they used? Which concepts are used nowadays with which meanings attached? I will discuss the 'Polenaktion', as this persecution was called by the perpetrators, as a crucial turning point in the European discourse and politics on statehood and asylum in the significant

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3   Reinhart Koselleck, Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe, Vol. 1. Einleitung des verantwortlichen Redaktors, v-xxv-viii.
4   Koselleck, Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe, v-xxvviii.

year of 1938.[5] As Raphael Gross put it: "The year 1938 stands for a new dimension of violence against Jews, for the transformation from discrimination and deprivation of rights to systematic persecution, robbery, and eviction."[6] I argue that 1938 is also relevant for persecution affecting the legal status of citizenship, especially of foreign citizenship. The first time that Jews were forced to leave Germany as a group based on their citizenship took place January 1938, when Werner Best ordered the (failed) eviction of Jews with Soviet citizenship.[7] The mass deportation to Poland was planned from April 1938 onwards in an inter-ministerial working group. In a parallel process, the same ministries tried to decide which ethnic Germans with Polish citizenship were to resettle in the Third Reich. Citizenship under pseudo-ethnic aspects, especially concerning minorities, was very much central to Polish-German relations in 1938/39. The specific situation of Danzig and the expulsion of 'Reichsdeutsche' (ethnic Germans) from Poland under the March law (which are explained below) are not discussed here, but need to be taken into consideration as well.

Overview and Context

On 28 October 1938, Nazi exclusionary policies once again shaped and changed European discourse, forcing international actors to respond and altering the lives of many people, this time based on citizenship and taking the form of expulsion. This date marks the first mass deportation under National Socialism and the beginning of a yearlong policy of persecution of Jews with Polish passports in the German Reich. The first 'Polenaktion' consisted of gathering, arresting, and deporting more than 17,000 Jews of Polish citizenship to Poland in response to the Polish March law.[8] From late January until August 1939, a further estimated 15,000 were deported in small groups. Finally, in September 1939 more than 5,000 Jewish men with Polish passports were arrested and sent to the concentration camps of Sachsenhausen, Buchenwald, and Dachau.[9] There had been expulsions of Eastern European Jewish migrants from Germany before, most notably in 1921 and 1923. But 1938 was singular in quantity as well as in quality. The persecution of Jews with Polish citizenship in the Third Reich between October 1938 and September 1939 (the first 'Polenaktion', the expulsions in 1939, and the second 'Polenaktion') reveal much about the escalation of broader Nazi policies towards Jews and in regard to Poland itself. The first 'Polenaktion' proved the possibilities of the "movement of population", especially

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5   In his important article on the 'Polenaktion', Wolf Gruner dismissed the idea of a deportation. Wolf Gruner, Von der Kollektivausweisung zur Deportation der Juden aus Deutschland (1938–1945). Neue Perspektiven und Dokumente, in: Birthe Kundrus/Beate Meyer (ed.), Die Deportation der Juden aus Deutschland. Pläne – Praxis – Reaktionen 1938–1945, (=Beiträge zur Geschichte des Nationalsozialismus, 20), Göttingen 2004, 21-62.

6   Raphael Gross, November 1938. Die Katastrophe vor der Katastrophe, Munich 2013, 9.

7   See for example Archiwum Panstwowe Zielona Góra [State Archive of Zielona Góra], Landratsamt Sorau, 1229, 3, includes a collection of orders on the issue by Best.

8   Trude Maurer, Abschiebung und Attentat. Die Ausweisung der polnischen Juden und der Vorwand für die "Kristallnacht", in: Walter H. Pehle (ed.), Der Judenpogrom 1938. Von der "Reichskristallnacht" zum Völkermord, Frankfurt am Main 1988, 52-73; Sibyl Milton, Menschen zwischen Grenzen. Die Polenausweisung, in: Menora. Jahrbuch für deutsch-jüdische Geschichte, 1990, 184-206; Yfaat Weiss, Deutsche und polnische Juden vor dem Holocaust. Jüdische Identität zwischen Staatsbürgerschaft und Ethnizität 1933–1940, Munich 2000, 195-204.

