



University of Tennessee, Knoxville

TRACE: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange

Masters Theses

Graduate School

5-2005

Ideology and Genocide on the Eastern Front

Elizabeth Grace Dunham
University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Follow this and additional works at: https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_gradthes

 Part of the [History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Dunham, Elizabeth Grace, "Ideology and Genocide on the Eastern Front. " Master's Thesis, University of Tennessee, 2005.
https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_gradthes/4563

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at TRACE: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Masters Theses by an authorized administrator of TRACE: Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange. For more information, please contact trace@utk.edu.

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Elizabeth Grace Dunham entitled "Ideology and Genocide on the Eastern Front." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in History.

Vejas Liulevicius, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

John Bohstedt, Denise Phillips

Accepted for the Council:

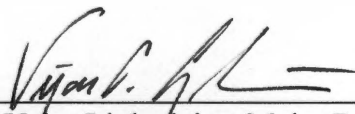
Carolyn R. Hodges

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

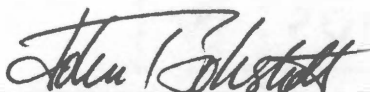
To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Elizabeth Grace Dunham entitled "Ideology and Genocide on the Eastern Front." I have examined the final paper copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts with a major in History.




Dr. Vėjas Liulevicius, Major Professor

We have read this thesis
and recommend its acceptance:

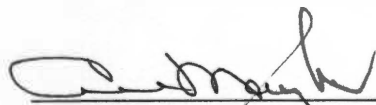


Dr. John Bohstedt



Dr. Denise Phillips

Acceptance for the Council:



Vice Provost and
Dean of Graduate Studies

Ideology and Genocide on the Eastern Front

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Arts Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Elizabeth Grace Dunham
May 2005

Thesis
2005
D86

INTRODUCTORY

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank my thesis committee for their invaluable help with this project. My chair, Dr. Liulevicius, read multiple versions of this thesis and greatly improved it with his insightful suggestions. Dr. Bohstedt encouraged me to consider my project from angles I would never have considered, and Dr. Phillips was extremely generous to join my committee during her first semester working for the History department.

I would also like to thank my family and friends, who have supported me while I was working on this project. My mother and father have both listened to multiple discussions of my thesis topic, no matter how boring they found it. My mother has also sent me any amount of comfort food in the form of pumpkin bread and has consistently felt sorry for me when I was in desperate need of pity. My friend Alyson Baker also helped me to develop my topic and devoted considerable amounts of time to reminding me that everything would work out well, even when she was in greater need of support than I. My friends at dance have also been extremely helpful, and especially Chris Larsen, who always reminds me not to take myself too seriously and invariably provides me with a welcome escape from my stress, not to mention extremely interesting conversation.

Finally, I would like to thank all of the people I work with at the University of Tennessee's Special Collections Library. They have covered my shifts, traded shifts with me, provided me with invaluable advice, and generally put up with me (for which they frequently deserved combat pay) while I was completing this project.

Abstract

This thesis considers one of the most widely debated topics in modern European history: why the men of the Einsatzgruppen (mobile killing squads following the Wehrmacht as they advanced into Russia) participated in massacres of supposedly “undesirable” people. Although this topic has been discussed for many years, to date there has been no definitive consensus formed. This thesis examines issues of the official SS publication *Das Schwarze Korps* and records from the Nuremburg Trials (contained in the Winfield B. Hale papers in the University of Tennessee’s Special Collections Library) in order to bring both new evidence and a new opinion into this debate.

Table of Contents

<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Page</i>
Chapter I: Introduction	1
Chapter II: A Review of the Historiography	7
Chapter III: “Mainstream Ideology”: Images of Jews in <i>Das Schwarze Korps</i>	23
Chapter IV: Ideology on the Front Lines: Reports of the Einsatzgruppen from the Nuremburg Trials.....	43
Chapter V: Conclusion	57
Bibliography.....	65
Appendix A: Images Published in <i>Das Schwarze Korps</i>	69
Vita.....	77

List of Figures

<i>Figure</i>	<i>Page</i>
A.1 Cartoon entitled “Rumänien und die “Weltpresse” appearing in the January 13, 1938 edition of <i>Das Schwarze Korps</i>	71
A.2 Cartoon entitled “Englische Arbeitslose” depicting the supposed state of the unemployed in England appearing in the January 26, 1938 edition of <i>Das Schwarze Korps</i>	72
A.3 Image of a young boy presented with birth announcements in <i>Das Schwarze Korps</i>	73
A.4 Image of a young girl presented with birth announcements in <i>Das Schwarze Korps</i>	74
A.5 Advertisement for the Mauser Rifle appearing in the July 13, 1939 edition of <i>Das Schwarze Korps</i>	75

Chapter I Introduction

One of the most hotly contested issues in contemporary scholarship on World War II is the question of what motivated the men of the Einsatzgruppen – mobile killing squads operating behind the lines of the advancing German Army – and other associated police units to participate in massacres of Jews and other “undesirables”. What makes this topic so disturbing and important is not only its grisly nature but much more what is ultimately at stake in it: how both military and political organizations deploy violence to further their own ends, the role that ideology plays in this deployment, and how ostensibly “ordinary” people can be convinced to accept and even participate in this violence. In other words, this topic forces us to ask whether people capable of participating in genocide are born with that ability or whether a state can create and deploy such people to achieve its own goals. At present, one can identify two clear schools of thought on the issue.

Christopher Browning presents the first significant position in his book *Ordinary Men*.¹ Here, Browning argues that the Order Police participants in these atrocities were not originally cold-blooded and fanatical ideological murderers, but were rather gradually desensitized to these killings (at least partially by official design and peer pressure) as a result of their participation in large numbers of massacres.² Specifically, Browning examines Reserve Police Battalion 101’s Einsatzgruppen service in Russia and their

¹ Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1998).

² The Order Police (ORPO) constituted one of the branches of the National Socialist police service along with the Security Police (SIPO) and Criminal Police (KRIPO). These civilian police units were often called in to augment the Einsatzgruppen when additional men were needed.

reactions to that service in order to document their gradual hardening to gruesome scenes of massacre. According to his thesis, the men of the ORPO began as “ordinary” people: law-abiding citizens who would never consider murder. By the end of the war, however, these previously “ordinary” men had become hardened killers. In short, Browning argues that killers are made, not born, and thus introduces the disturbing thought that virtually anyone could become a murderer, given the appropriate circumstances.

Claudia Koonz represents the other major position in this debate. In her new book *The Nazi Conscience*, she argues that both the men officially assigned to the Einsatzgruppen, as well as their police and Wehrmacht auxiliaries, killed Poles, Jews, and other “undesirables” as a result of the National Socialist ideology that they had absorbed between 1933 and 1939, not due to short-term conditioning in the killing fields.³ In order to prove her thesis, Koonz examines German culture during the first six years of Nazi rule and how Hitler both influenced and controlled this culture. Thus, Koonz emphasizes ideology and faith in legitimating a violent political program culminating in genocide.

The contrast between these two camps strongly resembles the longstanding debate between the intentionalist and functionalist schools of thought regarding the organization of the Nazi government. According to the intentionalists, Nazi policy against the Jews and other theoretically “undesirable” people was conceived and implemented by Hitler himself according to a long range “blueprint” that he had conceived in the 1920s which aimed at the final goal of the annihilation of Europe’s Jews. Those who arranged for and actually committed the massacres were only following orders that had been passed down

³ Claudia Koonz, *The Nazi Conscience* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003).

to them.⁴ This position corresponds roughly to Browning's thesis, as both positions hold that those men who were involved in the actual commission of genocide had been coerced into participating, for example by way of peer pressure, prospect of material gain, or threat of physical harm. The structuralists (or "functionalists"), on the other hand, argue that although Hitler may have approved of his subordinates' actions in eliminating supposedly "undesirable" persons, he personally had, at best, only a very small direct role in their doings. Instead, these various subordinates took actions that they thought would please Hitler (what Ian Kershaw labels "working toward the Führer"), and it was these actions that eventually evolved into the Holocaust in a process of "cumulative radicalization." This position corresponds roughly to Koonz's conclusions, in that both she and the structuralists assert that the men involved in genocide on the Eastern Front killed because they were ideologically convinced that their victims should die.⁵

The aim of my master's thesis is to address the question of how supposedly "average" men from modern, "civilized" societies could be convinced to participate in genocide. This thesis will be divided into four parts. First, I will discuss Browning's and Koonz's arguments in more detail and situate them in the existing historiography dealing with the Einsatzgruppen's motivations. Most of the authors in the recent literature support Koonz's conclusions. For example, Alexander Rossino's recent book *Hitler Strikes Poland: Blitzkrieg, Ideology, and Atrocity* concurs with most of Koonz's

⁴ See, for example, William Shirer's *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981) and Lucy Dawidowicz's *The War Against the Jews 1933-1945* (New York: Bantam, 1986).

⁵ The most prominent structuralist scholars are Martin Broszat, Dieter Pohl, Thomas Sandkühler, and Hans Mommsen.

arguments with its thesis that the Einsatzgruppen who operated in Poland in 1939 were composed of highly convinced National Socialists who killed because they believed it was necessary.⁶ An older classic work, Hannah Arendt's controversial *Eichmann in Jerusalem* also supports Koonz, describing Adolf Eichmann as a mid-level bureaucrat who facilitated the Holocaust because he was convinced, apart from the "banality of evil" his bureaucratic work represented, that the Jews had to be destroyed.⁷

By contrast, Browning receives considerably less support in the historiography. Perhaps his strongest buttress is Eric Johnson's *Nazi Terror*.⁸ In this work, Johnson argues that the German people did not object to the Nazi regime, and specifically the Gestapo, not because they were convinced that Nazi ideology was correct but rather because the government did not deploy the full force of its terror against them and it was easy to get along with the state if one was not among the targeted groups. For example, a German accused of making defamatory remarks about Hitler could, provided that he had done nothing else wrong, expect a very minimal sentence or even no punishment at all. Thus, the German people tolerated the Nazi regime because it was not threatening to them personally. Factors quite distinct from fanatical conviction were at work.

Daniel Goldhagen's book *Hitler's Willing Executioners*, which created a polemical riot when it first appeared, is of less use to a scholar of this particular set of

⁶ Alexander Rossino, *Hitler Strikes Poland: Blitzkrieg, Ideology, and Atrocity* (Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas Press, 2003).

⁷ Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Penguin Books, 1963).

⁸ Eric Johnson, *Nazi Terror: The Gestapo, Jews, and Ordinary Germans* (New York: Basic Books, 2000).

questions due to the fact that it is in fact extremely limited in its analysis.⁹ For example, it does not take into account why, if Germans wanted to eliminate the Jews specifically, they also enthusiastically murdered large numbers of other “undesirables,” for example the disabled, homosexuals, and the Sinti and Roma peoples. It also virtually ignores the question of why, if the German people were unique in wishing to exterminate the Jews, collaborators from other countries were so common.¹⁰ Finally, it does not take into account such factors as the distance of killing, which would significantly alter Goldhagen’s conclusions.¹¹ In other words, Goldhagen does not explain why, if the men of the Einsatzgruppen were truly motivated by ideology, the massacres they participated in were purposely designed to permit them to see their victims as mere collective targets rather than as human beings. Were these men truly ideologically motivated, they should have been convinced that their victims deserved to die and should thus prefer to acknowledge their victims’ individuality. Thus, Goldhagen’s thesis is lacking in several respects.

For the bulk of my research results, I will discuss the issues of the official SS organ, *Das Schwarze Korps*, dating from 1938 and 1939, in order to examine Nazi ideology on the eve of the Second World War and explore how thorough the ideological conditioning was in this elite literature. Specifically, I will be looking at articles and cartoons dealing directly with Jews. This material will allow me to assess the official

⁹ Daniel Goldhagen, *Hitler’s Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Vintage Books, 1997).

¹⁰ Michael Marrus deals with the phenomenon of collaboration, along with a number of other topics, in his work *The Holocaust in History* (NY: New American Library/Dutton, 1989).

¹¹ See, for example, Lt. Col. Dave Grossman’s *On Killing: The Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society* (USA: Back Bay Books, 1997).

reasoning behind the decision to exterminate the Jewish people. I will also use prosecution documents from the Nuremburg Trials (contained in MS 521 of the University of Tennessee's Special Collections) in order to ascertain whether the *Einsatzgruppen's* motivation to kill during their operation in Russia can indeed be traced to ideology absorbed before the beginning of World War II. Specifically, I will examine war diaries and situation reports that contain concrete rationalizations for the mass murders that the *Einsatzgruppen* committed. Finally, I will discuss the conclusions I have formed as a result of my research.

