

AFTERWORD*REHEARSALS: THE GERMAN ARMY IN BELGIUM, AUGUST 1914*

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PREFACE

I had expected that I might be accused by some readers of Germanophobia, and that my accusers would not be mollified by my attempt to preempt their charges in the Acknowledgments. However, I had imagined that such critics would be Amazon reviewers or, if the book received some attention, others in the wild blue blogosphere. It was disheartening to learn in the *American Historical Review*, the journal of the American Historical Association, that I believe in “a German national character” that is “innately barbaric.”[1]

Of course I neither say nor imply any such thing. What I do is take issue with the thesis of John Horne and Alan Kramer in their otherwise superb *German Atrocities 1914: A History of Denial*. They argue that German soldiers and officers were in the grip of a “franc-tireur myth complex,” a kind of mass paranoia much like that which seized the French peasantry in the summer of 1789. (The AHR reviewer proposed another analogy, comparing the killings in Belgium with abuses committed at Abu Ghraib.) I suggested instead that while there was indeed rampant paranoia about franc-tireurs, a more encompassing explanation was desirable, and that such an explanation ought to take into account what was being written and spoken in Berlin in the two decades preceding the war. Having been trained as an intellectual historian, I’m probably inclined to take ideas

more seriously than historians in other fields, but I had hoped that this would not be regarded as a radically retrogressive proposal.

After all, most of the nearly 6,000 Belgian civilians killed during the invasion were not the victims of random attacks by panicked troops. They were executed, sometimes days after the alleged provocation, under the orders of officers who made no efforts to distinguish the innocent from the guilty or, indeed, to determine if resistance by civilians had in fact occurred. There is much evidence to suggest that, whatever the source of the gunfire that inspired the reprisals (and I argued that, in several cases, agents provocateurs may have been responsible), officers were seeking to terrorize the civilian population. They wished to insure the speedy passage of their troops and to deter attacks on occupying forces and lines of communication. Such a tactic was approved by military authorities. I cited the handbook *Kriegsbrauch im Landkrieg* and endorsements of terrorism by respected figures such as von Clausewitz, von Holtzendorff and von Hartmann. These convictions were not shared by other Western armies. I contrasted the German invasion of Belgium in 1914 with the American and British invasion of Germany in 1945, and compared the German manual with *A Guide to Occupation of German Communities by Small Units*, issued by 9th Army Headquarters in December 1944.

Nor did these convictions occur in a vacuum. There was something distinctive about the political culture of Imperial Germany. Confessing that I am not an historian of Germany and that any comprehensive explanation would be “beyond the scope of this book and the competencies of the author,” I suggested that it might be helpful nonetheless to approach the differences by considering what had been written by astute and knowledgeable contemporaries, including German expatriates and dissidents. It is

easy enough to argue that the insights of such observers are at best impressionistic and likely to be tainted by unconscious prejudices. But historians arriving decades later do not check their own biases at the security desk of the archives and libraries they visit (different as those biases are from those of their subjects). What is certain is that alert contemporaries residing in Germany had access to a dense and rich body of evidence not available to historians of later generations, except in the conversations they recorded and the revealing incidents they described.

To recapitulate, my suggestion that it is worth looking at attitudes and beliefs of educated Germans in the *Kaiserreich* to help explain events in Belgium in August 1914 ought not to be interpreted as a belief in an innate national character. All the same, if we are convinced of the importance of historical forces in shaping values, we should hardly be surprised that, given their very different experiences between 43 AD and 1914, people inhabiting the regions that became Britain would feel differently about many things on the eve of the war than people who inhabited the lands that became Germany. These differences, however, were no more irreversible than they were innate. Had Wilhelm I died young and Friedrich III lived to a ripe old age, for example, it is certainly possible that educated public opinion in early 20th century Germany might have differed in subtle and perhaps not so subtle ways.

Having said all this, I recognize that what follows will only further alienate those who do not wish to discuss differences between European cultures. Needless to say, I don't think history is well served by such relativism.

INTRODUCTION

Even in a book of over 800 pages, scores of pages and hundreds of draft pages get shredded. Readers no doubt have reason to be grateful for most of the cuts. However, as I was reading through the second set of galley proofs in July 2007, I realized that I had cut discussions of two important, and related, propositions.[2] The first, amply illustrated throughout Chapters 2 to 12, is the role of anti-Catholicism in the persecution of Belgian civilians. It was not merely “materialism” that was responsible for the desecration of churches in Aarschot, Leuven, and elsewhere in Belgium. Clearly, the animus toward the Church that had precipitated, and was exacerbated by, the *Kulturkampf* survived the end of that campaign, and resurfaced in the heat of the invasion. An entire chapter had been excised that included a discussion of anti-Catholicism. It was entitled “Die Schwartze Teufelen,” literally the black devils, a derogatory reference to priests. The chapter surveyed the *Kulturkampf*, but it also looked back to the near-genocide of the Hereros in Southwest Africa in 1904, hence the title, and related it, as well as the suppression of the Boxer Rebellion in 1900 and the Zabern Affair of 1913, to the August war crimes. In taking up other precursors of German behavior in 1914, the chapter also obviously had more to say about “militarism” than was included in the final section of Chapter 13 (which had itself been reduced to less than a third of its original length).

If the first edition failed to include the backward glances I had drafted, it also neglected to include observations I had written on subsequent events, for I had originally discussed, albeit briefly, the way in which August 1914 was in fact a rehearsal. I was less disturbed by this omission. I figured readers familiar with the Holocaust, for example, might recall, when reading about the activities of the German “Red Cross” in Tamines,

the fact that the Zyklon B canisters were transported to the gas chambers at Auschwitz in white trucks emblazoned with a red cross. (The “infirmarium” at Treblinka also operated beneath an enormous Red Cross flag. Here the old and sick were “cured with one pill”—shot in the back of the head—so as not to impede the flow of arrivals into the gas chamber.) Similarly, descriptions of the forced marches around Brabant during the week of August 23rd would, I hoped, remind readers of the far more lethal but equally pointless treks of concentration camp survivors after the closing of the camps during the late fall and winter of 1944-45. And I trusted that the spectacle of cattle-cars rumbling eastward packed with innocent *Staatsfeinden* would also resonate, and that parallels between massacres in Belgian towns and villages in August 1914 and in Polish towns and villages after September 1939 would not be lost on readers. Still, in retrospect, I regretted omitting a discussion of the ways in which the events of August anticipated the subsequent behavior of Germans in uniform.[3] As I observe later, however, the events of August 1914 were less a rehearsal for the Holocaust than for the treatment of Polish civilians in the early fall of 1939, and of other Eastern Europeans subsequently. Under *Wermacht* rule, which lasted only until October 25th 1939, 531 Polish towns and villages were intentionally burned and 16,376 civilians killed in 714 mass executions. The Aarschots, Tamines, and Dinants of western Poland are remembered today only by the families of the victims.[4]

In what follows, I would like to try to redress both omissions together—to look forward to the persecution of civilians in Eastern Europe after September 1st 1939 (and German Jews after 1933) and back to the persecution of German Catholics that began in 1871, and of Chinese and Southwest Africans at the beginning of the 20th century—

persecutions, obviously, of very different magnitudes. Specifically, I would like to consider how the August massacres were prefigured by, and, in turn, anticipated, other campaigns by focusing on the roles of fear and greed as incitements to murder.