9   1939 has not yet been discussed properly within the context of the 'Polenaktion'. My postdoctoral project examines the persecution of Jews with Polish citizenship in the Third Reich from 1938 to 1940. Preliminary results regarding 1939 have been published in: Alina Bothe, Forced over the Border, in: Yearbook of the Simon Dubnow Institute 2018 (forthcoming).

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towards the East.[10] The second 'Polenaktion' was the first concentration camp action against this group of the population and showed the newly gained powers of the wartime Third Reich. Following the 'Anschluß' of Austria, the Sejm passed a law on citizenship, the so-called March law. Citizens who lived abroad and had not re-entered Poland for at least the last five years could be stripped of their citizenship. The law was neutral in language, but it was clearly aimed at the Polish Jews living in Austria and Germany. Polish politicians were afraid of mass immigration of pauperised Jewish migrants who had lost their property in the Reich and the annexed territories. The law had already been prepared since October 1937, otherwise it could not have been processed this fast. Mixing antisemitic and economic arguments, the Sejm and the Polish Government were interested in stopping a possible mass immigration of Jews with Polish citizenship from Austria and Germany. This aim was to be secured, as argued by Jerzy Tomaszewski, by revoking their citizenship.[11] After an extensive exchange of notes in which Germany demanded the revocation of the March law, the 'Ausländerpolizeiverordnung' (decree concerning the police's handling of 'foreigners') was passed on 22 August 1938. If the Jews with Polish citizenship living in Germany were to have their citizenship revoked by the Polish administration following the March law, they would have their resident permit for Germany revoked at the same moment. Some of the later deportees realised the danger of the new Polish and German laws and regulations very early in 1938 and tried harder to emigrate, as we know from letters and testimonies.[12] On 26 October 1938, Reichsführer SS and Chief of German Police, Heinrich Himmler, gave the order for the mass deportation to the subordinated authorities of the Reich. Between 27 and 29 October, the affected persons were arrested across the whole country. The deportations stopped on 29 October 1938 because Poland had threatened to expel ethnic Germans from Poland in return. Those already deported had to stay in Poland, many thousand in the border

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10 Alina Bothe, "… wird gegen Sie ein Aufenthaltsverbot für das Reich erlassen". Die Deportation von Jüdinnen und Juden polnischer Staatsangehörigkeit aus Berlin im Oktober 1938, in: Borggräfe, Henning (ed.), Wege, Orte und Räume der NS-Verfolgung, Freilegungen 5, Göttingen 2016, 83-105, here 105.

11 Jerzy Tomaszewski, Auftakt zur Vernichtung. Die Vertreibung polnischer Juden aus Deutschland im Jahre 1938, (=KLIO in Polen 9), Osnabrück 2002, 73.

12 As one telling example put it: "I said to my father – this measure is directly intended against us Polish Jews and I told him, I am afraid, that I am convinced the Nazi Government would […] take some action." USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive. Buck, Julius. Interview 37719. © 1997, Segment 34-35, Min. 4:31-5:01 Buck urged his father to go with him to the Verband der polnischen Juden, where his fears were confirmed, but they were told that there were others in greater need, as they had already been placed in concentration camps. Buck, aged 15, tried to persuade his parents to pursue emigration options, but his father, as a former officer in the First World War (fighting for the Habsburg Empire), did not think it necessary. Only after the expulsion did Buck's mother, in his recollection, take measures into her own hands and secure him a place on one of the at least three kindertransports organised by the Polish Jewish Refuge Fund from Gdynia to London. His father was allowed to return briefly to Berlin in July 1939, while his mother had also been issued an expulsion order by the Berlin Foreign Police. In early August 1939, Buck's parents left Germany, crossing over to Italy and from there to Aix-en-Provence, where they were jailed for a year as illegal immigrants. In 1942, his mother was first brought to Rivesaltes and from there was deported through Drancy to Auschwitz. His father survived in France. Another example would be the Adler family from Berlin, who had already received immigration papers to the US earlier after 1933, but gave them to a more endangered family. Once the new Polish legislation came into effect, they tried hard to receive new papers, which arrived in April 1939, a few weeks after the last members still in Berlin had been forced to leave. There are moreover a number of cases in which people knew about the upcoming expulsion measures and either tried to get to Poland beforehand on their own or were able to evade the expulsion, but smuggled themselves into Poland right after the "Polenaktion". See Carolin Raabe/Constanze Seifert-Hartz, Familie Bachner, "Wir waren unter denen, die wirklich Glück hatten.", in: Alina Bothe/Gertrud Pickhan, Ausgewiesen! Berlin, 28. 10. 1938. Die Geschichte der "Polenaktion", Berlin 2018, 78-85. This is also indicated by the correspondence files of the Israelitische Kultusgemeinde in Vienna, which in 1938 and 1939 was in contact with a number of Viennese Jews with Polish citizenship who had either been expelled or had fled to Poland. See also Alina Bothe/Christine Meibeck, Familie Buck. Bürgerliches Leben in Steglitz, in: Bothe/Pickhan: Ausgewiesen!, 98-105.