Chapter II

A Review of the Historiography

Nazi psychology has long been one of the more hotly debated topics in modern German history. In the effort to understand this distinctively destructive mindset, the same body of evidence has generated a number of different conclusions among scholars, which this chapter will discuss and evaluate. This work can be divided into two opposing and (on the face of it) mutually exclusive camps. The first of these interpretive camps holds that the men of the Einsatzgruppen murdered those people whom the Nazi regime considered “undesirable” because the killers had absorbed Nazi ideology to the point that they were firmly convinced that such people had to die. Due to these ideological beliefs, the men had no qualms, moral or otherwise, about killing these “unwanted” persons. The other school of thought holds that the men of the Einsatzgruppen were not convinced murderers, but were rather gradually desensitized to scenes of slaughter by way of frequent exposure. Thus, it is argued, they did not kill because they wanted to, but rather because they had become acclimated to mass murder to the point that they were willing to participate in it when they were ordered to.

In fact, primary source research indicates that the most accurate interpretation of this issue lies exclusively in neither camp, but rather in the ground between them. Using the 1938 and 1939 issues of *Das Schwarze Korps* (the official weekly publication of the SS) and the papers Winfield B. Hale (one of the American judges at the Nuremburg trials), I will argue that although the propaganda promulgated by the Nazi regime convinced the men who later served in the Einsatzgruppen that “undesirables,” and specifically Jews, needed to be eliminated, it did not, in and of itself, create at that time a

group of men ready and willing to perpetrate mass murder. Instead, specific conditions and catalysts during the war itself would truly forge this group, building on prewar influences.

Claudia Koonz represents the first historiographical position discussed above in her work *The Nazi Conscience*. In it, she argues that what caused both the Holocaust and the German people's toleration of the Holocaust was the fact that German civilians had internalized an ideology, as promulgated by the Nazis, that posited the existence of a superior Aryan race that needed to fight for its survival against any number of inferior peoples.¹² Koonz argues (along with more recent scholarship) that although Hitler stressed the anti-Semitic elements of his ideology early in his career, he quickly realized that this exclusive focus on racism was politically unwise: although the German people would tolerate violence against supposed political enemies, they "deplored [the] lawless attacks on Jews" frequently perpetrated by SA stormtroopers.¹³ In order to circumvent this obstacle, Hitler used sympathetic academics to create what Koonz terms a "respectable racism" that non-radical Germans would accept over time. It "celebrated the heroic values that elevated the community over the individual, instinct over reason, authenticity over rationality, and hardness over empathy" and emphasized "a biological hierarchy of human value that placed Aryan over Jew and Slav, genetically healthy over 'congenitally damaged,' and male over female."¹⁴ In conjunction with this new "respectable" racism, Hitler at first passed only seemingly "moderate" anti-Semitic legislation. The German public was generally willing to accept these new laws "as an

¹² Koonz, *Nazi Conscience*, 6-8.

¹³ Ibid., 39-40.

¹⁴ Ibid., 68.

‘adjustment’ to offset what many believed were Jews’ so-called ‘special rights’ in those areas.”¹⁵ Thus, Hitler’s major challenge in the 1930s was to find a way to reconcile mild legal racism with SA hooliganism.¹⁶ By 1939, the German people were “sufficiently prepared to accept a harsh solution to the Jewish question” instead of the more mild measures that had been taken previously.¹⁷ War’s crisis atmosphere would provide cover. According to Koonz, the Holocaust was made possible once Germany had reached this ideological point.

Indeed, Hannah Arendt’s work *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, originally published in 1963, foreshadowed many of Koonz’s conclusions.¹⁸ According to Arendt, Eichmann lived according to Hans Frank’s construction of “‘the categorical imperative in the Third Reich ... Act in such a way that the Führer knew your action, he would approve it.’”¹⁹ This formulation matches Ian Kershaw’s recent underlining of the regime’s motif of “working towards the Führer.” Indeed, Eichmann was a very zealous servant, taking pains to make sure that Jews and other “undesirables” were murdered according to plan, rejecting opportunistic changes: when “Himmler became ‘moderate’ [very late in the war, hoping to curry favor with the Western Allies], Eichmann sabotaged his orders as much as he dared, to the extent at least that he felt he was ‘covered’ by his immediate superiors,” who were considerably more radical than Himmler was at that point.²⁰ In short, Eichmann behaved as he did because he had been trained to obey the orders of the

¹⁵ Koonz, *Nazi Conscience*, 166.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., 256.

¹⁸ Arendt, *Eichmann*.

¹⁹ Ibid., 136. Originally in Hans Frank’s *Die Technik des Staates* (Munich, 1942).

²⁰ Ibid., 145.

Führer who, in Eichmann's mind, was doing what was best (and therefore morally correct) for the country and thus facilitated the Final Solution because he believed that it had to be done.

In terms of contemporary scholarship, Alexander Rossino argues unequivocally in his study, *Hitler Strikes Poland: Blitzkrieg, Ideology, and Atrocity*, that the men of the Einsatzgruppen killed as a result of ideology.²¹ His work is intended as a corrective to the commonplace view that the Nazi leap to genocidal policies took place with the attack on the Soviet Union in 1941 – rather, Rossino reminds us, the 1939 campaign against Poland already crossed many crucial thresholds in violence against civilians. Rossino mentions specifically the German army's reprisal policy, which featured the execution of random civilians in order to punish an entire town for a particular crime.²² Here, Rossino argues that the stunning levels of violence and brutality that the SS and parts of the Wehrmacht perpetrated in both Operation Tannenberg and Operation Barbarossa were due to their firm belief in National Socialist ideology, not immediate conditioning by war. Rossino begins his examination with Hitler's campaign against Poland – Operation Tannenberg. He argues that many Germans, and specifically high-ranking German officers (encouraged by Hitler), many of them conservative nationalists rather than fanatical Nazi activists, were eager to fight a war against Poland. Even after it became evident that Hitler "had decided mass murder and the extensive resettlement of Poles and Jews would be the twin elements of his plans for the Germanization of Poland," his officers continued to plan the assault, apparently with few to no moral qualms, showing a

²¹ Alexander Rossino, *Hitler Strikes Poland*.

²² *Ibid.*, 121.

basic moral consensus with the regime.²³ On the eve of the attack, German troops were told that “this was a war ‘against Polish impudence’ and in defense of ethnic Germans who wished to be ‘liberated from the Polish yoke’” and they attacked in order to “wipe away the shame of Versailles and come to the aid of their ethnic German comrades.”²⁴ In other words, according to Rossino, many officers and soldiers involved in the attack against Poland were willing to kill non-Germans, including civilians, since these people needed to be removed in order to allow for the future Germanization of the region. It was this campaign (and its associated ideology) that formed “a critical first step in the amalgamation of Nazi ideology and military practice that would be central to Germany’s *Vernichtungskrieg* against the Soviet Union and brutal anti-partisan campaigns in Serbia.”²⁵ In short, German atrocities perpetrated in both Poland and later in Russia were motivated by the ideology that German troops had absorbed long before the attacks.

The political scientist Daniel Jonah Goldhagen also argues that those men who murdered Jews on the Eastern Front were motivated above all by ideology in his controversial book *Hitler’s Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*.²⁶ He does not, however, argue that Nazi ideology instilled anti-Semitic beliefs in theoretically “ordinary” men, but rather that these men were already anti-Semitic, due to the pervasive and centuries-long dominance of “eliminationist” hatred of

²³ Ibid., 10.

²⁴ Ibid., 27.

²⁵ Ibid., 227.

²⁶ The most prominent work on this subject is Raul Hilberg’s *The Destruction of the European Jews* (Chicago, 1961).

the Jews in German culture and society, and Nazi ideology was designed to take advantage of this prejudice.²⁷

According to Goldhagen, the German people were “animated by ... a particular *type* of anti-Semitism that led them to conclude that the Jews *ought to die*.”²⁸ Goldhagen designates this idea “eliminationist anti-Semitism.” Although the Jews had been considered “dangerous aliens” for decades or centuries, there was a marked increase in anti-Semitic activity during the First World War. Among other things, anti-Semitic Germans accused the Jews of having compromised Germany’s war effort by shirking active duty and using wartime conditions to turn a profit wherever they could, culminating in the notorious 1916 “Jewish census” within the German army.²⁹ The first years of the Weimar Republic only exacerbated this anti-Semitism: during the massive inflation that followed the war’s end, many suffering Germans blamed their troubles on the Jews.³⁰ Indeed, one official in Swabia remarked that one “hears everywhere that ‘our government is delivering us over to the Jews.’”³¹ Anti-Semitism is said to have pervaded German culture to the point that it became impossible not to have an opinion on how the “Jewish Problem” could best be solved.³² Thus, Goldhagen argues, by the time Hitler took power, the German people were already thoroughly anti-Semitic and therefore

²⁷ Saul Frieländer presents a modified form of this argument in his *Nazi Germany and the Jews* (New York: Harper Collins, 1997). In this work, he argues for the existence of a small core of radical anti-Semites who gained prominence during the Weimar republic and whose prejudices eventually found expression in the NSDAP.

²⁸ Goldhagen, *Hitler’s Willing Executioners*, 14. Emphasis in original.

²⁹ Ibid., 81-82.

³⁰ Ibid., 82.

³¹ Ibid., 82.

³² Ibid., 84.

primed and willing to go along with Hitler's policies designed to eliminate the Jews by whatever means necessary.

Goldhagen contends that this generally shared German anti-Semitism also motivated the men of the police units that worked with the Einsatzgruppen to kill Jews in cold blood. According to this theory, these men were not selected, unusual zealots when they joined the police force: indeed, they were "often chosen for service in a haphazard manner and were frequently the least desirable of the manpower pool."³³ They did not undergo any ideological screening upon recruitment, and they did not receive any intensive ideological training once they had joined, remaining "ordinary Germans."³⁴ In spite of this lack of training, however, these men did their murderous work well.

Goldhagen provides more support for his argument that police battalions killed as a result of ingrained anti-Semitism in the fact that, by contrast, killing Poles upset the men, while killing Jews did not. Goldhagen offers the example of Major Trapp's reaction to the killings of 78 Poles in retaliation for the killing of a single German sergeant: according to one of his subordinates, "our battalion commander [Trapp] was very shaken after this action. He even wept. He was what one would call a fine human being and I deem it impossible that it was he who had ordered the shooting of the hostages."³⁵ Trapp was, however, supposed to kill 200 people in this action. Thus, he and his men proceeded to the Jewish quarter, where they murdered 180 with no apparent remorse.³⁶

³³ Ibid., 181.

³⁴ Ibid., 181.

³⁵ Ibid., 240.

³⁶ Ibid., 240.

Indeed, the men allowed their visiting wives to watch other actions, thus indicating their pride in their work.³⁷

There are, unfortunately, a number of problems with Goldhagen's work in the context of the problem under investigation. Firstly, Goldhagen's theory can explain only the murders of Jews and Poles: Jews were murdered due to the perpetrator's anti-Semitism; Poles were killed out of "practical necessity." This theory does not explain why other groups were targeted for extermination. For example, not only Jews and those who helped them, but also dissident Catholics, homosexuals, and the supposedly "asocial" and "workshy" were interred and killed in the Nazi regime's concentration camps. Because none of these groups were Jewish or even affiliated with the Jews, however, they must have been killed for reasons other than the eliminationist anti-Semitism that Goldhagen postulates as central. Unfortunately, Goldhagen's argument contains no condition that would cover these cases, which are part of the larger complex of the Nazis' destructive urge and psychology of killing. Thus, we are forced to conclude that his work is, at best, limited.

Christopher Browning represents the other side of this debate. In his important and highly regarded book, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*, he argues that the Einsatzgruppen and their auxiliary units were not primarily motivated to kill as a result of ideology, but rather were gradually desensitized as a result of being exposed to any number of gruesome scenes. As Browning puts it, like "much else, killing was something one could get used to."³⁸ He uses a case study of

³⁷ Ibid., 241-245.

³⁸ Browning, *Ordinary Men*, 85.

Reserve Police Battalion 101 to prove his arguments.³⁹ He contends that before these men had been sufficiently “hardened,” many of them either publicly objected to the mass shootings or found more subtle ways to shirk their duty as executioners. Indeed, some of their commanding officers did not expect the men to be able to carry out their shooting duties. For example, before one massacre Major Trapp offered “any of the older men who did not feel up to the task that lay before them [the opportunity to] ... step out.”⁴⁰ Several of the men who did not take advantage of this offer later found other ways to shirk their duties. For example, several men appealed to First Sergeant Kammer, who allowed them to either accompany the trucks or to guard the truck route.⁴¹ Others “‘shot past’ their victims” or “spent as much time as possible searching the houses so as not to be present at the marketplace, where they feared being assigned to a firing squad.”⁴² Almost none of the men were willing to shoot small children or infants in cold blood.⁴³ Browning points out, however, that this evasive response was frequently only temporary, as habituation set in.