Fear and greed are obviously not incompatible. Historians are always suspicious of monocausal explanations and any day trader knows that both can be equally importunate at one and the same time. Students watching nearly any documentary on Nazi Germany are treated to scenes *from Das Ewige Jude* (The Eternal Jew) Fritz Hippler's 1940 film, that juxtapose images of rats scampering out of a sewer with Polish Jews. The Jews were parasites threatening the health of the Aryan nation, a favorite motif in Nazi propaganda, but never so vividly illustrated. The leading Nazis believed their propaganda, and may have convinced millions of others, that "International Jewry," unlike benign parasites, was actually intent on exterminating the German people and it was essential that Jews be eliminated first if Germans were to survive the war. The Second World War was a war against the Jews: *Auschwitzdienst ist Frontdienst*, SS guards were told, and Hitler and his subordinates made no secret of the German objective.[5]

No less memorable, and no less inevitable in the documentaries, are scenes shot by Russian cameramen shortly after the liberation of Majdanek, showing piles of children's clothing and of human hair that Germans had been unable to ship west before abandoning the camp. In one arresting image a soldier holds up a little girl's vest. Before the Jews were gassed, they were robbed. The robbery began with the businesses, savings, and investments they were obliged to liquidate, the buildings, property, and valuables they were forced to sell, or that were simply seized, the cash, jewelry, and food

that was taken from the arriving convoys, and, finally, the gold extracted from the teeth of the corpses before they were incinerated, and that was shipped to Germany along with the hair and clothing. There was also the value of the labor extracted from the ghetto workshops and from the factories and mines ringing Auschwitz and other camps.[6]

FEAR

It should be clear that I am not now reverting to Horne and Kramer's thesis, which I criticized in Chapter 13. I suggested there that, while there was much paranoia about franc-tireurs, the killing of Belgian civilians was not a recapitulation of the Great Fear in France of 1789. The operations in the summer of 1914 were supported by a set of attitudes—an impatience, arrogance, and ruthlessness—that grew out of the kind of nationalism that had emerged in Germany by the end of the 1890s (according to European contemporaries), complemented by “militarism” and intensified by “materialism.” Militarism meant a belief in the inevitability and desirability of war and the conviction that it must be prosecuted with lightning speed and annihilating brutality. It also meant contempt for civilians and a hypersensitivity to slights against one's honor on the part of officers and, on the part of soldiers, a willingness to do what other European nationals would have found unconscionable, merely because it was ordered. For what has to be explained, in the end, is not only the shooting of civilians and the burning of their homes by enraged troops immediately after gunshots were heard, but executions carried out many hours, and sometimes days, after the incidents they were supposedly avenging. “Materialism,” meanwhile, ratcheted up the commitment to the German nation and Volk. There is a large and impressive body of literature describing how nationalism became a surrogate religion in the French Revolution and then in the 19th century independence movements, before reaching a hideous apotheosis in Germany in the 1930s.[7] In August 1914, these attachments overrode commitments to European legal norms (not to mention conventions of chivalry and charity) that would have moderated the treatment of Belgian civilians, even in wartime.

What I neglected to unpack from German nationalism, however, though it was made obvious in the narrative, was a lingering anti-Catholicism that resurfaced during the invasion, and became a pretext to pillage and murder.[8]

Bismarck called off the *Kulturkampf* in 1879, recognizing that socialism posed a more dire threat to German unity than its trans-national rival, Catholicism, and that the successive May Laws and other legislation had only resulted in a larger and stronger Center Party and in the revival of Polish nationalism.[9] Persecution had been counterproductive, as is frequently the case in Western Europe. Indeed, the Center Party, Bismarck eventually decided, might make a better ally than the Liberals against socialism. However, the hatred of the Church that was revealed, and much exacerbated, by the *Kulturkampf* persisted.[10] It is impossible to disentangle animosity toward Belgians from anti-Catholicism, though this was something German Catholics wished to do (in absolving the clergy but not denying that franc-tireurs had committed atrocities or questioning the Army's reprisals). Their Catholicism had very much to do with the wickedness of the civilian population, in German eyes, particularly with their deceitfulness and lack of self-control. There had been, of course, no hostility to Belgians qua Belgians on the part of any segment of German society prior to August 1914.[11] But clearly a substratum of anti-Catholicism persisted after the 1870s and flared up during the invasion.

It is not far-fetched to compare it to antisemitism.

“*Ohne Juda, ohne Rom/Wird erbaut Germanias Dom,*” chanted Pan-Germanic students in Vienna during the *Los von Rom* movement in the first decade of the 20th century. (Without Judea, without Rome, Germania's cathedral will be built.)[12]

Jews and Catholics threatened the German Volk—with whom the Austrian Pan-Germans wished to unite politically—in different ways, but by similar means. Jews, in the formula that united antisemites in all European countries after 1873, were dangerous because they were the bearers of capitalism—an economic process that uprooted and despoiled peasants, marginalized small shopkeepers, and concentrated great wealth in a few corrupt hands. But they also posed a threat as agitators for radical political change, seeking to usurp the positions of traditional elites (including the bankers, merchants, and industrialists responsible for the social and economic dislocations the antisemites deplored) in the name of the workers, an identification that naturally intensified after 1917. Catholicism, however, was menacing precisely because it was anti-modern. It undermined the loyalty of believers to the German state, guardian of the German people, on the one hand, while, on the other, it subverted the critical intellect that was essential for freedom and autonomy, themselves essential for social and economic progress. But what united Jews and Catholics was their *modus operandi*. The destructive work of both was carried out surreptitiously, behind the scenes—invisible to innocent Michael—much like the activities of the *franc-tireurs*.