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town of Zbąszyń (Bentschen), to which Saul Friedländer referred as an internment camp.[13] This is the brutal chapter of a binational conflict about the citizenship of a minority. While the Polish state was not interested in having Polish Jews migrating and some of them returning to Poland, the Polish embassy in Berlin intervened regularly on behalf of Polish Jews in Germany from 1933 onwards.

Refugee or Deportee? Considering a Term

As mentioned above, the 1930s were a special decade in the development of refugee policies. Matthew Frank and Jessica Reinisch put it like this: "The decade saw co-ordination between states to guard against refugees: a negative form of international cooperation based on a sort of competitive restrictionism."[14] Michal Frankl stated (referring specifically to the Czechoslovakian case, but with striking similarities to the Polish situation): "The refugee question became increasingly intertwined with citizenship, ethnicity and minority rights."[15]

Three texts serve in the following as the point of departure to discuss the term refugee: Hannah Arendt's *We Refugees* (1943),[16] Arieh Tartakower and Kurt Grossman's *The Jewish Refugee* from 1944,[17] and Elie Wiesel's *The Refugee* from forty years later.[18] All authors were refugees in their own right, Elie Wiesel having been the only one who had survived the death camps. They were all European Jews who had lost the citizenship due to Nazi persecution between 1933 and 1945. While these authors agreed on some basic semantic and everyday elements of the term refugee as well as of the refugee experience, the differences in argumentation are noteworthy. Tartakower and Grossmann's *Jewish Refugee* from 1944 helps to differentiate the terms. The authors defined three different groups of people who leave or are forced to leave their countries of origin:

1. An "emigrant" decides voluntarily to move to another country.
2. "A refugee is a person, who leaves his place of abode not of his own free will, but because he is driven to do so by fear of persecution, or by actual persecution, on account of his race, religion or political convictions."[19]
3. "All trace of voluntarism is lost in the case of the third category of displaced people, the deportees. These are persons compelled by physical force to leave their homes and go elsewhere. They are free neither to choose the time of their departure nor – with very few exceptions – to go wherever they like. As a rule, both their emigration and their new place of residence are fixed for them by the deporting authorities."[20] They added that a deportation is mostly accompanied by the confiscation of property.

Given these defining aspects of the deportee as someone who is "compelled by physical force to leave their homes and go elsewhere", one can safely designate those

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13 Saul Friedländer, Das Dritte Reich und die Juden. 1933–1945, Munich 2013, 131.
14 Matthew Frank/Jessica Reinisch, Refugees and the Nation State in Europe 1919–1959, in: Journal of Contemporary History 49 (2014) 3, 477-490.
15 Michal Frankl, Prejudiced Asylum. Czechoslovak Refugee Policy, 1918–60, in: Journal of Contemporary History 49 (2014) 3, 537-555.
16 Hannah Arendt, We Refugees, in: Mark Robinson, Altogether Elsewhere. Writers in Exile, Philadelphia 1996, 110-119.
17 Arieh Tartakower/Kurt Grossmann, The Jewish Refugee, New York 1944.
18 Elie Wiesel, The Refugee, in: Cross Currents 34 (Winter 1984/85), 385-390.
19 Tartakower/Grossmann, The Jewish Refugee, 2.
20 Ibid, 3.