In later executions the men of Battalion 101 performed much more efficiently. Some of this increased participation was due to more advanced methods of killing. For example, Battalion 101 began working frequently with *Hilfswillige* (HIWI) battalions of native collaborators. These non-German units were frequently delegated the most

³⁹ It is important to note here that the men that Browning deals with in his study were civilian policemen, most of whom were unfit for regular military service, who had been attached to the Einsatzgruppen in order to increase its numbers. Thus, they had not been subject to the same ideological and military conditioning as the men of the Einsatzgruppen proper had.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 57.

⁴¹ Ibid., 62.

⁴² Ibid., 62-63.

⁴³ Ibid., 59.

distasteful tasks, including most of the shooting, which considerably reduced the psychological burden on the German policemen.⁴⁴ The method used in the shootings themselves was also changed: policemen were no longer paired off with their victims as before, and shooters were rotated frequently.⁴⁵ Additionally, because the men had shot before, they “did not experience such a traumatic shock” as they had the first time.⁴⁶ 101’s commanders also began purposely desensitizing the men by forcing those who had previously avoided shooting duty by various means to participate, to create a larger circle of shared complicity. For example, First Sergeant Ostmann told one of his men, “Drink up now, Pfeiffer. You’re in for it this time, because the Jewesses must be shot. You’ve gotten yourself out of it so far, but now you must go to it.”⁴⁷ Many other “clerks, communications men, and drivers who had hitherto avoided direct participation in mass executions ... suddenly found themselves pressed into service by the local Security Police.”⁴⁸ As a result of all of these factors, the men of Battalion 101 over time found it considerably easier to kill their victims. By 1943, when Battalion 101 was delegated to participate in the so-called “harvest festival” massacre, which constituted “the single largest German killing operation against Jews in the entire war,” the only problem was disposing of the large numbers of bodies.⁴⁹ Thus, Browning directly contradicts Koonz’s conclusions. His emphasis is on the power of habituation to brutality in practice, not in ideological preparation.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 85.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 85.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 85.

⁴⁷ Robert Gellately, *The Gestapo and German Society: Enforcing Racial Policy 1933-1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 108.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 111.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 135, 141.

Another specialist on the Nazi period, Robert Gellately, supports many of Browning's conclusions in his work, *The Gestapo and German Society: Enforcing Racial Policy 1933-1945*. Although Gellately concentrates on the Gestapo instead of on the killing squads of the *Einsatzgruppen*, he also contends that the German people did not support the Nazi regime's actions against the Jews due to overriding anti-Semitism. Instead, he argues that German society at large did not protest against Nazi rule because "many law-abiding citizens, out of respect for the legal norms, simply complied and co-operated with the new regime ... many could choose to ignore its revolutionary character."⁵⁰ Thus, many who were not enthusiastic about the new regime chose to conform to it.

The Gestapo meted out harsh punishments to those who chose not to conform: both in Germany and in other occupied territories, the "Gestapo responded to any dissent with policies on the 'Jewish question' by redoubling its efforts in order to obtain compliance through police pressure, where necessary fulfilling its mandate with methods that gained a reputation for utter brutality."⁵¹ Indeed, word quickly spread that one could be arrested and even killed on the suspicion of disobedience.⁵² Thus, many of those who did not comply with the Nazi regime willingly rearranged their lives in order to remain above suspicion and avoid any confrontation with the Gestapo.

Eric Johnson agrees with many of Browning's and Gellately's conclusions in his work, *Nazi Terror: The Gestapo, Jews, and Ordinary Germans*. Johnson contends that the German people may truly not have known about the genocide of the Jews in a

⁵⁰ Gellately, *Gestapo and German Society*, 137.

⁵¹ Gellately, *Gestapo and German Society*, 186.

⁵² Ibid.

comprehensive way until December of 1942 at the latest. After conducting an exhaustive study of the Gestapo's records for the cities of Cologne and Krefeld and a survey of some residents of Cologne who had lived through the Nazi era, Johnson advances several very interesting conclusions. Firstly, he argues that the German population was not a totally complicit body. For example, he tells us that 53% of the people who responded to a survey he conducted while researching his book reported having listened to illegal radio broadcasts, primarily to the BBC.⁵³ Indeed, listening to "illegal foreign-radio broadcasts was a largely passive activity so commonplace that it could have been considered normal had it not been outlawed by the regime."⁵⁴ At the same time, Johnson reports that 75% of his respondents stated that they had never feared arrest during the Third Reich, although they had committed some sort of action officially designated as a crime. His explanation for this phenomenon is that since the Gestapo (which was a relatively small organization) devoted most of its resources to persecuting Leftists, Catholics, and Jews, it simply did not have the manpower available to police the German population at large.⁵⁵ Johnson concludes that:

[f]ew Germans knew everything about the Holocaust ... [b]ut ... millions of ordinary German citizens, coming from every social, political, and religious background and from every corner of German society, certainly knew that masses of Jews were being murdered. Some Germans did not know this until relatively late in the war. Large numbers of Germans knew much earlier on.⁵⁶

Johnson attributes the German public's silence about the fate of the Jews not to anti-Semitism, but rather to "a lack of moral concern about the fate of those who were perceived as outsiders and from a tradition of obsequious submission to authority that the

⁵³ Johnson, *Nazi Terror*, 258.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 259.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 284.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 458.

Nazis cultivated but did not originate.”⁵⁷ Indifference is seen as key, rather than murderous intent on the part of the bulk of the German population.

In a distinctively different variation on this debate, German scholars Götz Aly and Susanne Heim also argue in their controversial book, *Architects of Annihilation: Auschwitz and the Logic of Destruction*, that virulent, pervasive anti-Semitism did not motivate the *Einsatzgruppen* to kill. Instead, they point to the existence of a very different motivating factor – money. According to this theory, the Nazi regime removed Jews and other “undesirables” from Germany and other occupied territories in order to strengthen Germany’s economy, as part of an overriding drive for modernization and rationalization. Aly and Heim contend that Nazi demographers had understood unemployment in the “towns and cities, poverty and ‘underemployment’ in agriculture, ‘backwardness’ and low productivity ... as the consequence of a steadily growing human population surplus.”⁵⁸ This surplus was particularly acute in Eastern Europe, and these “excess” people were said to be “exerting a ‘population pressure’ on Germany’s borders” as people who could not find work farther east entered Germany in hopes of finding jobs.⁵⁹ According to Nazi economic logic, European Jews were the most expendable population in the affected areas: as Peter-Heinz Seraphim put it in 1938, “the ‘Jewish question’ in Eastern Europe amounted to a ‘population policy problem on a massive scale.’”⁶⁰ Thus, in order to revitalize flagging European economies, Jews needed to be removed. Initially, Nazi planners intended to corral Jews into ghettos, where they would

⁵⁷ Ibid., 458.

⁵⁸ Götz Aly and Susanne Heim, *Architects of Annihilation: Auschwitz and the Logic of Destruction*, trans. A.G. Blunden (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 2002), 59.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 71.

stay until they were deported.⁶¹ It quickly became obvious that there was nowhere to deport these Jews to, and so another solution had to be found. Initially, the Nazi government tried to establish industries in the ghettos so that the Jews could provide nearly free labor and so fortify the German economy.⁶² Economic analysts quickly determined that the ghettos could not be made profitable, and so their inhabitants were deported to the “Final Solution” in the Eastern concentration and death camps.⁶³ In short, Aly and Heim argue that the Jews were massacred neither due to pervasive German anti-Semitic ideology nor desensitization brought on by witnessing multiple massacres, but rather because the presence of Jews was believed to be harmful to the German economy. The bureaucratic imperatives of economic rationality are stressed, in this account, rather than ideological hatred.

In short, what we see in the current literature dealing with Nazi psychology is a general division between two schools of thought: one that argues for the existence of a pervasive anti-Semitic ideology that motivated the men of the *Einsatzgruppen* to murder Jews, and another that holds that these men murdered for other reasons. The two major supporters of the idea that the *Einsatzgruppen* murdered due to ideology are Claudia Koonz and Hannah Arendt. Goldhagen supports this argument, but as I have discussed, his work contains significant flaws. The most prominent author arguing against this concept of the primacy of ideology is Browning, who contends that the *Einsatzgruppen* were taught to kill via a gradual process of desensitization. Gellately and Johnson also argue that the German people were not motivated solely by ideology: they contend that

⁶¹ Ibid., 162.

⁶² Ibid., 186.

⁶³ Ibid., 208-210.

“ordinary” people generally conformed to the Nazi regime voluntarily. Finally, Aly and Heim agree that the Nazi regime did not exterminate the Jews based on anti-Semitic ideology: instead, they contend that this genocide was designed to improve Germany’s economic situation. The following chapter will pursue the issue of ideology in more detail, as it examines the ideological themes present in the 1938 and 1939 issues of *Das Schwarze Korps* in order to determine precisely what type of anti-Semitic ideology existed among the men of the SS.

Chapter III

“Mainstream Ideology:” Images of Jews in *Das Schwarze Korps*

Das Schwarze Korps, published weekly in Berlin from 1938 to 1945, was the official press organ of the SS. Although Oberführer Gunter D’Alquen was its official publisher, *Das Schwarze Korps* was in reality controlled by Reinhard Heydrich after April of 1935.⁶⁴ Heydrich was a man to be reckoned with in the Nazi hierarchy: as Reitlinger put it, sometimes “Heydrich’s sullen figure in menacing black SS uniform and varnished boots would be pointed out fearfully to foreign journalists ... They would be told that they had just seen the most dangerous man in Germany.”⁶⁵

Heydrich began his career in Nazi structures in 1931 as the head of the Sicherheitsdienst (SD).⁶⁶ In 1934, he became the head of the security police as well. His domain increased again in 1939 when he took over the RSHA, including the criminal police and the Gestapo. He remained in this position until he was assassinated by two members of the Free Czechoslovak Forces in 1942.⁶⁷ Politically speaking, Heydrich was very close to Heinrich Himmler, head of the SS and Gestapo. It was Heydrich who originally saw the need for an intelligence service, and it was Heydrich who eventually convinced Himmler to create the SD by “detaching the Information officers – in plainer words, informers – from their respective SS units and forming them into a new arm [the

⁶⁴ Gerald Reitlinger, *The SS: Alibi of a Nation, 1922-1945* (New York: Da Capo Press, Inc., 1957), 32. Reitlinger’s work followed in the footsteps of Karl Dietrich Bracher’s work *The German Dictatorship*, which constitutes the first truly scholarly study of the Third Reich.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 31.

⁶⁶ The SD was officially the Security Service of the SS. Practically, it functioned as a secret political police.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 215, 467.

SD].”⁶⁸ As the head of this new intelligence service, Heydrich worked closely with Himmler on the various purges of the SS.⁶⁹ In short, Heydrich and Himmler frequently worked together, a fact that became particularly pertinent when Himmler became the Chief of German Police – and thus the official head of all German police organizations - in 1936.⁷⁰

Das Schwarze Korps (under Heydrich’s leadership) catered primarily to the well-educated men who “claimed to be a self-selected racial elite” who comprised the bulk of the SS.⁷¹ Based on these readers’ tastes, *Das Schwarze Korps* printed intellectual and theoretical articles as well as allegedly “tasteful” political cartoons. In other words, *Das Schwarze Korps* did not aim to attract readers with lewd content and crass sensationalism (as for instance Julius Streicher’s notorious anti-Semitic publication *Der Stürmer*), but rather intended to “win the respect of not only well-educated Nazis but of thoughtful readers everywhere.”⁷² As Claudia Koonz put it, the newspaper’s “editors trusted their readers to think for themselves within the bounds of National Socialism.”⁷³ *Das Schwarze Korps* is thus an intriguing primary source for the self-understanding of the self-proclaimed new German racial elite.

This chapter examines the issues of *Das Schwarze Korps* that appeared in 1938 and 1939. I chose to concentrate on these two years specifically because most scholars of the Nazi period agree that 1938 and 1939 represent the point at which Nazi ideology

⁶⁸ Ibid., 37.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 38.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 467.

⁷¹ Robert Koehl, “The Character of the Nazi SS,” *The Journal of Modern History*, 34, No. 3 (September 1962): 275-283.

⁷² Koonz, *The Nazi Conscience*, 240.