“Here we are so helpless,” sighed Henry Lorensten, the officer supervising the burning of homes along Stationsstraat in Leuven. “Fighting is easy in comparison.” The *franc-tireurs* were infuriating precisely because they did not give battle in the open, but cut down German soldiers and officers from the shadows. Their tenacity was diabolical. Even after the residents of Les Rivages had been expelled from their homes and the houses searched three times, the elusive *franc-tireurs* continued firing from the

residences. The commune, according to the German commander, was a “witches’ cauldron.”[13]

“International Jewry” and the Jesuits, the shock corps of the Church, also operated clandestinely. In the satiric “Battle song of the Jesuits,” published in *Kladderdatsch* in June 1872, members of the order sang “We are elusive like the air/Quietly floating through the night,/Like vapors rising from a bog/Or shrub or poisoned goblet./When you think you’ve grabbed us,/We have already disappeared,/Slipping away into a hidden lair;/You can sooner fumigate pests,/Than us, the Jesuits.”[14] The solution for pestilence was *Säuberung*—cleansing—a word that recurs in German testimony about actions against franc-tireurs—for instance, the assault on the families sheltering under the railroad bridge in Neffe—as against Jesuits and Jews. The cleansing had been more thorough, if less lethal, in 1872, when foreign-born Jesuits were expelled from Germany, German Jesuits forcibly dispersed, and the order banned. In the cleansing after 1941, the Jews, of course, were literally fumigated.[15]

It did not take long for some Catholic intellectuals in Germany to grow suspicious of the reports of franc-tireur atrocities. The charges of Catholic treachery and deceit that circulated widely in the German press in August were too reminiscent of accusations made during the *Kulturkampf*, even before chilling information began surfacing about the destruction of churches, amid cries of *Religionskrieg*, and the execution of priests. Even military authorities were concerned about the level of popular anti-Catholicism.[16]

Similarly, by June of 1872, a year after the war against the Church had commenced,[17] two leading Liberals began to have second thoughts. What was disturbing for Edward Lasker and Ludwig Bamberger was that the anti-Jesuit legislation

targeted not criminal activity by individuals, but a specific group. “What if there had been a law against the *Nationalverein*?” fretted one of the party’s Nestors, the Saxon historian Karl Biedermann, in a letter to Lasker. [18] But Lasker and Bamberger were Jews, and it was not only a hypothetical attack on the Party that troubled them. “We are acting in self-defense and cannot restrain ourselves with liberal phrases about citizens’ rights,” Bismarck declared angrily, when questioned about the Jesuit Law.[19] Could not Jews be targeted by a similar rationale?

Lasker’s fears were echoed, in turn, by the leadership of the Center Party two decades after the *Kulturkampf*. “We...have not forgotten what happened to us,” wrote Windhorst’s successor, Ernst Lieber, at the height of the antisemitic campaigns of the ‘90s. “Even if more elevated considerations and more fundamental motives did not restrain us, we cannot offer to forge the weapon to be used against the Jews today...” [20]

In the end, though, it was more than a common *modus operandi* that united Jews and Catholics, in the minds of German nationalists. Though antithetical in other respects, they were both, at bottom, “materialists,” like the hypocritical English. The God all three worshiped was the Law, not the Spirit. It sufficed to follow the rules laid down in the Talmud or in Catholic liturgy and canon law, or in the British Constitution and the laws of supply and demand. And in the end, what Jews, the Catholic Church, and the English sought was wealth and power, not redemption. And all three menaced Germany; they profited from her weakness and disunion, which they cunningly exacerbated. The themes echoed and re-echoed in the work of nationalist writers in the fifty years before 1914.[21]

Notable among the torrent of anti-Catholic literature appearing in 1872 was a satirical booklet by the popular cartoonist (and inventor of the comic strip) Wilhelm

Busch, *Pater Filuzius*, which chronicled the adventures of a wily Jesuit as he tried to convince an elderly spinster to leave her fortune to him. Unlike priests, who were generally depicted in anti-Catholic publications as lazy gluttons, short and fat, Jesuits, in Busch's cartoons and elsewhere, were tall and thin, and much more threatening. [22] Busch's cartoons notoriously included vivid antisemitic caricatures: "The Hebrew, sly and craven,/Round of shoulder, nose and knee,/Slinks to the Exchange unshaven/And intent on usury." [23] *Die fromme Helene*, from which the verse comes, is also a repository of anti-Catholic stereotypes. The message: when dealing with Jew or Jesuit, hang onto your wallet.

On the eve of the *Kulturkampf*, Richard Wagner decided to republish under his own name his anonymous pamphlet of nineteen years earlier, "On Jewry in Music (1850)." Emancipation had been a mistake. "For all our writing and speaking of Jewish emancipation, we always felt instinctively repelled by any real, active contact with Jews." [24] There were a couple of reasons for this repugnance, apart from their foreign looks and manners: the language and culture of the Jews was derivative; it was not rooted in a *Volkgeist*, and so they could not make truly original contributions to European culture. Worse, without this spiritual sheet anchor, Jews sought only money and power, a malignant power directed against Germany: "I hold the Jewish race to be the born enemy of pure humanity and everything noble in it. It is certain it is running us Germans to the ground." [25] Wagner is credited with coining the word "Judaization" (*Verjüdung*). [26]

Wagner abhorred Catholicism as well. It was a "huge perversion" perpetrated by "the Semite-Latin Church." [27] Munich was a "vile place" to which he refused to return, he explained to King Ludwig, because its people were misled by Jews and Jesuits. [28] It

was because of the Jesuit influence in Austria that Wagner favored an alliance between Bavaria and Prussia, despite his loathing of Bismarck.[29]

It was left to Wagner's son-in-law and fervent admirer, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, to flesh out, amply, Wagner's prejudices. Chamberlain famously inaugurated the racial antisemitism that was taken over virtually in tact by Alfred Rosenberg, the Nazi Party ideologue (though the extent to which "racial" antisemitism differed from the "ethnic" antisemitism that goes back to antiquity—regarding the Jews as a people or nation, not merely individuals subscribing to certain religious beliefs—should not be overstated). Precisely because of their own racial consciousness, according to Chamberlain, Jews posed a threat to Europe. They were intent on destroying idealistic Indo-European culture and enslaving the continent's inhabitants. Catholicism was anathema precisely because it retained Semitic influences. Like the Jews, the Papacy was bent on dominating the world; the history of Germany was largely the struggle to free itself from the clutches of Rome.[30] Thus, in popular culture and high culture alike—from the newsstands of Berlin to the drawing room of Wahnfried in Bayreuth—Jews and Catholics, Jesuits in particular, were reviled, sometimes in tandem.