who were brought to the Polish border in October 1938 as deportees. But the picture became confused when Tartakower and Grossmann analysed the first mass deportation. First they wrote: "On the night of October 28, 1938, over 15,000 Polish Jews long resident in Germany were arrested and deported to Poland." Someone who is deported is a deportee. A few sentences later we can read the following: "At first the Polish authorities allowed the refugees to proceed to the interior, where they could at least expect to receive temporary help from friends or relatives; but after a few days the authorities had a change of heart and interned over 5,000 refugees at Zbonszyn."[21] Now, we have refugees who were deported and are subsequently interned. This little semantic analysis shows that, in 1938 as well as in 1944, when Tartakower and Grossmann wrote their book, the legal and political situation of the victims was hard to grasp. They were literally what Sybil Milton later called people "between borders".[22]

Hannah Arendt pointed out in 1943 that the refugees did not like to be called refugees, but preferred the term immigrants, especially before the war.[23] She thus succinctly also pointed to the power and perception contained within a concept. At this point, it was considered better to be named an immigrant rather than a refugee. Elie Wiesel complemented Arendt's argument with his very personal perception of the term:

> "What has been done to the word refuge? In the beginning the word sounded beautiful. A refuge meant 'home.' It welcomed you, protected you, gave you warmth and hospitality. Then we added one single phoneme, one letter, e, and the positive term refuge became refugee, connoting something negative."[24]

As Arendt noted wryly: "Refugees need to be helped"[25] by refugee committees. A refugee had lost the ability to take care of themselves. This was exactly the response of the Polish Jewish charities to the Jews expelled from Germany. They saw a group a people, more than ten thousand, in dire need of help, as they could not care for themselves under the circumstances. Arendt did not dwell on what made her or the others she included in her "we" a refugee, but paid more attention to the consequences of this situation, while Elie Wiesel gave a very short and clear answer: "Now what is the characteristic of a refugee? It is that she or he has no citizenship."[26]

Arendt wrote: "We lost our home, which means the familiarity of daily life."[27] Arendt was herself a refugee, but crossed the border, while being threatened, on her own. By contrast, the victims of the first 'Polenaktion' were transported to the border under threat, so the journey over the border, which made them refugees, was different. While the result – having to leave their country of residence – was the same, the process and the agency of the individuals involved differed enormously. The refugee beforehand acted upon their own decision to cross the borders, often forced by threat, but not actually expelled. They did not arrive in masses, but in small groups, and needed to orientate and organise themselves. Even if they did not want to leave, they were in the mind-set of seeking refuge or exile.[28]

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21   Ibid.
22   Sibyl Milton, Menschen zwischen Grenzen. Die Polenausweisung, in: Menora. Jahrbuch für deutsch-jüdische Geschichte (1990), 184-206.
23   Arendt, We Refugees, 110.
24   Wiesel, The Refugee, 388.
25   Arendt, We Refugees, 110.
26   Wiesel, The Refugee, 388.
27   Arendt, We Refugees, 110.
28   For the broader context, refer to David Jünger, Jahre der Ungewissheit. Emigrationspläne deutscher Juden 1933–1938, Göttingen 2016, who discussed the shift from emigration to flight.

"We lost our occupation, which means the confidence that we are of some use in this world."[29] This experience was also often reported after the 'Polenaktion', with the refugees often losing their businesses, having been forced to close them down. After the expulsion, most of those affected had no possibility to rebuild their professional lives, having left them in a hurry with few economic resources to rely on. This could have grave consequences, as the story of Heinz Baran shows. He was transported to Poland from Berlin together with his father at the age of sixteen. In 1939, his father left him alone in Poland, and emigrated with the younger brother and their mother to South America, hoping that it would be easier to send emigration papers to his son from there. Heinz went to live with distant relatives in the town of Kutno. In his letters, he begged his parents from the beginning of the occupation onwards to send him money, because to their relatives he was "der Schnorrer" (the mooch).[30] He was last heard from in late 1941. "We lost our language."[31] Not only was a language lost, but families had to find a new language within short phone calls and in the written word, which is evident from many letters of the deportees and their loved ones.