⁷³ Ibid. 241.

became violent enough and the German people tolerant enough of this ferocity (with Kristallnacht as the key moment) to allow the mass murder of the Jewish people. According to this argument, because it was this ideology that allowed the practice of genocide, it is also this ideology that would theoretically have driven the men of the Einsatzgruppen to kill countless people as they moved through Eastern Europe and Russia. I have chosen *Das Schwarze Korps* to investigate this ideology in part because the SS, and specifically Heydrich, controlled it. As such, it would have had to conform to Nazi ideology and indeed would be a prime, official example of the same. As Reitlinger explains, Heydrich “was the real idealist of the SS and the things that he practiced were part of his ideal of the good German.”⁷⁴ Even without this conviction, “Heydrich had to conform to Himmler’s SS code” at least externally, including its ideology.⁷⁵ Additionally, because this publication catered to the well-educated, it should provide an unusually articulate and nuanced analysis of Nazi ideology and the Nazi mindset.

In my research, I concentrated on studying articles and cartoons that deal directly with Jews. I also considered articles dealing with governmental systems and forms of media that Jews allegedly control, since these articles provide another means of studying the “official” Nazi position on Jews. Finally, I looked at obituaries and advertisements printed in *Das Schwarze Korps* in order to get an additional sense of how the SS saw itself as a racial vanguard.

A prime conclusion is that *Das Schwarze Korps* presented the Jews primarily as an economic threat as late as 1938-1939. For example, in an article entitled “Davor

⁷⁴ Reitlinger, *Alibi of a Nation*, 32.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 32.

graust uns!” (translation: “We dread the thought”), a section entitled “Against ‘our’ Jews”⁷⁶ states that “We can once again experience a boycott instituted by the Rumanian government [which had been taking measures against Jews living in Rumania] against our goods because not one factory in National Socialist Germany can break with its Jews.”⁷⁷

At first glance, it seems ridiculous for the Nazi government to worry about Rumania boycotting its goods. Indeed, Rumania accounted for a mere one percent of Germany’s total foreign trade.⁷⁸ This boycott, however, put a serious crimp in Germany’s ambitions toward dominating a European economic sphere. As Aly and Heim put it, Nazi planners at the time envisioned “the division of Europe into a series of more or less interdependent economic zones, whose functions would be assigned to them by the German Reich and whose economic activities would be coordinated in the interests of German capital.”⁷⁹ Because Rumania was economically dependent, as will be discussed in more detail later, it was already well on its way to becoming one of these desired subordinate economies. Thus its boycott, and hence its assertion of economic independence, logically caused serious concern among Nazi intellectuals.

Another argument for forcing Jews out of the German economy appears in the article “The Legend of the Decent Jew.”⁸⁰ Also published in 1938, this article encouraged German businessmen to avoid doing business with Jews by conducting

⁷⁶ In original: “Gegen ‘unsere’ Juden.” *Das Schwarze Korps*, January 13, 1938.

⁷⁷ In original: “Ja, wir können noch einmal erleben, daß unsere Waren einfach offiziell von der rumänischen Regierung boykottiert werden, weil sich einige Fabriken im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland nicht von ihren Juden trennen können.”

⁷⁸ Keith Hitchins, *Rumania 1866-1947* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 364.

⁷⁹ Aly and Heim, *Architects of Annihilation*, 216.

⁸⁰ In original: “Die Legende vom anständigen Juden”

background checks on the representatives of the companies they work with.⁸¹ “The Legend of the Decent Jew” tells the story of an honest Aryan businessman who arranged a transaction with a representative of another company. Although he had no second thoughts at the time, he later became suspicious of the representative’s name: Wertheimer. At this point, “the businessman arranged to ask [Wertheimer’s] firm whether this Wertheimer was a Jew. If the answer is yes, then the [Aryan] businessman must send the goods [that he bought from Wertheimer] back.”⁸² If all Aryan businessmen behaved as this businessman did, then the German people would never have to deal with Jewish merchants at all.⁸³ Thus, if all good German businessmen were properly vigilant, the author suggests, Germany could be free of the deleterious effects Jews exercised on its economy.

According to *Das Schwarze Korps*, the international community did not truly see the threat, economic or otherwise, that the Jews posed. Indeed, the magazine complained, international opinion supported the Jews to the point that it frowned upon those countries that attempted to protect or improve themselves by eliminating their Jewish inhabitants. One sees this point illustrated particularly well in a 1938 cartoon entitled “Rumania and the ‘World Press’” (Figure 1). The illustration shows a downcast Rumanian and two equally downcast Jews standing outside a building flying the Nazi flag. The caption (expressing the Rumanian’s complaint) reads, “As long as we suffered from

⁸¹ “Die Legende vom anständigen Juden,” *Das Schwarze Korps*, January 18, 1938.

⁸² In original: Das beranlaßt den Kaufmann, bei der Firma Bauen anzufragen, ob dieser Wertheimer etwa Jude sei. Wenn ja, müßte er den Auftrag zurück ziehen.”

⁸³ “Die Legende vom Anständigen Juden,” *Das Schwarze Korps*, January 18, 1938.

lice in our fur, we were a cultured people; now, when we rid ourselves of these parasites, we are barbarians!”⁸⁴

It should be noted that both the cartoon’s caption and its title employ language designed to disparage Jews. The word “Weltpresse” (world press) in the title contains an implied reference to supposed Jewish international perfidy. According to Nazi ideology, “world Jewry” had a controlling interest not only in international finance, but also in the international press. Thus, when these newspapers published reports of the “barbarous” Rumanians systematically pushing Jews out of Rumania, foreign Jews not yet threatened by such “enlightened” peoples as the Rumanians were said to be using their fairly significant international leverage to justify (and therefore reinforce) Jewish dominance in Rumania. In other words, the title’s wording indicates that the Jews were to blame not only for Rumania’s poor economic situation, but also, in their international incarnation, for preventing Rumanians from improving that situation by forcing Jews out of the country.

The term “Kulturvolk” in the cartoon’s caption is also significant. “Kultur” translates directly as “culture,” but it also carries a connotation of superiority. According to Liah Greenfeld, an outstanding historian of nationalism, nineteenth century Germany considered its culture to be superior to that of the rest of Western Europe, a key concept in German self-understanding of the period. According to contemporary German sentiment, “Germany was a universal nation par excellence, that is ... only it truly

⁸⁴ In original: “Solange wir Läuse in unserem Pelz duldeten, waren wir ein Kulturvolk; jetzt, wo wir uns dieser Parasiten entledigen, sind wir Barbaren!”

“Rumänien und die ‘Weltpresse,’ *Das Schwarze Korps*, January 13, 1938.

represented humanity and perceived its purpose.”⁸⁵ In short, should “the German not assume world government through philosophy, the Turks, the Negroes, the North American tribes [i.e., culturally inferior peoples,] will finally take it over and put an end to the present civilization.”⁸⁶ As time went on, German intellectuals articulated German superiority even more vigorously, to the point that Adam Müller claimed that even though the Germans are naturally humble, “the German mind is forced to ascribe to itself as an advantage over all other nations its obedient and pious understanding of everything alien, even if this prostration and understanding may sometimes degenerate into the idolatry of foreign habits and persons.”⁸⁷ Eventually, however, the German people would not be threatened by contamination by inferior cultures, because “Germany, the fortunate heartland, ... will dominate the world by its spirit.”⁸⁸ In other words, “Kultur” refers not just to culture, but to a transcendent, “superior” culture that will eventually replace all other, “inferior” cultures. By employing this term, the cartoonist offers a snide commentary on the international community’s perception of the Jews: when Rumania tolerated the Jews, who were purposely detrimental to the Rumanian people, the Rumanians were considered to be a “Kulturvolk”; when Rumania, in its own defense, attempts to exclude Jews, the Rumanian people become barbarians. In short, the caption portrays the Jews as a threat to a world that they have, by and large, hoodwinked into defending them.

⁸⁵ Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 366.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 366.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 367.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

On reflection, it is worth asking why Rumania comes to occupy this prominent position in the mental universe of an SS magazine. Rumanian politics in January and February 1938 matched German political ideals very closely. This cartoon probably refers specifically to the changes to the Rumanian constitution that were made under the Goga-Cuza government. This regime came to power in January 1938 when Octavian Goga's National Peasant's Party fused with Alexandru Cuza's extremely anti-Semitic League of National Christian Defense.⁸⁹ Although this regime only retained power for forty days before King Carol II's dictatorship began in February 1938, they managed to make a number of constitutional changes before their replacement. The most important of these changes denied Jews Rumanian citizenship (the so-called "Law of the Blood"), removed Jews from the Rumanian press establishment, barred Jews from government service, and most importantly, declared that "Rumanians would have priority in all economic enterprises and cultural institutions."⁹⁰ It is to this last change, which effectively removed Jews from Rumanian society, that *Das Schwarze Korps's* cartoonist is probably referring.

It was primarily Rumania's economic situation at that time that made these amendments possible. Rumania, and especially Bucharest, had been industrializing rapidly during the 1930s. Peasants migrating to the cities provided an abundant and cheap source of labor for this new industry. Most of these peasants, ironically, had been impoverished by the agrarian reform laws introduced between 1918 and 1921 that had broken up many of the older agricultural estates and distributed the resulting land to

⁸⁹ Israel Gutman, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, vol. 3 of *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* (NY: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1990), s.v. "Romania."

⁹⁰ Gutman, *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, 1293-1294.

peasants.⁹¹ Unfortunately, “many [of these] holdings were too small to be viable and continued to be subdivided through inheritance.”⁹² Peasants were also taxed heavily, making their situation even more precarious.⁹³ Finally, most peasants suffered from heavy debt, which they were hard put to pay off.⁹⁴ Thus, many migrated to the cities in search of factory jobs to supplement their meager agricultural incomes.⁹⁵

Industrial development was curtailed, however, by the depression that hit in the early 1930s.⁹⁶ This depression was fortunately short, and between 1934 and 1938 “the overall value of large-scale industrial production almost doubled from 34,900 million lei to 64,600.”⁹⁷ Part of the reason for this acceleration was political support on the part of the state: contemporary Rumanian politicians and governments hoped that expanding Rumanian industry would “assure both ... economic and political independence.”⁹⁸ For all these industrial gains, however, the Rumanian economy still operated at a disadvantage: the Rumanian domestic market could not absorb all of the goods that Rumanian industry produced.⁹⁹ As such, Rumanian manufacturers sought foreign markets. By 1939, the most important of these markets was Germany, which imported 32 per cent of Rumania’s total exports. Germany was also Rumania’s principal supplier, providing 39 per cent of her total imports.¹⁰⁰

⁹¹ Hitchins, *Rumania*, 347.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 351.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 354.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 373.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 357.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 357.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 360.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 374.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 362.

¹⁰⁰ Hitchins, *Rumania*, 363-364.

In short, the Rumanian economy had seen drastic improvement over a surprisingly short period of time. As we have seen in the preceding analysis, “mainstream” Nazi ideology likewise attributed much of Germany’s economic improvement to the measures that excluded Jews from the German economy. Indeed, Rumania society at the time was extremely anti-Semitic. Thus, it makes sense that this cartoonist would conclude that Rumania must have pushed Rumanian Jews out of the economy in order to allow for its stunning improvement. He merely capitalizes on this assumed situation in order to comment on what he perceives as the state of international politics.

Even after Kristallnacht, the major themes dealing with supposed Jewish perfidy in *Das Schwarze Korps* do not change drastically. For example, an article of November 24, 1938 entitled “Jews, what now?” posits once more that Jews have hoodwinked most other countries into welcoming them.¹⁰¹ Indeed, Jews have supposedly conned these countries to the point that they are “too cowardly ... to concede that there is a “Jewish Question,” much less take action to solve this “Problem.”¹⁰² As always, Germany cannot solve this problem itself: as the author puts it, “Germany ... is not able to solve its ‘Jewish Question’ outside of Germany because we do not own anything but this land, which we must free of the Jews.”¹⁰³ In a new twist, this article hints a rather surprising “solution”: “because they [the Jews] know just as well that the existence of a true Jewish

¹⁰¹ *Das Schwarze Korps*, November 24, 1938.

¹⁰² In original: “Die Demokratien waren bisher selbst zu feige, überhaupt zuzugeben, daß es eine Judenfrage gäbe.” *Das Schwarze Korps*, November 24, 1938.

¹⁰³ In original: “Deutschland selbst ist nicht in der Lage, seine Judenfrage außerhalb Deutschlands zu lösen, denn wir besitzen nichts als dieses Land, das wir von den Juden befreien müssen.” *Das Schwarze Korps*, November 24, 1938.

state – Palestine is only an English contrivance – [would cause] all host peoples to also deport ‘their’ Jews there.”¹⁰⁴ Thus, Nazi propaganda had not yet begun advocating the wholesale murder of European Jews – instead, it would still be content to solve the “problem” through deportation. As such, we do not yet see the ideology of extermination that would theoretically need to be present in order to motivate the men of the Einsatzgruppen to kill during the Russian campaign.