From the 1760s Jesuits were repeatedly expelled from most European countries and it would be easy to push too far the analogies between the persecution of Jesuits, Jews, and franc-tireurs—and, for that matter, Freemasons, in which the Jesuits distinguished themselves, as some certainly did in campaigns against the Jews. (The antisemitism of *Civiltà Cattolica*, the Jesuit organ, was notorious after 1880; many French and Belgian Jesuits, however, demurred.)[31] But a nation founded on the triumph of a Volk was bound to have a more vivid and lively perception of the Other

against whom it defined itself than did nations whose most celebrated founding events were declarations of rights—particularly when German culture owed so much to an individual, Luther, who harbored such animated hatreds of Catholics and Jews, combined with so exalted a notion of what was owed the State.[32] One cannot in the end avoid viewing what happened to *Staatsfeinde* in 1914 in the light of what had happened to them in the 1870s and what would happen to them in the 1940s.

GREED

For at least a century and a quarter before the outbreak of the Great War, nationalist writers repeatedly claimed that the German people, thanks to their distinctive *Volkgeist*, were more spiritual than the materialists and egoists across the Rhine, the Channel, and the Atlantic. They were heroes, not shopkeepers, idealists, not utilitarians or pragmatists. Duty and honor beckoned, not profit. This was hardly the view of most Belgians in August 1914.

Returning through Leuven to secure supplies for the refugees in Tienen, a merchant was surprised to see the Stationsplein crammed with merchandise to be shipped east. An American diplomat standing in the square thought he was in a supply depot. A Dominican friar approaching the town by train watched car after car rumble eastward, laden with goods. The looting in other towns was hardly less thorough. On August 15, a resident of Visé recalled, “two officers inspected my house, and finding there were things worth taking, they wrote and signed a paper directing the house to be spared and pinned it to the door. When the valuables had been removed, the place was burned down. I took the paper off the door and preserved it.”[33] Marie Naus, of Leffe, also came away with a souvenir—the top of a pepper mill, which she showed to the British solicitor interviewing her. Everything else in her house had been stolen or destroyed, she told him. Over and over, Belgian witnesses offer similar testimony. Their homes were thoroughly looted, and what was not carried off was smashed or burned.

Candid German diarists and p.o.w.s repeatedly confirmed this. “This is what happened,” explained a private in the 103rd Regiment of the Saxon XIIth Corps that destroyed Dinant. “The troops would take possession of a town and pursue the enemy.

Then, when the Reserves arrived, they pillaged the houses, taking linen, silver, jewelry, provisions, drink, etc. I saw all this. Nay, and more: when they pillaged, they piled the goods in heaps. The adjutants made a selection from these, keeping the best for the Colonel and the Major, and others for the other officers.” Booty not wanted by individual officers was sold.[34]

Apart from the confiscation of their goods, Belgians were compelled to subsidize the invasion. Officers not only made requisitions, but imposed fines on the towns they occupied. It was his protest against the confiscation of all the communal funds that led to the execution of the burgomaster of Andenne. Most of his counterparts were more obliging. Brussels was required to pay 50 million francs as a “war contribution,” Brabant another 450 million.[35] Additional fines were routinely imposed as punishments. Sixty thousand francs were demanded from the widows and orphans in Leffe as a penalty for imaginary gunfire coming from the Abbey. (The Germans generously reduced this to 15,000 francs.) When Cardinal Mercier was cheered by crowds as he crossed Brussels in his car on the second anniversary of Belgium’s Independence Day under occupation, the city was fined a million marks.[36] In another incident, when a crowd attacked two men working for the German Secret Service and the police failed to intervene promptly, Brussels was fined 5 million marks.[37] In all, the assessments totaled \$537.5 million, according to the Belgian government, over \$11 billion today.[38]

This was all petty thievery compared to the larceny that took place in 1917 and 1918. In order to ramp up its industrial production and also to destroy potential Belgian competition in the future, Germany set about dismantling Belgian factories. Machinery

was transferred to the Kaiserreich, along with iron and copper roofs, and all raw materials, semi-finished products, and spare parts. As usual, everything not requisitioned was destroyed. In their retreat in 1918, the Germans tore up the rail lines for iron, confiscated locomotives and rolling stock, and destroyed 350 railway bridges. (The Army had intended to flood the mines, as they did in France. However, Hoover intervened with Wilson, and most were spared.) As a result of the depredations, production of coke, iron, steel, lead, and zinc were at one-fifth to one-twentieth of pre-war levels in 1918; total industrial production was at about 15%. When the Treaty of Versailles was signed, three-quarters of the workforce was unemployed. Also indiscriminately seized during the retreat were livestock and poultry. Herds didn't recover 1913 levels until 1930. Belgian forests were decimated; Eupen was requested partly for its timber. Works of art in private collections were also stolen throughout the country, in addition to those destroyed at Leuven and that disappeared from the University of Liège; the country's premier collection of manuscripts and incunabula had of course gone up in smoke.[39]

Apart from the massacres and looting of August, the most notorious rehearsal was the drafting of forced labor that began in October 1916. Once again, it takes some effort to appreciate the outrage this practice evoked at the time. Even the Governor-General of Belgium was profoundly unhappy with the idea, and resisted the plan for several months. Thirty years later some 8 to 12 million slave laborers would be toiling away in Greater

Germany. This time no German authorities would object and other, more spectacular Nazi crimes would divert attention from the drafting of workers.

From the beginning of 1916, military and industrial leaders had urged the government to ship unemployed Belgian workers back to the Reich. The additional labor would help meet production quotas in the arms factories and free up soldiers to serve on the front at a time when the Army's needs were particularly acute. But when the War Ministry proposed sending 400,000 Belgians to German factories, General von Bissing vetoed the plan. The effect on Belgian morale would be devastating, he argued, particularly as he was about to launch a series of measures that would eventually induce the Dutch-speaking population, he hoped, to accept incorporation into the Kaiserreich.[40] Bissing stepped up efforts to recruit volunteers, but only some 21,000 unemployed men signed up to work in Germany. In October pressure was renewed, and this time von Bissing, told by the Chancellor that the requisitions were essential to Germany's survival, relented.[41]