Agents and Terms

Conceptual history investigates the genesis of a term as well as the development of its meaning. The examples discussed here serve the goal of generating a broad overview, allowing semantic nuances to be discerned. First, however, one needs to consider language. I here focus on German, English, and Yiddish. In a broader discussion, it would be valuable to also include Polish. To make the article readable, the terms and quotations needed to be translated, with the necessary shifts that occur in translation. The question of the term used is not purely academic, but is grounded in the experiences of those affected, who needed to argue for recognition of their sufferings after the events. It is to be assumed that they were already forced to find words for what they were going through during the persecution. These words were hard to find and many relied on press images and texts that spoke of "the plight of the Polish Jews".[32] First, I will consider the terminology used by the perpetrators, before looking into the wording of victims and other agents involved.

For the German Foreign Office, the situation was complicated. While the Ministry of the Interior wanted to expel the "Ostjuden" as soon as possible, the Foreign Office pressed for a diplomatic option, without showing signs of weakness towards other German authorities.[33] The language the officials at the Foreign Office chose was bureaucratic: They spoke about Polish nationals, Polish Jewish nationals, or Polish nationals of Jewish race.[34] Right after the deportation, they changed the wording and further spoke about "Polish Jews who were the property of the Polish State" and expellees.[35] In official perpetrator documents, the term "Ausweisung"[36] (expulsion) was used. Internal documents of the Foreign Office deployed a different terminol-

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29 Arendt, We Refugees, 110.
30 Landesamt für Bürger- und Ordnungsangelegenheiten Berlin, Entschädigungsbehörde, Entschädigungsakte 317679, M. 58.
31 Arendt, We Refugees, 110.
32 The Times, 30 October 1938, 1.
33 The term „Ostjuden" was regularly used in official documents. Politisches Archiv Berlin, Ausweisung von Ostjuden aus Deutschland 1925–36, Schreiben Regierungspräsident Düsseldorf, 1935, R 82778.
34 See for example: Politisches Archiv, R 82778.
35 Politisches Archiv Berlin, R 28881, 250.
36 Politisches Archiv Berlin, R 28881, 250.

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ogy, demonstrating both a semantic shift as well as a shift in meaning. In a memorandum from early November 1938, the State Secretary Ernst von Weizsäcker pencilled in the words "Abtransport"[37] (removal) and "Massen-Abtransport"[38] (mass removal), yet the term "Ausweisungs-Aktion"[39] (expulsion campaign) was also used within the Foreign Office. An expulsion (Ausweisung) is a juridical act, based on the sovereign right of a state to terminate the residence of a foreign citizen. "Aktion" (campaign) hints at the extent of the measure. When von Weizsäcker scribbled down "Abtransport" and "Massen-Abtransport", he used a language of dehumanisation rather than of a juridical measure. Those still described as "Ausgewiesene" (expellees) in the Foreign Office documents become objectified and depersonalised. Moreover, the term "Abtransport" has an underlying semantic connection to military transports. Both terms were used for later deportations, see for example the various "Transportlisten" (transport lists) from the collection camps on the way to Auschwitz or the transit camps.

As discussed elsewhere, the 'Polenaktion' was implemented extremely differently in different states, cities, and districts. So, for Saxony, the terms were "Abtransport" (removal) and "abtransportierte Juden" (removed Jews), while in Braunschweig the term used was "Ausgewiesene" (expellees).[40] These small semantic differences could point to a different understanding of the campaign by lower level administrations tasked with its implementation. The different terms used in the official German documents produced by the relevant ministries and agents of the bureaucracy shows that the situation was in a certain way a semantic challenge for the perpetrators and their language as well. This was a novel situation, for which no clear and unified semantic arsenal (vocabulary) existed at that point.