Again accenting the international mission of anti-Semitism, *Das Schwarze Korps* maintained, the working classes of foreign countries realized that the Jews posed a serious threat to them, unlike their political leaders. We see this point clearly in a cartoon appearing in *Das Schwarze Korps* on January 26, 1939 dealing with the situation of the unemployed in England (Figure 2). Titled “English Unemployed,”¹⁰⁵ the cartoon shows two disheveled Englishmen (who are presumably out of work) sitting in front of a poster encouraging passerby to ‘help the poor emigrated Jews.’”¹⁰⁶ Another unemployed man wearing a false “Jewish” nose is tipping his hat to the men in front of the poster. In the caption, one of the seated men says to the Jewish man, “Where do you find in our misery the ‘humor’, Bill? The fellow puts a carnival nose on his face!” The supposed Jew replies, “Idiot. Do you think I want to starve with you? I’m going to pass myself off as an emigrated foreign Jew!”¹⁰⁷ According to this cartoon, only honest, non-Jewish

¹⁰⁴ In original: “weil sie ebensogut wissen, daß die Existenz eines wirklichen Judenstaates – Palästina ist ja nur eine englische Zweckerfindung – alle Wirtsvölker veranlassen würde, ‘ihre’ Juden gleichfalls dahin abzuschieben.” *Das Schwarze Korps*, November 24, 1938.

¹⁰⁵ In original: “Englische Arbeitslose.”

¹⁰⁶ In original: “Helf den armen emigrierten Juden!”

¹⁰⁷ “Englische Arbeitslose.” *Das Schwarze Korps*, January 26, 1939, p. 1. In original: “Wo du bei unserem Elend nur den ‘humor’ hernimmst, Bill. Pappt sich der Kerl eine

workers starve in England – the Jewish unemployed can avoid such a fate by sponging off honest English citizens as “refugees” from such “enlightened” countries as Germany and Rumania. In short, England’s leadership is not as advanced as Germany’s is – they have not yet realized that they need to force Jews out of their economic life in order to protect “true” Englishmen. This notion was very much in line with the cynical suggestion that Nazi exclusion of German Jews would also ‘export anti-Semitism’, as other countries found themselves host to impoverished Jewish refugees.

Das Schwarze Korps does not, however, does not confine its portrayal of the supposed “Jewish threat” to the economic sphere. Although the economic theme is very prominent, there are a considerable number of discussions portraying the “Jewish threat” in other forms. For example, *Das Schwarze Korps* expresses deep concern about Jews infiltrating the Aryan race. This point is made clearly in the newspaper’s discussions about Jews who assume German names in order to pass as Aryans. For example, an article from February 9, 1939, entitled “So One Should not be Named,” tells the story of a good, “authentic” German named Isidor von Leeb. Von Leeb’s name appeared mistakenly on a list of Jewish businesses that *Das Schwarze Korps* published in 1938. At this, von Leeb of course protested, and the newspaper acknowledged its mistake in a story designed to demonstrate the continued perfidy of the Jews, whom it blamed for the misunderstanding. According to the article, von Leeb had appeared on the list simply because many Jews shared his surname. Von Leeb, however, was not Jewish: indeed, the “church register showed that [von Leeb’s] line had been pure Aryan for 7 or 8

Faschingsnase ins Gesicht! – Idiot. Meinst du, ich will mit euch verhungern? Ich geh’ jetzt als emigrierter Auslandsjude!”

generations.”¹⁰⁸ The confusion had come from the Jews named von Leeb. They had not been born with this reputable surname, but rather had “first been called Levy or Löb and then undertook a small shift of sound, for reasons that are transparent,” and began calling themselves by the aristocratic name of von Leeb.¹⁰⁹ Thus, what had once been a noble German name was now allegedly corrupted by dishonest Jews who were once again appropriating and polluting German culture for their own gain.

This fear of “racial pollution” is also seen in the birth announcements published in *Das Schwarze Korps*. This fascinating section became extremely prominent in mid-1939, as Hitler’s unleashing of the Second World War approached. This portion of the newspaper is designed very simply – it is a one or two page spread that states the name of the child born, the names of its parents, how many children are now in the family, and features pictures of some of the older children in these families. It is in these pictures that we see the overriding concern with racial purity and its visual representation (Figures 3 and 4). All of the children portrayed in these photographs are stereotypically Aryan – they have blond hair, blue eyes, fine-boned faces, and are even dressed in traditionally “German” clothes. The reader can also infer that the parents of these children are racially “pure.” According to the SS marriage code (Heiratsgenehmigung), both “parties to the marriage were expected to show proof of Aryan ancestry as far back as 1750 and proof of hereditary soundness of constitution. The SS man’s bride had to submit to a medical

¹⁰⁸ In original: “Kirchenbuchereinträgen bis zur 7 or 8 Generation zurück arischer Herkunft.” *Das Schwarze Korps*, February 9, 1939.

¹⁰⁹ In original: “solche nämlich, die erst Levy oder Löb heissen und dann eine kleine Lautverschiebung aus durchsichtigen Gründe vornahmen.” *Das Schwarze Korps*, February 9, 1939.

examination and provide testimonials as to her philosophy of life.”¹¹⁰ Thus, the birth announcements in *Das Schwarze Korps* not only announce the births of children in to SS families, they also promote childbearing among “racially pure” couples in order to produce more Aryan children, by celebrating an idealized and officially sanctioned model of family.

This emphasis on increasing the number of “Aryan” children in Germany is echoed in the secondary literature. Concerns with fertility and population policy predated the Nazi rise to power. As Mark Mazower writes in *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century*, German women “read magazines like Weimar’s *Die Deutsche Hausfrau* (The German Housewife) ... or visited one of the many traveling health exhibitions organized by the Dresden Hygiene Museum in order to ensure the ‘national fitness and the physical and mental health of future generations.’”¹¹¹ For all the effort toward encouraging childbearing in the 1920s and 1930s, however, Germany’s “racially sound” population grew very slowly. Even SS families experienced lagging growth: although SS men “were expected to lead the way in ideological and sexual fervor ... [as of 1939] 61 per cent of the SS were bachelors, and its married men averaged only 1.1 children per family.”¹¹² This slow growth rate led to nightmarish “images of an overcrowded globe, of a Europe – whose own population is dwindling and aging – being swamped by fast-breeding immigrants from the Third World.”¹¹³

¹¹⁰ Reitlinger, *Alibi of a Nation*, 30.

¹¹¹ Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000), 83.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 86.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 87.

Das Schwarze Korps is, of course, also careful to tout Hitler's victories over the allegedly pernicious Jews living in Germany. Indeed, the image of Hitler presented is almost unbelievably positive, showing Hitler as the prophetic and stalwart savior of the German people. For example, Hitler is lauded extremely obviously in the April 20, 1939 edition of *Das Schwarze Korps*; indeed, this issue was intended to honor Hitler on his birthday. As Himmler puts it in this article, "On his fiftieth birthday we send the Führer our heartfelt wishes for good luck and thank him for all he has done for the German Volk." Himmler expresses his hope that Hitler will be with them for many more years.¹¹⁴ This issue also features a number of pictures of Hitler with cross-sections of the grateful German people. For example, a page titled "Father of the People" shows young, stereotypically Aryan children saluting Hitler, Hitler shaking hands with an archetypal German peasant, Hitler greeting a jubilant crowd, and finally Hitler greeting a group of working people. The centerpiece of this issue is a pencil sketch of Hitler standing proudly in front of an outline of Germany with light radiating from behind him. At his feet is a mass of people saluting and waving the Nazi flag. The lettering reads, "Reverence and thanks ... for the greatest son of our people."¹¹⁵ Thus, this issue presents and celebrates virtually unadulterated admiration of and gratitude to Hitler. According to the sentiments presented here, Hitler has revitalized Germany and the German people and made it possible for Germany to be regarded as the powerful country it was before the much-hated Treaty of Versailles.

¹¹⁴ *Das Schwarze Korps*, April 20, 1939.

¹¹⁵ In original "Erfurcht und Dank ... dem größten Sohne unseres Volkes". *Das Schwarze Korps*, April 20, 1939.

Finally, *Das Schwarze Korps* promotes a virulent culture of violence to its readers. Although this violence is not specifically directed against Jews, it does forshadow the murders on the Eastern Front with its emphasis on the necessity and glory of appropriately applied violent solutions. This culture can be seen most clearly in the obituaries for SS men that the newspaper printed after Germany's invasion of Poland in 1939. Although these entries do express sadness over the loss of a loved one or friend, they emphatically praise that man's death as a noble sacrifice in Germany's service. For example, on February 26, 1939, the leader of the SS office in Donau, Kaltenbrunner, published an obituary in *Das Schwarze Korps* for SS-Brigadeführer Hubert Klausner. It read, in part, "On 12 February 1939 our comrade, ... Hubert Klausner, died. He was a leader and comrade in the deep despair of our country. No one will forget him."¹¹⁶ An obituary for Friedrich Graf von der Schulenburg (submitted by no less than Heinrich Himmler himself) praised Schulenberg as "a shining example of an irreproachable soldier, a true National Socialist and a fearless follower of our Führer as a great, noble human being."¹¹⁷ In other words, these men did not simply die – they died gloriously and to great effect. Klausner, an ethnic German living in Austria, served his people – i.e. the German Volk - during a difficult time in its history, while Schulenberg set an example as an ideal National Socialist. In short, these men made one of the most noble sacrifices possible – they died in service of the Nazi cause.

¹¹⁶ In original: "Am 12. Februar 1939 starb unser Kamerad ... Hubert Klausner. Er war Führer und Kamerad in tieffer Not unserer Heimat. Keiner wird ihn vergessen." *Das Schwarze Korps*, February 26, 1939.

¹¹⁷ In original: "ein leuchtendes Vorbild als untadeliger Soldat, als treuer Nationalsozialist und furchtloser Gefolgsmann unseres Führers und als großer, edler Mensch." *Das Schwarze Korps*, May 25, 1939. "Edler Mensch" signifies someone who is renowned for his wisdom and love of humanity.

As Ian Kershaw points out in his work *The Hitler Myth: Image and Reality in the Third Reich*, obituaries written in this style were hardly unique to *Das Schwarze Korps*, but rather often appear in the press. In this study, Kershaw identifies several formulae that families of the fallen commonly used in these announcements regardless of what newspaper they were eventually published in. The two most frequent phrases indicate that the man in question died “For People and Fatherland” or “For Führer, People, and Fatherland.”¹¹⁸ Mentions of the Führer were particularly common before the Wehrmacht’s crushing defeat in Stalingrad. For example, 41 percent of death announcements posted in the *Fränkischer Kurier* mentioned Hitler in 1940. The *Augsburger Nationalzeitung* and *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten* showed similar results, with 62 and 44 percent respectively of all obituaries posted mentioning the Führer in the same year.¹¹⁹ Thus, the idea of the heroic soldier who died in the service of his country and leader is hardly unique to *Das Schwarze Korps*: rather, this idea was present throughout German society in the years leading up to the Second World War.

One can also see attributes of this culture of violence in the advertisements printed at the end of each issue of *Das Schwarze Korps*. Indeed, using only the products advertised here, one could stage an impressive military campaign. The most frequently advertised items in these sections are various forms of firearms. For example, the April 13, 1939 edition of the newspaper contains an advertisement for the Model 38 Sauer pistol. According to the advertisement, this pistol has “All the merits of a revolver and a

¹¹⁸ Ian Kershaw, *The Hitler Myth: Image and Reality in the Third Reich* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1987), 188.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

pistol united in one weapon ... A masterpiece by J.P. Sauer and Son.”¹²⁰ The Mauser is also a popular weapon. The July 13, 1939 edition of *Das Schwarze Korps* contains an advertisement for the Mauser Rifle reading: “MAUSER: The German small caliber rifle of international renown. Ask for a free brochure.”¹²¹ The accompanying picture shows two men in hunting garb sitting on a bench in a rural setting admiring a Mauser rifle (Figure 5). Another advertisement recommends the Mauser for those who participate in sport clubs and praises it as “the time-tested original Mauser sport weapon.”¹²²

Das Schwarze Korps advertises other military items as well. For example, the July 20, 1939 edition of the paper promoted steel helmets manufactured by Bath and Wagawa of Dresden. This advertisement states that these helmets are available in multiple colors and can “also be used for air-raid protection and fire brigades.”¹²³ Their primary purpose, use in the conduct of war, is not stated explicitly. *Das Schwarze Korps* also advertises military-style boots made in Munich. According the manufacturer’s description, these boots are “Marching boots and uniform boots in one.”¹²⁴ One satisfied customer, Herr Forstmeister Schwenke, wrote that he did not have to resole his boots until after he had marched over 400 kilometers in them.¹²⁵ Although the advertisements

¹²⁰ In original: “Alle Vorzüge von Revolver und Pistole meisterhaft in einer Waffe vereint ... Ein Meisterwerk von J.P. Sauer & Sohn.” *Das Schwarze Korps*, April 13, 1939.