The deportation of captured Belgians in August 1914 had been an ad hoc affair. The operation in the fall of 1916 was better organized. Lists of unemployed were prepared. (Brussels was threatened with a 10 million franc fine if it didn't provide these.)[42] All men were ordered to assemble in a school or empty factory. (Women and girls had been seized in French Flanders and compelled work in the fields in the south, but this had excited so much indignation in Allied and neutral countries that Bissing wisely refrained from drafting women in Belgium.) Here their papers were inspected, they were interrogated briefly, and then sent either to the left, to freedom, or to the right, to work for the Germans. No soldiers were posted at the entrance of the

collection centers, to deceive the workers, but troops often lined the route out to the trains, many soldiers acting “like real brutes,” one witness recalled.[43] As in August 1914, the first deportees often rode in open cattle cars; later groups had boxcars and, occasionally, overcrowded coaches. Conditions in the prison camps were deplorable, by design. The Germans were trying to induce their captives to sign contracts. About 58,500 men were sent to Germany; 62,155 worked in labor battalions behind the front, constructing the Hindenberg Line.[44] A press campaign was naturally launched in Germany against the “work-shy” Belgians, wallowing in luxury and self-pity, but public opinion in Allied and neutral countries was appalled. Bethemann-Hollweg, already fretful about the response, prevailed on the General Staff to halt the deportations in March, 1917.[45]

The profits extracted from Belgium increased exponentially in the next war, both for individuals and the state. Götz Aly’s controversial 2005 book *Hilters Volkstaat* (translated as *Hitler’s Beneficiaries* in 2007) makes the case that the Nazis were indeed national socialists, confiscating wealth not from the country’s bourgeoisie, like democratic socialists, but from the nations the regime had conquered, and dutifully redistributing it to working-class *Volkdeutsch*. This explains, for Aly, German support for Hitler until well into the war: the masses were bought off— directly, by goods German soldiers were permitted to buy and ship home at nominal costs, but also by the low, progressive tax rates the state was able to maintain throughout the war, thanks to what it expropriated from Jews and from what it extorted from the occupied countries. Aly is

certainly not the first to describe the regime's egalitarianism, but no one has emphasized it to this extent, and with such a wealth of evidence. (His inversion of the traditional, discredited materialist take on the Third Reich—that Hitler was the tool of “big capitalists”—has been popular in the Bundesrepublik, critics allege, because it reduces the charge against the German people from murder to robbery. They did not hate the Jews and despise non-Aryans; they merely coveted their wealth and were indifferent to their fate.) Aly's figures have been questioned by a number of economic historians, along with his downplaying of ideology. [46]

As for Belgium, though soldiers were initially ordered to treat civilians correctly in 1940, the country was exploited far more ruthlessly than under von Bissing. Occupation costs were demanded of the state, according to an official, “that it can just barely, with the greatest sacrifice, raise.”[47] Additional “accommodation services” were also assessed. These were double the government's average monthly tax revenues. In all, the Germans demanded 18 billion francs per year from a government whose entire budget had been 11 billion in 1938; the income funded the construction of airfields and defenses along the Atlantic coast.[48] Belgium's gold, forty-one tons, was also confiscated by the occupiers, and used to purchase valuable resources from neutrals.[49]

As for forced labor, not only did the Third Reich enlist more than double the number of workers as its predecessor (about 250,000), but it seized, in addition to the exorbitant wage taxes it collected, that portion of their income that the workers sent back to Belgium. The amounts were then paid to their families out of occupation costs. Belgian tax-payers subsidized the country's forced laborers.[50]

Once the occupiers confronted an actual resistance, they proved as ruthless as their predecessors. More than 17,000 Belgians working for the resistance were killed, including 12,000 in concentration camps. The total civilian death toll was around 33,000, excluding those killed in Allied bombing raids in 1944 and the nearly 27,000 Jews murdered at Auschwitz. [51]

Finally, the second time around the Germans could not resist stealing from Leuven Bouts' "Last Supper." After failing to burn it in 1914, they had left in Belgian hands. The Versailles Treaty had ordered the return of its two panels, but the entire triptych was removed to Bavaria in 1942 for "safe-keeping." [52] The other Belgian work that the Germans most coveted was the renowned Gent altarpiece "The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb" by the Van Eyck brothers, six panels of which had been in Germany until 1920. The remaining six had been hidden from the Germans in 1914. In 1940, the Belgians spirited off the entire altarpiece to the Pau caves in southern France (the Vatican had been the intended destination), but the Vichy government turned it over to the Germans two years later. [53]

REHEARSING THE REHEARSAL

The behavior of the German Army in August 1914 did not represent a radical departure in its practices. The Army's response to revolts in China and Southwest Africa (and to disturbances in Alsace) anticipated the killing and looting in Belgium. The difference is that the repression now took place in Europe, and was not preceded by a rebellion.

While the Boxer Rebellion was directed against all foreigners, Germany played a distinctive role both in precipitating the conflict and in exacting retribution at its conclusion. The Germans, in the metaphor that gained wide currency, had arrived late to the table, but with a ravenous appetite. Using as a pretext the murder of two missionaries at Juye, the Kaiser's government seized Jiaozhou (Chiao-chou) Bay in Shantung province in 1897, precipitating territorial demands from other Powers.[54] Ironically, thanks to its governor, the province itself was comparatively calm in the spring and summer of 1900, at the height of the uprising. But further north missionaries and large numbers of Chinese converts were tortured and killed, and, beginning on June 10, the European and Japanese Ministers and their staffs, along with newly arrived guard contingents, were besieged in the Legation quarter of Beijing, just south of the Forbidden City. The attitude of the government toward the Boxers had been ambivalent. [55] But after the leveling of the Taku forts and the dispatching of a multinational force to rescue the Westerners trapped in Beijing and in Tianjin, the Chinese government began openly siding with the Boxers. It was Imperial soldiers who killed the German Minister, Baron Klemens von Ketteler, when he ventured out of the compound. Although a total of about 78 foreigners were killed during the siege, Klemens was the only Minister to die, and the German

government was determined to avenge his murder.[56] “When you come upon the enemy, smite him,” the Kaiser exhorted troops departing from Bremerhaven in July. “Pardon will not be given. Prisoners will not be taken... Once, a thousand years ago, the Huns under their King Attila made a name for themselves, one still potent in legend and tradition. May you in this way make the name German remembered in China for a thousand years, so that no Chinaman will ever again dare to even squint at a German.”[57]

Before the troops arrived, the siege had already been lifted. (There had been only about 900 German soldiers in the 20,000-man force that liberated the diplomats.) The newly arrived regiments set out at once to fulfill the Kaiser’s expectations. The expedition was diverted south to, in the Kaiser’s words, “busy itself with the complete cleansing and subjugation of Jiaozhou and its hinterland.”[58] “The violence of the German troops,” one historian concluded, “made the Chinese people detest and fear them more than any other foreign force,” besting the accomplishments of the large Russian and Japanese contingents.[59] The total number of Chinese deaths cannot even be estimated, but the U.S. commander guessed that for every Boxer killed in the punitive expeditions the Germans launched, “fifteen harmless coolies...including not a few women and children, have been slain.”[60]