Those who fell victim within the first weeks used different terminology to describe the events and their new personal situation. Quite a few relied on the German technical term "Ausweisung" (expulsion) or used phrases or descriptions like "nach Polen fahren muss" (have to go to Poland). In a letter to a relative dated 17 November 1938, Max Karp, a Berliner with a very tight grasp on his language, described the entire series of events in different phases. The first step was the "Verhaftung" (arrest) on his doorstep; next came the "Sammelaktion in den einzelnen Städten" (the collection campaign in the individual towns). The public was seen on the streets as he was transferred to a train station, as they watched the "historische Austreibung der Juden aus Deutschland" (the historic expulsion of the Jews from Germany). Having arrived in Neu Bentschen (today Zbąszynek in Poland), he reported "weitere einlaufende Transporte" (the arrival of further transports) and another train of "Zwangsmigrierten" (forced migrants). After a "Marsch" (march), actually more of a "Treibjagd" (battue or hunt), he was among many who reached the Polish border. At this moment, his language changed very interestingly: "Wir mussten einige hundert Meter weiterlaufen, damit sich der ganze Flüchtlingsstrom auf polnischem Gebiet befand." (We had to walk a few hundred metres, until the entire flow of refugees had reached Polish territory.) A few sentences later, he again noted the change of status, once the border was crossed: "Inzwischen kamen immer mehr Flüchtlinge (aus D. Vertriebene) an." (In the meantime, ever more refugees arrived /expellees from Germany/.) In the later parts of the letter, too, he used the term "Vertriebene" (expellee) when speak-

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37 Politisches Archiv Berlin, R 28881, 265.

38 Ibid.

39 Politisches Archiv Berlin, R 288881, 331.

40 Niedersächsisches Landesarchiv Wolfenbüttel, Neu 13, no. 1578, unpaginated; Sächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Ministerium des Innern, no. 11687, 116.

ing about the experience within Germany. But once he referred to the pogroms in Germany, he clearly observed that refugees, as they were no longer in the country, were by then a distinct group with different experiences. Following Max Karp in his reflective language, the status of the refugee became a special status once the victims of the "Polenaktion" arrived in Poland and describes their situation within Poland. "Vertriebene" meanwhile was the term used in connection to Germany.[41] This argument is strengthened by the language used by Lothar Wellner in a letter from Zbąszyń to Rabbi Erwin Zimet sent as late as June 1939. Within days of their expulsion, Zimet and Wellner had joined the efforts to organise help.[42] Zimet was able to emigrate as a rabbi on the US non-quota and continued to correspond with Wellner in Zbąszyń. In his letter, Wellner wrote to Zimet praising the "gewaltige Hilfeleistung des polnischen Judentums für unsere Flüchtlinge" (massive assistance of Polish Jewry for our refugees).[43] Wellner's use of "our refugees" entailed a mixture of paternalism and solidarity that many of those who were pushed into Poland felt. Two Polish Jewish committees were immediately prepared to help those who had been deported. In the Yiddish press, which was heavily invested in the rescue movement, the terms "pleytim" (refugee) and "aroysgeshikte" (banished), sometimes also "fartribene" (expellees) were used.[44] While the term "pleytim", a Hebraism in Yiddish, reflected the consequence of the situation, "aroysgeshikte" reflected the process of expulsion.

Different terminology was used by the JDC in their annual report of 1938. The overview of events in 1938 in the Foreword already stated: "October brought with it the shocking deportation from Germany of 20,000 Jews of Polish nationality over the Polish-German border."[45] A few pages later, an additional page about "The Deportees" offered further insight into the situation in Poland. Without referring to them as refugees, the JDC clearly considered the act of eviction in the form of a 1938 deportation as more important. But, at one point, the word refugee was used to describe the "unfortunate".

When we include the documents and testimonies of survivors, and often also their descendants, from the compensation files of the 1950s and 1960s, a highly important source pool with regard to language and content, the picture becomes slightly less clear. Relatives who possessed no further knowledge about the fate of their loved ones after the 'Polenaktion' often used the term "Deportation", while those who had further knowledge distinguished between 1938 and later deportations.[46] The use of the term "Deportation" here seems to have been a necessary tool for claiming compensation, especially as the German compensation authorities rejected the interpretation of the "Polenaktion" as a "nationalsozialistische Unrechtsmaßnahme"[47] (an official Nazi policy that amounted to an injustice). As the "Polenaktion" targeted people with foreign citizenship without a legal basis concerning, for example, property, many compensation authorities rejected requests for compensation. This urged the victims-turned-"Antragssteller" (applicant) to discuss the events and their interpretation in writing in the 1950s and 1960s. One stunning example is by Gertrud K.