¹²¹ In original: MAUSER: Die deutsche Klein-Kaliber Büchse von Weltruf. Verlangen Sie kostenlose Druckschrift.” *Das Schwarze Korps*, July 13, 1939.

¹²² In original: “Die bewährten original-MAUSER Sportwaffen.” *Das Schwarze Korps*, July 27, 1939.

¹²³ In original: “schwarz u[nd]. farbig auch f[ür]. Luftschutz und Feuerwehr.” *Das Schwarze Korps*, July 20, 1939.

¹²⁴ In original: “Marschstiefel und Uniform-Zugstiefel in all.” *Das Schwarze Korps*, April 06, 1939.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

for various types of gun changed frequently, those for boots and helmets were very long-lived: the same steel helmets are advertised in the last 1939 edition of *Das Schwarze Korps*, and the boots appear until the second-to-last.¹²⁶ In short, one could equip a small army using those martial items advertised in *Das Schwarze Korps*.

In conclusion, what these issues of *Das Schwarze Korps* tell us is that Nazi ideology presented the “Jewish threat” as being primarily economic even in 1938 and 1939. Through their perfidy and worldwide conspiracy, they had allegedly been crippling Germany’s economy and the individual German’s well-being for years. Only in recent years, after Germany had recognized the threat the Jews posed had that nation been able to improve its situation. The international community, however, did not recognize Germany’s wisdom, in large part because most world governments and virtually all international newspapers were said to be controlled by Jews. *Das Schwarze Korps* also highlights Germany’s victories over the Jews by advertising Hitler’s successes in strengthening Germany. The newspaper also expresses concern with preserving the Aryan race, either by preventing Jewish infiltration or by encouraging Aryan couples to procreate in order to further the race. Finally, *Das Schwarze Korps* provides a taste of things to come with its promotion of a virulent culture of violence.

In short, we do see indoctrination in these issues of the newspaper, but it is not targeted indoctrination to kill. *Das Schwarze Korps* does portray Jews as a threat, but this threat is primarily economic. The solution to this problem is also not yet “Final”: instead, the “Jewish Problem” can be solved merely by deporting the Jews. Mass murder is not yet necessary. Thus, what we see here is not the type of indoctrination that would

¹²⁶ *Das Schwarze Korps*, December 21, 1939; *Das Schwarze Korps*, December 14, 1939.

explicitly motivate men to kill Jews. Rather, according to these issues, the Jews do not need to be killed, but rather excluded. The next chapter will consider whether or not these “moderate” themes, in one form or another, influenced the *Einsatzgruppen*’s reasoning relative to the mass murder soon to ensue on the Eastern Front.

Chapter IV

Ideology on the Front Lines: Reports of the Einsatzgruppen from the Nuremburg Trials

Finally, this study of whether or not the variety of propaganda distributed in *Das Schwarze Korps* influenced SS men serving on the Eastern Front turns to examine a second major source, the Winfield B. Hale Nuremburg Trials Papers. This collection contains the materials that Winfield B. Hale collected while serving as an American judge at the Nuremburg Trials. Among other things, these papers contain the prosecution's exhibits from several of the defendants tried at Nuremburg, including several men who either worked closely with or were in charge of Einsatzgruppen. These documents were translated into English for the judges' convenience and were annotated by Hale during the trials.¹²⁷ It should be noted that these translations only comprise excerpts of the documents themselves, as full translations of the massively extensive originals would have been far too time-consuming for both the translators and the judges. The documents relevant to this study are composed primarily of situation reports or combinations of situation reports and memoranda that were created by the commander of a particular Einsatzgruppe or Einsatzkommando and then submitted to Berlin.¹²⁸ Some of these documents (although not all) contain various justifications for the wholesale murders that the Einsatzgruppen and -kommandos committed.

¹²⁷ Each of these translations has been certified by the translator with the phrase "I, [Name of Translator, translator's identification number], hereby certify that I am thoroughly conversant with the English and German languages; and that the above is a correct and true translation of excerpts from [document number]."

¹²⁸ Situation reports generally contain five sections consisting of an overview of the activities of the Einsatzgruppen in general followed by one section for each of the Einsatzgruppen describing its specific activities. Occasionally, these last four categories are further subdivided into headings for individual Einsatzkommandos or specific types of activity.

The Einsatzgruppen were originally formed for service in Poland during Germany's 1939 invasion. They were "composed primarily of men from the Gestapo, Sicherheitspolizei (Sipo; Security Police), Sicherheitsdienst (SD; Security Service) and Kriminalpolizei (Kripo; Criminal Police).¹²⁹ These groups were controlled through an office in SD Headquarters called Zentralstelle II P (meaning Central Office II Poland) under the authority of Franz Six.¹³⁰ The Einsatzgruppen were technically to be composed of 500 men each, divided into 100-man Einsatzkommandos, although this number varied considerably during the war.¹³¹ There were a total of five Einsatzgruppen serving in Poland: I, II, III, IV, and V. Additional units were added when the situation warranted their existence.¹³² Officially, their mission was to combat "all elements in foreign territory and behind the fighting troops that are hostile to the Reich and German people."¹³³ They were required to maintain good relations with both the Wehrmacht and various police units in order to better achieve this goal.¹³⁴ Indeed, the Wehrmacht and its associated intelligence units frequently flagged potential targets for the Einsatzgruppen and then contributed troops to aid in their elimination.¹³⁵ As is now recognized in the scholarly literature, such incidents show the complicity of the German army in atrocities

¹²⁹ Rossino, *Hitler Strikes Poland*, 10.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid., 11.

¹³² Ibid., 12.

¹³³ Ibid., 13.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 16-20.

on the Eastern front, contrary to the earlier popular notions of a blameless regular army.¹³⁶

The concept of the Einsatzgruppen was revived when Germany invaded Russia in 1941. Like their predecessors, these new Einsatzgruppen were formed of men from the “Security Police (Gestapo and Kripo) as well as ... [the] intelligence apparatus (Security Service, or SD).”¹³⁷ These groups could be supplemented by small Waffen-SS units or assorted police units as the situation warranted.¹³⁸ Four of the new Einsatzgruppen, numbering approximately 3,000 men each, were assigned the letters A, B, C, and D and deployed behind the advancing German lines in Russia.¹³⁹ They were arranged alphabetically from north to south, with Einsatzgruppe A operating in Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia and Einsatzgruppe D operating in Ukraine. A fifth Einsatzgruppe was formed in July of 1941, and formed “the permanent Security Police force in the areas of the 1939-41 Soviet occupation zone in former eastern Poland.”¹⁴⁰ As they had been in Poland, the Einsatzgruppen were again responsible for “eliminating hostile elements” in the newly occupied territories, through mass executions behind the front lines.

Interestingly, their justifications for these atrocities and missions of liquidation bear little resemblance to the rationales expressed in *Das Schwarze Korps* for eliminating the Jewish presence in Germany, which had been primarily economic. According to this earlier theory, the Jews were exploiting the German economy for their own gain, which

¹³⁶ See, for example, Omer Bartov, *Hitler's Army: Soldiers, Nazis, and War in the Third Reich* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

¹³⁷ Browning, *Ordinary Men*, 9.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 10.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

was detrimental to the average German. On the whole, the rationalizations in the Hale papers are considerably more “practical,” in that they portray Jews as an imminent, rather than general, threat. Within the 77 relevant documents I examined, I found nine categories of rationalizations for mass murder.¹⁴¹ The most prevalent rationalization, constituting 38.8% of the total, was that Jews had to be eliminated as a “practical measure” to ensure the safety of German soldiers and uninvolved civilians in general in occupied areas. A specific form of this justification, constituting 24.7% of the total, was that the Jews were the driving force behind Bolshevism and that therefore Jews helped Russian soldiers in any way they could, thus making them a military threat that needed to be eliminated. The idea that military measures against the Jews were justified because the general non-Jewish population of the area in question welcomed them placed third, comprising 17.6% of the total. Less common rationales included the earlier predominant idea that Jews posed an economic threat to occupied areas (4.7%), which had been a prominent theme in *Das Schwarze Korps*, that Jews posed a threat to public health (2.4%), and that Jews were infiltrating the Aryan race (1.2%). Surprisingly, the documents do not dwell on the idea that the German people are the only ones who see the threat that the Jews pose: this idea is mentioned only once, constituting 1.2% of the total. The remainder of this chapter will examine each of these rationales in greater detail, and will then compare the results of this investigation with the results of the examination of *Das Schwarze Korps*.

¹⁴¹ Please note that several of these documents were counted twice when calculating percentages because they contained multiple rationales. As such, I studied 77 relevant documents but divided by 85 when performing my final calculations.

The most common justification for murdering Jews, that they posed a general threat to the German military and to the general civilian population, is perhaps also the most interesting. In the case of the military, the argument usually runs that Jews oppose German control and so conspire to subvert their occupiers in any way they can. Often, this opposition takes the form of allegations of direct force exerted against German operatives. For example, a situation report of August 30, 1941 alleged that in Pinsk, “Jews fired on a sentry of the town militia” as well as shooting “a member of the Militia ...from ambush.”¹⁴² As punishment for this supposed crime, 4500 Jews were murdered.¹⁴³ An operational situation report from August 7, 1944 repeats this theme, stating that Einsatzkommando 10a of Einsatzgruppe D carried out reprisals against the Jews of Petschanka due to “riots and attacks against the Wehrmacht.”¹⁴⁴ These reprisals consisted of shooting 97 Jews and taking 1756 hostages. These hostages were hardly safe: indeed, the report states explicitly that hostage-taking had become routine and that hostages “are executed on the slightest pretext.”¹⁴⁵ Jews were also executed in cases alleging treason. For example, a situation report from August 7, 1941 states that Einsatzkommando 11b of Einsatzgruppe D had concentrated the Jews of Thigina and liquidated 155 of them “as a reprisal for giving signals to the Red Army.”¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² Book 9, Document 932, 30 August 1941, Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Book 9, Document 744, 07 August 1941, Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Book 9, Document 744, 7 August 1941, Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

This supposed threat to the Wehrmacht could be extremely obscure. For example, a report dating from August 2, 1941 dealing with Sonderkommando 10a's activities near Kodyma employs a number of very vague reasons for murdering Jews. Among these are that "Jews had gathered in groups of 10 – 12 and had ... adopted a very hostile attitude" toward German forces.¹⁴⁷ Other Jews "had behaved in an insubordinate manner to the German military."¹⁴⁸ A memorandum to the Feldkommandantur 810 of the Feldgendarmarie from February 15, 1943 repeats this theme. This document states that in the "village of Ikor, a Jewess who had also showed her hostile attitude toward the Germans was treated according to regulations together with a 3 years old child and a newborn infant."¹⁴⁹ This chilling bureaucratic document is especially significant because it introduces the idea of collective guilt: the woman was supposedly guilty of harboring anti-German sentiments, but two children who had apparently done nothing to merit their treatment "according to regulations" were shot with her, presumably as a result of her alleged crimes. In short, the threat presented to the Wehrmacht did not have to be specific: instead, Jews could be shot for speaking out against German soldiers even if they have no obvious plan to harm them.

The idea that Jews needed to be eliminated in order to protect German soldiers was still present late in the war: a division morning report dating from August 30, 1944 states that the 69th infantry division "met with resistance from Jews who had prepared

¹⁴⁷ Book 9, Document 740, 2 August 1941, Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Book 9, Document 786, 15 February 1943, Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

defense positions” while passing south of Stakiai-Pamityvis.¹⁵⁰ These rebels were defeated quickly, and one Russian was taken prisoner along with 19 Jews.¹⁵¹ All of these captives were handed over to the SD, who presumably murdered them.