The other colonizing Powers were certainly capable of brutal responses to uprisings by subject peoples (China, though callously exploited, was not itself colonized, of course), but the German campaign against the Hereros in the summer and fall of 1904

was qualitatively different from those conducted by other European governments in the 19th century. As with the Boxer Rebellion, the comparison with events a decade later, in this case, cannot be pushed too far. Racist attitudes obviously affected the response, and there had been a real uprising. About 158 German settlers and soldiers were killed during the revolt, most of whom lived on the 267 isolated farms in north of the colony. Though the Herero warriors largely refrained from murdering women and children, and missionaries as well, they did mutilate corpses, leaving the Germans to assume the victims had been tortured.[61] What distinguished the German campaign was the infamous *Vernichtungsbefehl*, the extermination order, issued by the commanding general, Lothar von Trotha on 2 October 1904. German Southwest Africa was to be made Herero-frei: “The Herero people must leave the land... Within the German border every male Herero, armed or unarmed, with or without cattle, will be shot to death. I will no longer receive women and children, but will drive them back to their people or have them shot at.”[62]

There are some misconceptions about the proclamation. General von Trotha was probably acting on his own initiative. He had not received a specific order to clear out the colony, only to defeat the uprising “by all means,” a standard instruction.[63] In the Reichstag, Auguste Bebel speculated that a secret order had indeed been given, similar to the notorious injunction from the Kaiser to troops departing for China, but “which one did not want to express publicly a second time.”[64] Also, the order was issued long after the policy had already been adopted. Instead of inflicting a decisive military defeat, followed by negotiations, as the governor, Colonel Theodor Leutwein, an old African hand, had intended, once the Hereros had retreated en masse to Waterberg, a high

plateau due north of the capital, Windhuk, von Trotha, who was summonsed to the colony in June, 1904, planned to surround and annihilate the tribes.[65] In fact, the warriors broke out to the southeast, toward the Omaheke Desert. Contrary to many summaries of the campaign, it does not seem to have been the original intention of the Germans to permit this escape, though it proved convenient. German forces pursued the retreating tribes further into the desert, preventing access to wells, shooting those who approached, or poisoning the water. The Hereros had numbered between approximately 60 and 80,000 before the uprising; in 1911 there were a little over 15,000. More natives died in internment camps (over 7,500) than were killed in battle, but the great majority starved to death or were hunted down as they attempted to surrender or approached water holes.[66]

What distinguishes the episode, and what is relevant for events a decade later, is the emphasis on “punishment” and the latitude with which that imperative was interpreted. One experienced African soldier and administrator, disgusted by the brutality of the new troops brought in with von Trotha, confided to his diary, “I have contempt for this whole society, because I see only egotistical ends being followed and to those ends only the worst means being used. I continuously observe traits that make me appalled at the lack of discipline of these new, young soldiers. This kind of incompetence on the part of the leadership in combination with such poorly disciplined soldiers must lead to a catastrophe in a war against Germany’s enemies at home.”[67]

At one point during the Zabern Affair—a comic opera with a sobering denouement—which occurred between October, 1913, and January 1914, Karl von Wedel, Governor of Alsace-Lorraine, protested to Chancellor Bethmann Hollweg that civilians in Zabern “have a right not to be treated like Hereros.”[68] Within six months of his statement, Wedel, a Major General and a Conservative, was obliged to resign, like Leutwein. The lesson was the same: whatever your rank, however extensive your experience with the “natives,” you were subordinate to the local army commander, and, for the army, necessity knew no law. Regulations and customs could be freely abrogated to achieve military objectives. In the case of Zabern, this was the right of officers not to be laughed at.

No one died in Zabern. However, residents who happened to be on the street on November 26 were charged by soldiers with fixed bayonets and twenty-six were imprisoned overnight in a damp coal cellar, without any sanitary facilities. Among those arrested was a judge. [69] The detention was entirely illegal; martial law had not been declared, and the citizens had every right to be out on the streets. (The commander of the local garrison, Colonel Adolf von Reuter, had been unhappy when residents arrested two days earlier had been released as soon as they were turned over to the police.) In a second incident, in a village outside town, a shoemaker with a club foot, pinioned by soldiers, was struck with a sword by an officer, and badly injured. He was accused of *lèse-majesté*, having laughed at the officer, though he protested his innocence.

The perpetrator of the second incident and instigator of the first was a boyish-looking twenty-year-old second lieutenant, Günther Freiherr von Forstner. In a lecture to recruits on October 28, he had told the men that “if you knife a *Wackes* [a disparaging

term for Alsatians] you won't get two months... You'll get ten marks." The jeering and the informal demonstrations that took place in town when von Forstner and other officers appeared convinced Colonel von Reuter that an uprising was imminent. (Most military men shared the views of the Kaiser: Alsatians were treacherous, disloyal, unruly—the Reichsland “could almost be Bohemia or Bosnia”—and regretted the liberal constitution of two years earlier, which the All Highest threatened to “smash to bits.”) As public pressure mounted, von Forstner received a slap on the wrist—he was confined to his rooms for six days—but ten soldiers were arrested, charged with leaking the lieutenant's remarks to the press, and the offices of the *Zaberner Anzeiger* were ransacked. When von Forstner made further inflammatory remarks to recruits (telling them they could “shit on the French flag” for all he cared), Wedel asked the Commander of the XVth Corps, General Berthold von Deimling, who had served alongside von Trotha in Southwest Africa, to post the lieutenant elsewhere. He told the Kaiser, “In my view, the prestige of the army will not suffer but will gain if an injustice which really happened is not covered up but is punished.”[70] This was hardly the opinion of most military men, including Deimling, who instead urged Reuter to be more *schneidig*. The bayonet charges and arrests of civilians followed.

On the very day Wedel compared the Zaberners to the Hereros and Forstner struck the shoemaker, December 2nd, the Crown Prince sent telegrams of support to both Deimling and Reuter: “Bravo!” “Beat'em up!” Immediately, there were political repercussions. Questions were asked in the Reichstag. When Bethmann Hollweg, who privately sympathized with Wedel, made a characteristically evasive response, members of Center and National Liberal Party, as well as the Socialists and Progressives, were

visibly angered. (Conceding that “the limits of the law were not observed,” he argued that nonetheless “the Kaiser’s uniform must be respected in all circumstances.”) The War Minister, von Falkenhayn, poured oil on the flames. In a defiant speech, he staunchly defended the army and displayed his contempt for what he regarded as a parliamentary “mob.” An uproar followed, and the government suffered a crushing no-confidence vote, 293 to 54, with 4 abstentions. In any other Western European country, the government would have fallen. But under the constitution of the Second Reich, the Chancellor served at the pleasure of the Kaiser, and Wilhelm was pleased with Bethmann Hollweg’s performance.