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41 Jewish Museum Berlin, letter from Max Karp, 2006/78/3.

42 Jewish Museum Berlin, Collection Erwin Zimet, 200/104/1, f. 18.

43 Ibid.

44 See for example Der Moment, 3 November 1938, 1, and Der Moment, 16 June 1939, 6.

45 American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (ed.), Aid to Jews Overseas. Report on the Activities of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee for the year 1938 (1939), 7.

46 See for example Landesamt für Bürger- und Ordnungsangelegenheiten Berlin, Entschädigungsbehörde, Entschädigungsakten 311.339, 311.340, 172.409.

47 See for example Landesarchiv Berlin, B Rep. 025-02, Wiedergutmachungsakten, Nr.: 1353/55, Bl. 64.

from Braunschweig. She was detained along with her husband and her ten-year-old daughter on the evening of 27 October 1938 and after a few hours in prison were shipped to the Polish border. They had to stay in Zbąszyń for months, until Gertrud became one of the few who received the permission to return in July of the following to liquidate shops and apartments. She did not return before the German invasion of Poland on 1 September and her husband died that November, leaving her young daughter alone. She lost all trace of her daughter in 1942 and about ten years later applied for her to be declared dead and asked for compensation.[48] She was not awarded any compensation for her husband's death nor for the confiscation of her property, but only received a small sum for the loss of her daughter. In plain but gripping words she summarised how the "Polenaktion" had affected her:

> "Now I ask you kindly, did an unlawful detention take place or not, because, assuming the former rulers had not taken over, I could still be together with my family and my husband would still be alive. As it is, I lost everything through the action of the unprincipled rulers; apartment, furniture, husband, and everything."[49]

Gertrud K. saw her family rightly as the victims of an unlawful campaign by the regime. She had to be very careful in her argumentation due to citizenship matters. She was born in 1900 into German citizenship and received Polish citizenship through her marriage in 1924. In 1948, she remarried and regained her German citizenship through her second husband. Had she made a strong argument about their persecution as Jews with Polish passports, she would not have been eligible for compensation. This is why she settled for the basic human argument concerning the destruction of her family. Gertrud K. here argued on the basis of the result of the events, which was sufficient and convincing in her case. But the picture gets more complicated when turning to other victims. For many of the families, the experience of October 1938 was an impetus to accelerate their plans to emigrate as quickly as possible.

Conclusion

This article focussed on terminology and shifts in language in 1938 and afterwards regarding the unique phenomenon of the first "Polenaktion" and those affected by it. The shifts in language and meaning are seen as a tool to interpret the historical situation from the contemporary as well as retrospective perspective. In the sources discussed here, a non-homogenous use of wording can be observed – on all sides involved, affected or witnessing. This shows clearly that the events were hard to grasp for the agents involved, to understand that they had reached a turning point. Nonetheless, the usage of unusual terminology, as shown above, implies those agents were *coming to terms* with the newness of the situation. Second, we see through language a process of *becoming* a refugee, a figuration that is different in interpretation for the refugees themselves as for the welfare and care organisations, different state agents, and further institutions involved.

In this short article, I chose to reflect on the vocabulary of very different actors in order to broaden the topic. This means that the semantic analysis was necessarily

48 Her daughter had in fact survived in the Soviet Union but the two only learned about each other's survival in 1957, after which they started to exchange letters.
49 Niedersächsisches Landesarchiv Wolfenbüttel, 4 Nds 1908/1907.

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brief. But the approach used here allows for more meanings and shifts in meaning to be demonstrated, while the multi-voice perspective hints at the possibilities of an *integrated* conceptual history, following Saul Friedländer's important call for an "integrated" history of the Shoah. By this multi-vocal and multi-language approach, it is possible to identify the first 'Polenaktion' as a crucial shift in Nazi persecution policies from emigration to deportation.

CONTEXT

Alina Bothe

Historian, Freie Universität Berlin

alina.bothe@fu-berlin.de

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Copy Editor:
Tim Corbett