The alleged Jewish threat to German troops could also be seen on a larger scale elsewhere in Nazi-occupied Europe: for example, a memorandum dated February 3, 1943 (i.e. during the German and Italian occupation of France) to the Commander-In-Chief West states that, “For urgent security reasons it is imperative that all Jews be removed from all border and costal districts.”¹⁵² These Jews were to be concentrated in the interior of France so that they could be deported east at a later date. Such a deportation would eliminate alleged Jewish operations against the Wehrmacht from loosely policed territories, as was theoretically the case at the time the memo was written.¹⁵³

The Jews were, of course, presumed not to be above sabotage. For example, a war diary (Stamped “Top Secret!”) dating from August 12-15, 1941 states simply that in the “course of an action carried out in Rudjna and Trojanow 26 Jewish Communists and saboteurs were seized and shot.”¹⁵⁴ These Jews were killed by Einsatzgruppe C, which was operating in the vicinity of Novo Ukrainka at the time. Another journal, this one dated August 29, 1941, mentions that Einsatzgruppe B shot a Jewish woman who had

¹⁵⁰ Book 9, Document 724, 30 August 1944, Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Book 9, Document 653, 03 February 1943, Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Book 9, Document 932, 30 August 1941, Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

been acting as a saboteur while operating in Smolensk.¹⁵⁵ This alleged sabotage could also take the form of spreading rumors. For example, a memorandum to the Counterintelligence Officer dated August 6, 1941 tells of a Ukrainian woman (who could understand but not speak Yiddish) who claimed to have eavesdropped on a secret conversation between local Jews and Bolsheviks. According to her report, these persons were not only planning armed resistance against the occupying Germans, but had also intended to “pick up and collect leaflets dropped by German planes requesting the Ukrainians to start again working in the fields and in this way to impede and void our propaganda.”¹⁵⁶

The notion, advanced as a pretext to genocide, that Jews posed an imminent threat to the civilian population is more obscure. Usually, these arguments dealt with the allegation that the Jews were somehow controlling the population, usually economically. For example, a war diary dated August 23, 1941 provided an update on a situation that had been mentioned in previous reports. In this instance, local Jews had been accused of preventing the population of Ananjew from bringing in their harvest. The dispatch claimed that the local population was willing to work, but “resistance was partially shown toward an orderly harvesting caused at the instigation of Jewish inhabitants”¹⁵⁷ of the region. To rectify the situation, Einsatzkommando 12 of Einsatzgruppe D shot 94 Jews. A situation report dating from September 3, 1941 speaks of a much more direct threat to

¹⁵⁵ Book 9, Document 858, 29 August 1941, Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

¹⁵⁶ Book 9, Document 738, 06 August 1941, Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

¹⁵⁷ Book 9, Document 856, 23 August 1941, Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

the civilian population. In this instance, a group of security police “had” to shoot 300 Jews because the “Jews of Ananjew had threatened the ethnic German citizens of Ananjew with a blood bath after the German troops would leave.”¹⁵⁸ Thus, in this instance, the security police were preventing an immediate threat – massacre – rather than an impending threat – starvation.

The Jews also allegedly threatened the Wehrmacht by collectively and individually collaborating with the Soviet Army. For example, the situation report from August 28, 1941 also mentions that “11 Jews were executed in the villages of Szuchari and Jasna. Some of these had ... carried on Communist agitation.”¹⁵⁹ One of these, it was reported, had even been a political Commissar, and he was of course promptly executed.¹⁶⁰ In an instance described in a letter to Commander of the Army Rear Area Korueck dated August 20, 1941, although 4,000 Jews left when the Soviet Army surrendered the town, it “was found by Sonderkommando 10b [Woehler’s group], that in spite of this, there are collaborators of the Communist Party and of the N.K.V.D. among the Jews.”¹⁶¹ A situation report from July 6, 1941 also draws this connection between Communists and Jews, alleging that “in Garsden the Jewish population had supported the Russian frontier guards in the defense against the German attacks.”¹⁶² In consequence, these Jews were executed along with many other people. Another report, dated July 17,

¹⁵⁸ Book 9, Document 861, 3 September 1941, Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

¹⁵⁹ Book 9, Document 858, 28 August 1941, Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Book 9, Document 884, 16 November 1941, Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

¹⁶² Book 9, Document 921, 6 July 1941, Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

1942 and discussing the situation in Ukraine, claims that in the "course of the security-police measures taken, 36 communist functionaries as well as 76 Jewish-bolshevist officers, among them political commissars, were found to be ringleaders" of a planned uprising in a POW camp.¹⁶³ All of these prisoners were, of course, executed.

A popular variation on this argument proposed a larger conspiracy between Jews and Bolsheviks. According to this theory, Jews were not just prone to helping the Red Army in their fight against Germany. Instead, Jews were said to be in fact the main proponents of Bolshevism. Therefore, it was allegedly their fault that there were Communists, and therefore a war, in the first place. This concept of "Judeobolshevism" was embraced by a number of high-ranking Nazi officials, including Hitler himself. According to Eberhard Jäckel, it "was Hitler's conviction that the war of conquest against Russia would be an easy undertaking since the Bolshevik regime was made up of Jews who ... were unfit to build a state."¹⁶⁴ Indeed, Russia's fall was to be the crowning example of Nazi racial theory's validity.¹⁶⁵ The concept of "Judeobolshevism" is also connected with the idea of the "universal mission" of anti-Semitism. According to this concept, because Jews do not have any type of territorial state, their "ultimate goal is the denationalization, the promiscuous bastardization of other peoples, the lowering of the racial level of the highest peoples as well as the domination of this [resulting] racial mishmash through the extirpation of the folkish intelligentsia and its replacement by the

¹⁶³ Book 9, Document 925, 17 July 1941, Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

¹⁶⁴ Eberhard Jäckel, *Hitler's Weltanschauung: A Blueprint for Power*, Trans. Herbert Arnold (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1972), 54-55.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 55.

members of its own people.”¹⁶⁶ Thus, Germany cannot defeat the Jewish menace alone: instead, the “fight against the Jews ... was a task for all mankind.”¹⁶⁷ As we have already seen, however, the Nazis stressed that mankind as a whole did not yet recognize the “Jewish threat.”

The best example of the concept of “Judeobolshevism” is expressed in a situation report from November 5, 1941. According to this document,

Einsatzgruppe C [then operating near Kiev] found that the dominant role of Jews in the USSR in the fields of politics, economy, and culture to be greater than was anticipated. There is scarcely another country that is so strongly under the absolute rule of an alien group of oppressors and exploiters than the Soviet Union. The tyranny of the Jews in the USSR extends without exception to all spheres of life.¹⁶⁸

The author continues for four more pages discussing, in detail, alleged Jewish dominance in the Communist Party, economics, fine arts and sciences, and finally in national education and specifically the education of youth.¹⁶⁹ This point recurs in a memorandum from Lieutenant-Colonel Keitel to Führer Headquarters dated September 12, 1941. According to Keitel, the “fight against Bolshevism necessitates indiscriminate and energetic accomplishment of this task, especially also against the Jews, the main carriers of Bolshevism.”¹⁷⁰ This theme is repeated in a war diary dating from October 1, 1941. In this instance, the diary’s writer states that the “battle against Bolshevism commands a ruthless and energetic drive above all also against the Jews, the main supporters of

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 104.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 105.

¹⁶⁸ Book 9, Document 880, 5 November 1941, Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Book 9, Document 609, 12 September 1941, Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

Bolshevism.”¹⁷¹ In other words, the war could not end until the Bolsheviks have been defeated, and the Bolsheviks would not and could not be defeated until the Jews had been eliminated.

A few documents expound on the tangible benefits that occur after extirpating Jews from a particular area. For example, a report from September 25, 1941 mentions that “the clothing of evacuated Jews secured by the SD are being decontaminated and issued to needy ethnical [sic] Germans and/or Ukrainians.”¹⁷² Jewish property was not going to waste either: the “mayor has been ordered to list the Jewish apartments ... [t]he apartments are assigned to homeless ethnical [sic] Germans by the mayor.”¹⁷³ This idea is repeated in an activity and situation report dating from November 25, 1941. The report recounted that after the Jews in Kiev had either been arrested or shot, their money, “valuables and clothes ... [were] secured and placed at the disposal of the NSV (National Socialist Peoples’ Welfare Organization) for the equipment of racial Germans and ... the needy population.”¹⁷⁴ Thus, removing the Jews was said to have immediate and tangible benefits: the favored Aryans could benefit from using their property, instead of allowing it to remain in the hands of the degenerate Jews.

Finally, we note again the idea that local non-Jewish populations welcome the removal of the Jews, and so this removal is said to be justified. For example, one Einsatzgruppe stated that in Simferopol, the population (which was reputed to be openly

¹⁷¹ Book 9, Document 745, 1 October 1941, Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

¹⁷² Book 9, Document 865, 25 September 1941, Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Book 9, Document 868, 25 November 1941, Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

anti-Semitic) appreciated the German actions against the Jews to the point that “in some cases [they] spontaneously bring ... Jews to the Kommandos to be liquidated.”¹⁷⁵ A later report from Simferopol confirmed this observation, stating that the “population generally welcomed the elimination of these elements.”¹⁷⁶ This sentiment was said to be present in other places as well. For example, a situation report dating from April 16, 1942 mentioned that the population of the Crimea “in the majority has welcomed the measures taken against the Jews.”¹⁷⁷ Indeed, the population was said to be helping the German occupiers with their task by making denunciations against Crimean Jews.¹⁷⁸ These assertions of gratitude could be extremely helpful to the German troops involved in massacring Jewish populations. Instead of having to acknowledge that they were killing innocent people, they could instead tell themselves that they were actually helping uninvolved civilians by eliminating a factor in their lives that had long been oppressing them. In other words, they were doing in an “orderly” manner what these people had long wanted to do themselves. In an odd way, this focus on others anti-Semitism was prefigured by the focus on Rumania in the preceding chapter. In that instance, the Rumanians were praised for eliminating the supposed Jewish threat to their economy. In this instance, the killers did not have to acknowledge their own anti-Semitism: instead, they could tell themselves that they themselves were not actively anti-Semitic, but rather they were efficiently helping other people who happened to be anti-Semites. These

¹⁷⁵ Book 9, Document 893, 12 December 1941, Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

¹⁷⁶ Book 9, Document 900, 09 January 1942, Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

¹⁷⁷ Book 9, Document 916, 16 April 1942, The Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

killers could in some sense again circumvent the idea that they had become truly complicit in atrocity.

In short, the SS reports contained in the Winfield B. Hale papers present the Jews as a tangible rather than a potential threat. Instead of the ideas vented in *Das Schwarze Korps* in the prewar years of Jews dominating Germany economically and Jews infiltrating the Aryan race, we see Jews allegedly conspiring against the German military in all its forms, planning to harm the ethnic Aryan population, and conspiring with the Soviet forces against the German occupiers. Indeed, the local population could be used as a crucial pretext: the Jews were said to have become such a nuisance over the years that the citizens of the affected areas welcome their removal. Thus, the reasons that these documents give for eliminating the Jews are significantly different from the reasons advanced in the editions of *Das Schwarze Korps* that I discussed in the previous chapter. In *Das Schwarze Korps*, we see the Jews allegedly posing an economic threat: according to the newspaper's contributors, if Jews are allowed to remain in the German economy, they will eventually destroy it. *Das Schwarze Korps* also alleges that Jews sponge off honest Aryan citizens even while they attempt to infiltrate the Aryan race. In contrast, the reports contained in the Hale papers allege that the Jews pose an immediate and practical threat to both German troops and innocent civilians. Thus, they must be executed to prevent their supposed imminent atrocities, in a classic case of argument by psychological projection. In short, the themes expounded in *Das Schwarze Korps* are largely absent from these documents. This contrast needs to be addressed in more detail and forms the central issue of the following, concluding chapter.

Chapter V Conclusion

In general, what this thesis shows is that the ideological reasons for forcing Jews out of the German economy presented in the 1938 and 1939 issues of *Das Schwarze Korps* are significantly different from the justifications presented for killing “undesirables” given by the Einsatzgruppen reports contained in the Hale papers. In 1938 and 1939, pivotal years in the portrayal of the Jews, *Das Schwarze Korps* details a number of reasons why Jews supposedly need to be eliminated from European society. The most common of these pretexts was that Jews posed an economic threat to Europe as a whole. *Das Schwarze Korps* wrote on this threat in many forms. The most common of these forms accused Jews of damaging the European economy. For example, assorted articles contended that German Jews damaged trade with “enlightened” countries (specifically, the example of Rumania loomed large) that had already pushed Jews out of their economic sphere, that dishonest Jewish businessmen cheated hardworking Aryans, and that Jews refused to work to support themselves and thus unnecessarily drained Germany’s much-needed resources.

This supposed “Jewish threat” was depicted in other forms as well. For example, *Das Schwarze Korps* expressed concern about Jews infiltrating the Aryan race, either by marrying Aryans (this alleged threat usually took the form of Jewish men marrying Aryan women) or by assuming traditionally “German” names. The newspaper also expressed concern about what is considered the lagging size of the Aryan population. For example, the birth announcements in *Das Schwarze Korps* were not only intended to announce a new child’s arrival, but also to encourage by example, so that Aryan couples

would reproduce and so prevent Europe's "racially pure" population from being overrun by supposedly inferior populations both indigenous to Europe and transplanted from the non-European world.