There were court-martials in January, but Reuter and the lieutenant ordering the bayonet charge were acquitted under an 1820 Cabinet order permitting a commander to act “if civilian authorities waited too long.” Reuter was promptly awarded the Order of the Red Eagle by the Kaiser. Forstner, who had been found guilty of illegal use of his weapon, had his sentence overturned a few days later, on the grounds that the shoemaker had a penknife in his pocket, and the lieutenant had acted in self-defense. And the “Zabern Coalition” collapsed. When the SPD tried to withhold funds from the government ten days after the no confidence vote, all non-Socialists deserted the cause.

There were angry editorials and sarcastic poems, but the message was unmistakable. Also prefiguring events in Belgium was the willingness of the army command to dissemble. By “*Wackes*,” it was claimed, von Forstner was referring only to unruly characters, not to all Alsatians, and by “French flag,” the lieutenant meant the flag of the Foreign Legion.[71]

STROLLING DOWN THE SONDERWEG

Early in the morning of November 11th, 1918, the final day of the war, a British battalion approached a village east of Valenciennes. It appeared to be deserted, save for a wounded German lieutenant, propped up against a wall. Speaking excellent English, he confirmed that the village was indeed empty. The patrol who encountered him assumed he had been left behind so that he could be cared for by the well-provided British field hospital. But when the battalion formed up and marched into the square, hidden machine guns opened fire from all sides, including from the church tower. More than a hundred men were killed or wounded before the gunners, and the lieutenant, were shot or bayoneted.[72] *Weltmacht oder Niedergang* was not just an empty slogan. It is unthinkable, of course, that a British, Belgian, French, American or Italian company would have pulled a similar suicidal stunt on the war's final morning, and of course there's no evidence any did.

Things were different in Germany, British intellectuals were convinced by the end of the war, as many fewer had been before 1914. From the 4th of August, German operations scandalized public opinion in London. Most of the handful of British writers who were not outraged by the invasion of neutral Belgium, were appalled by the treatment of Belgian civilians. And the burning of the Leuven library and the shelling of Rheims cathedral shocked educated Europeans to a degree difficult to appreciate nearly a hundred years later. Twenty-first century readers are apt to dismiss British indignation at submarine attacks. But this practice seemed to contemporaries a flagrant violation of the rules of naval warfare that had been honored from time immemorial. The German government itself recognized that the sinking of unarmed ships with civilian passengers—

without warning, without permitting lifeboats to be launched—was barbaric (or at least was anathema to the Americans), and ceased doing so for a year and a half, until exigencies overcame scruples.[73] But even readers jaded by subsequent atrocities are surprised to learn that the u-boats were permitted to sink hospital ships within certain zones after 1917, though they were not supposed to turn their guns on the survivors in lifeboats, as one crew did. Poison gas had been banned by Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907. Again, one has to make an effort to appreciate the horror this practice evoked. Flamethrowers were perceived as yet another nefarious German innovation. What is perhaps most difficult to grasp for people born after 1945 is the shock and dismay at aerial bombardment, another practice pioneered by the Germans. When Antwerp was bombed by an airship on August 25th, 1914, with twelve dead and more than forty injured, the first such attack in history, the outrage in Allied and neutral countries was as great as that occasioned by the bombing of Rotterdam twenty-five-and-a-half years later. The shelling of Scarborough, Whitby, and Hartlepool in December 1914, with forty civilians killed, was another first. What kind of mind-set could countenance these violations of international law and the conventions of European warfare, British and American intellectuals asked. The search for a special German path to modernity did not begin in 1933.

Regarding the threats posed by Jesuit and Jew, things were indeed different in Britain. The country, too, of course had a Catholic Question and a Jewish Question. When certain disabilities were removed from Catholics in 1778, to induce them to enlist

in the Army and fight the Americans, [74] anti-Catholic rioting broke out in London. By the time the Army was ordered to fire on the mob four days later (when the Bank of England and the homes of the Prime Minister and Archbishop of Canterbury were threatened), much of London had been burned and nearly 300 people were dead. The inevitable next step, Catholic Emancipation—the right to sit in Parliament—was finally granted in 1829, after the King and Lords were given an ultimatum by Wellington, the Tory P.M., who was finally convinced of its necessity. (Protestant dissenters had been admitted to the House only two years earlier.) The agitation was spearheaded by Daniel O’Connell’s Catholic Association, providing a model for political pressure groups forever after. In 1850, Rome re-established in Britain the diocesan hierarchy and titles eliminated by Henry VIII. Still smarting from the Tractarian schism and the defection of Newman and other leading lights to the Church, and irritated by Cardinal Wiseman’s tactless wording of the announcement, Anglicans and dissenters took umbrage. Russell, the prime minister, not above capitalizing on popular prejudices, introduced and passed a bill to prohibit the Church from taking titles already in use by the Anglican Church. But the Anglican Church was disestablished in Ireland in 1869 and Catholics permitted to hold fellowships at Oxford and Cambridge two years later. Though some satisfaction was expressed in London at the *Kulturkampf* (while it was considered thoroughly un-English), Britain and Germany were moving in opposite directions by 1872. Jesuits, of course, had never been banned; one of the great English poems of the final quarter of the 19th century, by a Jesuit priest, celebrated the martyrdom of German nuns who drowned when their ship sank off Kent.[75]

As for the Jewish Question, Jews, readmitted to England de facto, though not de jure, during the Protectorate, suffered under the same disabilities as Catholics until the 19th century. (The famous “Jew Bill” of 1753, granting citizenship to foreign-born Jews, was repealed the following year, after orchestrated protests.) Jews were admitted to Oxford in 1854—they could already matriculate at Cambridge—and were permitted to take degrees at both in 1856. In 1858 they were able to serve in Parliament. The mass immigration of Russian Jews after 1881 (some 100,000 to 150,000 entered Britain by 1914)[76] aroused antisemitism, particularly in East End neighborhoods near where the immigrants settled. But there was no antisemitic party or movement. While individual publicists held forth on the Jews (most notably Chesterton and Belloc), “even in most extreme of ultra-nationalist right-wing circles—let alone among mainstream Tories—there is simply no evidence of antisemitism in the continental sense,” in which Jews were viewed as irredeemably alien and destructive, W. D. Rubinstein has concluded.[77]