By contrast, the themes expressed in the Nuremburg Trials documents do not indicate that the men of the Einsatzgruppen and their associated police squads were motivated to kill by ideology identical to the one articulated in *Das Schwarze Korps*. Instead of portraying the Jews as an economic threat that needed to be eliminated, these documents indicate that these men stated that they killed for immediate, "practical" reasons. The most common reason these reports give for murdering Jews was that Jews supposedly posed an imminent threat to the Wehrmacht, the Einsatzgruppen, or the ethnic non-Jewish civilian population of a particular location. This threat could take many forms. In some cases, the Jews were accused of taking direct action against the occupying forces: for example, Jews were frequently alleged to have acted as snipers, collaborated with partisan bands, or engaged in sabotage. In other cases, the supposed Jewish threat went far beyond any specific area and was presented as universal and omnipresent. In these instances, Jews were identified as the main supporters of Bolshevism. According to this theory, Jews controlled the Soviet Union and were collaborating with the Red Army. Thus, the Jews were held to be theoretically responsible not only for innumerable acts committed against German troops or ethnic Germans, but also for the very existence of the Soviet Union. Thus, this argument ran, German forces would have to eliminate the Jews in order to win the war with Russia.

Certainly, the Jews were occasionally mentioned in terms similar to those in *Das Schwarze Korps*. For example, there were five mentions of Jews as an economic threat,

one mention of the idea that the German people were the only ones to see the threat that the Jews pose, and one mention of the charge of Jews infiltrating the Aryan race.¹⁷⁹

These references are, however, far outnumbered by documents indicating that Jews were killed due to immediate, “practical” reasons. It is not, however, safe to conclude that ideology played a subordinate in the Holocaust. There are also considerable numbers of documents in the Hale collection that do not give any reason for the murder of Jews.

Thus, there is no way to tell what the motive behind the murders described in these pages was: it could have been practical, but it could also have been ideologically based. There is simply no way to know relying solely on the evidence used in this thesis.

The issue of the accuracy of documents in the Hale collection must also be considered. In those reports that state reasons for mass murder explicitly, there is in fact no way to know for certain whether or not the report’s writer had recorded those reasons with total accuracy. It does not, however, seem likely that those writers would have lied to any great extent as these were internal memoranda not intended for wider circulation. The Nazi regime was extremely anti-Semitic and pursued multiple avenues to remove the Jews from German society. Thus, if the killing squads operating in the East were killing Jews because the men participating in those massacres were anti-Semitic and so wanted the Jews dead, there would be no reason for them to hide it. Indeed, it is extremely likely that this sentiment would be applauded. There was certainly no punishment associated

¹⁷⁹ Documents portraying Jews as an economic threat: Book 9, Documents 743, 856, 931, 934, and 880; Document indicating that Germans are the only ones to see that threat: Book 9, Document 911; Document expressing fear that Jews are infiltrating the Aryan Race: Book 9, Document 880; All documents are from the Winfield B. Hale Papers, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Libraries.

with the expression of such sentiments, as is shown by the fact that no discipline was meted out to those report authors who provided no pretext for their murder of Jews.

It is also unlikely the Allied translators altered the documents significantly when preparing for the Nuremburg Trials. These trials were designed to find designated war criminals and punish them, not to study the intricacies of Nazi thought and policy. In other words, the point of the Nuremburg trials was to convict, not to consider. Thus, these translators would have had no motive to help the accused by providing them with excuses for their actions and thus possible pardons. Indeed, if the translators were altering documents, one would expect them to make the Einsatzgruppen seem more anti-Semitic than they actually were, since such a portrayal would make them even more obviously guilty and thus more likely to be convicted. In short, although we cannot be sure that those who wrote the reports were being completely honest about their motivations, it is unlikely that these statements are particularly and consistently inaccurate.

One of the most interesting ideas that emerges when examining the evidence presented in this thesis as a whole is that of SS men projecting their own anti-Semitism onto others. We see this idea first in the *Das Schwarze Korps* cartoon dealing with Rumania. Here, there is no direct mention of German anti-Semitism. Instead, the cartoonist shows a Rumanian complaining about his country's inability to "cleanse" itself of Jews without being slandered in the international press, which was, of course, supposedly controlled by Jews. In other words, what we see here is Rumanian anti-Semitism and a Rumanian desire to force the Jews out of its economic life. There is no mention of any German influence in the creation or maintenance of this attitude. As

such, it is Rumania that has “enlightened” itself by deciding to exclude Jews: Germany, far from being anti-Semitic “barbarians,” is merely reacting to the same threats in order to improve its own situation. The absurdity of Nazi activists then also complaining in 1938 and 1939 that Germany is not anti-Semitic enough is patent.

The idea of projecting one’s own anti-Semitism onto others resurfaces in the Hale papers. Here, however, we see this projection on an individual, rather than on a national, scale. In general, these documents show German troops convincing themselves that the indigenous peoples of the areas that they were operating in wanted the Jews living near them to be eliminated. Thus, if the German occupiers kill local Jews, they are not indulging their own anti-Semitism: rather, they are doing the local population a favor by accomplishing what that population would do itself if it were able, but in an orderly and efficient fashion, rather than in the disorderly “pogrom anti-Semitism” otherwise characteristic of Eastern Europe. Thus, Germans are not forced to face their own anti-Semitism in either of these cases. Instead, they can allow themselves to believe that they are acting reasonably and that any massacres or other “distasteful activities” that they find themselves involved in were forced upon them by “outsiders.” In other words, both those people reading *Das Schwarze Korps* and the German soldiers involved in the genocide on the Eastern Front can, with a minimum of creative thinking, attribute both their actions and their anti-Semitism to someone else.

In short, according to the evidence presented in this thesis, the Einsatzgruppen apparently did not kill because they had been comprehensively indoctrinated in the years preceding the war to believe that Jews should die nor because they had been specifically trained (and hence desensitized) to do so. Although these two factors may have

influenced them, these men killed for a completely distinct reason: their own claim of necessity. In other words, they “had” to kill such “undesirable” people as Jews and Poles in order to protect themselves and the civilian populations of the areas they were stationed in. In sum, this evidence supports neither those scholars who argue that the Einsatzgruppen killed due to ideology (in particular, Goldhagen, Koonz, and Rossino) nor those who contest that the Einsatzgruppen killed because they had been specifically trained to do so (most prominently Browning). Instead, it would seem to back such authors as Aly and Heim, who argue that the Holocaust’s origins can be explained through “practical” motives and pragmatic strategic and tactical motivations. Of course, none of these motives, specious or not, in any way diminish the enormity of the crimes committed by the Einsatzgruppen and their associated units against their victims or serve to absolve, excuse, or lessen the culpability of the Nazi regime as a whole. The assumptions from which the “practical” measures followed were clearly monstrous in their own right.

Obviously, more research is needed on this topic. A potentially profitable future project would be to examine other documents, especially memoirs and oral histories, in order to study what factors motivated the individuals involved with the Einsatzgruppen to kill. It would also be useful to study each Einsatzgruppe operating in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union separately in order to determine whether or not the factors discussed previously operated in all four units or if they were peculiar to only one or two, suggesting different group dynamics. Finally, it would be profitable to engage in a detailed comparison of the motivations of the Einsatzgruppen in Poland during 1939 and the motivations of the Einsatzgruppen in Russia during 1941 in order to see whether or

not their motivations changed as a result of different factors in the campaigns they were participating in. In short, in spite of all the research that has already been done on the subject, the debate about the Einsatzgruppen's motivations is far from over, and the stakes – the question of what produces genocidal properties and readiness to violence – are as important as the topic is disturbing.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Das Schwarze Korps. Schutzstaffeln der NSDAP: Berlin, 1938-1939.

Nuremburg Trial Papers, 1945-1946. MS 0521, University of Tennessee (Knoxville) Spécial Collections Library.

Secondary Sources

Aly, Götz and Susanne Heim. *Architects of Annihilation: Auschwitz and the Logic of Destruction*. Trans. A.G. Blunden. London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 2002.

Arendt, Hannah. *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*. New York: Viking Press, 1963.

Arendt, Hannah. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1966.

Browning, Christopher. *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*. New York: Harper Perennial, 1998.

Gellately, Robert. *The Gestapo and German Society: Enforcing Racial Policy 1933-1945*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990.

Goldhagen, Daniel Jonah. *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*. New York: Vintage Books, 1997.

Greenfeld, Liah. *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993.

Gutman, Israel. *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*. Vol. 3 of *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1990.

Herbert, Ulrich. *National Socialist Extermination Policies: Contemporary German Perspectives and Controversies*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2000.

Hitchins, Keith. *Rumania 1866-1947*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994.

Jäckel, Eberhard. Trans. Herbert Arnold. *Hitler's Weltanschauung: A Blueprint for Power*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1972.

Johnson, Eric A. *Nazi Terror: The Gestapo, Jews, and Ordinary Germans*. New York: Basic Books, 2000.

Kershaw, Ian. *The Hitler Myth: Image and Reality in the Third Reich*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Koehl, Robert. "The Character of the Nazi SS," The Journal of Modern History, 34, No. 3 (September 1962): 275-283.

Koonz, Claudia. *The Nazi Conscience*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2003.

Mazower, Mark. *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century*. New York: Vintage Books, 2000.

Reitlinger, Gerald. *The SS: Alibi of a Nation, 1922-1945*. New York: Da Capo Press, Inc., 1957.

Roseman, Mark. *The Wannsee Conference and the Final Solution: A Reconsideration*. New York: Metropolitan Books, 2002.

Rossino, Alexander. *Hitler Strikes Poland: Blitzkrieg, Ideology, and Atrocity*.

Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2003.

Appendix A:
Images published in *Das Schwarze Korps*



Figure 1

Cartoon entitled “Rumänien und die “Weltpresse” appearing in the January 13, 1938 edition of *Das Schwarze Korps*.



Figure 2
Cartoon entitled “Englische Arbeitslose” depicting the state of the unemployed in England appearing in the January 26, 1938 edition of *Das Schwarze Korps*.



Figure 3

Image of a young boy presented with birth announcements in *Das Schwarze Korps*.



Figure 4
Image of a young girl presented with birth announcements in *Das Schwarze Korps*.

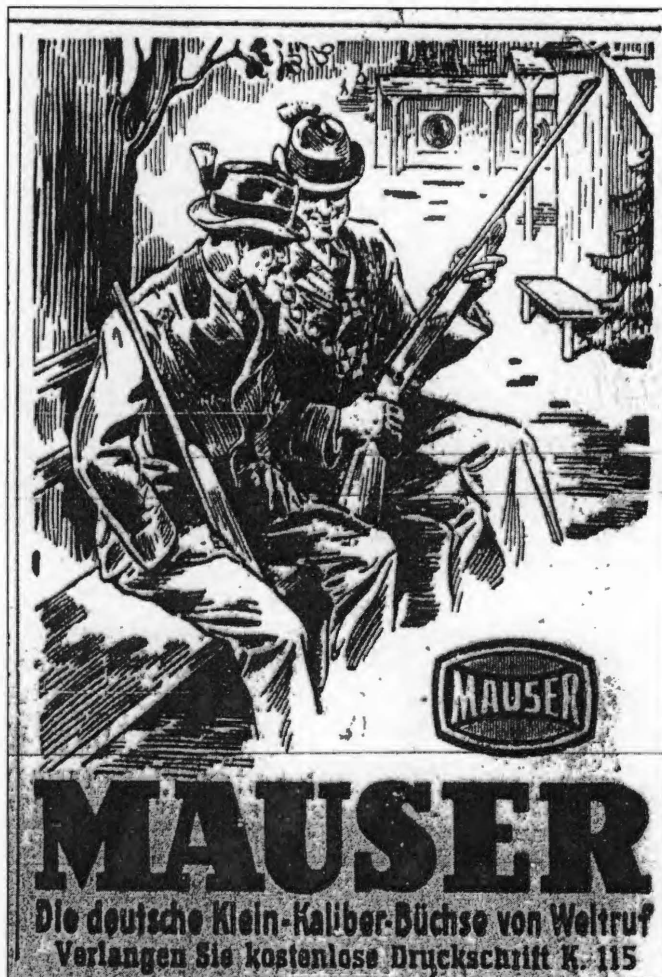


Figure 5

Advertisement for the Mauser Rifle appearing in the July 13, 1939 edition of *Das Schwarze Korps*.

Vita

Elizabeth Grace Dunham was born in Boston, Massachusetts on May 22, 1980.

She graduated from Sinagua High School in Flagstaff, Arizona in 1998 after having also attended Notre Dame High School in San José, California between 1994 and 1996.

Elizabeth began her undergraduate studies at Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Massachusetts in September of 1999, and transferred to Pomona College in Claremont, California in January of 2000. She graduated from Pomona College with a Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in History in May of 2002 and continued on to the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, where she began her graduate studies while working as a TA in the History department. She was hired full-time at the Special Collections Library in May of 2004. Elizabeth has completed all of the requirements for a Master of Arts degree in History, which will be conferred in the spring of 2005.