(Mosely’s BUF turned antisemitic in 1933. But unlike its predecessor, the New Party, it never contested a General Election—perhaps because the New Party had polled only .2% of the total vote in 1931—and never captured a council seat. There were a few acolytes of Hitler in Britain—Beamish, Lease, Ramsay—but they were marginal figures spurned even by Mosley.)[78] The Russian Revolution undoubtedly raised levels of antisemitism on the British Right, as the Boer War had on the British Left. English editions of the Protocols began circulating in 1919, but were seldom taken seriously even in the most reactionary circles. Two years later, the Times correspondent in Constantinople exposed the book as a forgery. Antisemitism soon faded. There is no chapter on antisemitism in Britain in the mostly widely used anthology on the subject.[79]

In short, the German government's persecution of Catholics that took place in the 19th century and Jews in the 20th century would have been utterly unthinkable in Britain.

There is of course something futile about the hoary *Sonderwegfrage*; it would hardly be such a popular subject otherwise. Was there a unique German path to modernity? Of course there was. But there were also unique English, French, Spanish, Swiss, Swedish, and Dutch and Belgian paths, though naturally if you half-shut your eyes, or consider the development of what were to become the European states at sufficient remove (say from Beijing, Delhi, Cuzco, or Timbuktu), you see similarities. Nonetheless, what struck British and American intellectuals so forcibly in 1914 (and earlier) is bound to strike contemporaries similarly. Why should we be surprised if the values of a nation that was consolidated in the 16th century behind a formidable fortress, the Channel (enabling warriors to become gentlemen), and which had circumscribed the rights of its ruler in the 13th century, with additional checks in the 17th and 18th centuries (when preoccupied or malleable foreigners had been selected king), which resisted the reimposition of Roman over Common Law as well as absolutism, and in which, therefore, a form of Protestantism insisting on the right to rebel against an ungodly ruler (and which encouraged collective decision-making as well as exalting conscience) flourished alongside a quasi-Catholic state church, and which, finally, as a result of these and other factors, forged ahead of the pack in commerce and banking, developing the laws and habits facilitating both, and acquired a vast colonial empire and industrialized before anyone else—why should we expect that the outlook of the citizens

of such a country would be similar to those of the subjects of a nation where none of this had happened—particularly when so many German intellectuals resented so bitterly the delay in unification and did not seem to mind that it had been brought about by the conquests of Prussia, the absolutist, militarized state par excellence?

The light opera made its debut in Britain just as Germany was premiering the heavy opera.[80] Its mildly satiric songs ridiculed a First Lord of the Admiralty whose office was a reward for polishing handles and never thinking for himself, and who went below “whenever the breezes blow,” a Major General who knew “no more of tactics than a novice in a nunnery,” though au courant on many other subjects, and another General who led his regiment from behind (“he found it less exciting”). These songs were wildly popular with the middle and upper classes. Can we imagine audiences from the same strata in Berlin applauding ditties mocking Field Marshals? Can we imagine a German Chancellor who was a converted Jew? Conversely, can we imagine a parson in Surrey telling his congregation that it must please God to see Himself mirrored in the English soul or praising “our English God”? Can we imagine a British officer informing his troops that the life of a single soldier was worth more than the entire population of Heidelberg?[81] Can we imagine a Prime Minister assuring the House that necessity knows no law? Can we imagine him authorizing a “Jew count” in 1916, and then suppressing the disappointing results?

OTHER REHEARSALS

Germany was not the only country rehearsing in 1914. As mentioned in the Epilogue, Grey made a desperate bid to appease Austria. Refraining from publicly condemning the ultimatum, he urged Vienna, through Germany, to, first, delay the deadline for the Serbian reply, and then, when the Ballhausplatz refused, to negotiate the trivial differences between the Austrian demands and Belgrade's response, which had accepted nine of the ten demands and offered to submit the tenth to international arbitration. Again, no expression of regret was issued when Vienna rejected this request. Implicitly accepting the Empire's right to resolve the dispute by force, Grey then pleaded with the Ballhausplatz to content itself with the occupation of Belgrade. While the Liberal Cabinet would have countenanced no concrete action to pressure Austria and its ally, sharp protests and realistic prognostications might have had a sobering effect on Franz-Joseph's government. The thickly veiled warning that Grey finally issued on July 30 alarmed Bethmann Hollweg and resulted in his first and only attempt to reign in Berchtold and the war party, though its sincerity is open to question. While one can only speculate as to what would have happened had Grey privately cautioned the German Chancellor at the outset of the crisis that Britain would very likely wind up fighting beside its Entente partners if an Austrian invasion of Serbia was followed by a German invasion of France, there can be no doubt that appeasement failed in 1914 no less spectacularly than in 1938.

The Church was also rehearsing. The issue of the role of the Vatican in the Holocaust is certainly one of the most contentious questions in the history of the 20th century.[82] While there can be no doubt that the Holy See protected some Jews after the

German occupation of Italy, as did many hundreds of priests and nuns throughout Europe, Pope Pius XII not only issued no condemnation of the extermination of the Jews but failed to refer to it explicitly in any papal communication during the war. The Pope's fear of Bolshevism exceeded his unhappiness with Nazi racial policies, and he hoped to broker an alliance between Britain and Germany to defend Western Civilization from the Soviet barbarians.[83]

Belgian Catholics, including the leadership of the Church, were hardly less disappointed in Pope Benedict XV than were Jews, and many Catholics, in Pius XII. Like Eugenio Pacelli twenty-five years later, Giacomo Della Chiesa—with whom he shared an atypical background for a 20th century pope, urban and aristocratic—hoped to negotiate a peaceful resolution of the conflict, and feared Russia above all combatants. He was convinced that any display of partisanship would jeopardize his role as a mediator. The Vatican openly sympathized with the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Europe's only avowedly Catholic regime, and long perceived as a bulwark against Russia. It was feared that an Allied victory would further extend the influence of the Orthodox Church into Europe; Constantinople would be resurrected as Rome's rival. German influence was also strong at the Vatican, owing in part to the thirty-year Triple Alliance, while the Entente was scarcely represented.[84]

The failure of the Pope to denounce the massacres and destruction during the invasion baffled and frustrated the Belgian Church. Forty-five members of the clergy had been murdered and several churches looted and gutted. The Vatican had already been well informed of the massacres by its chargé d'affaires when Cardinal Désiré Mercier, on his return from Rome, began reporting German crimes to the new Pope.[85] When

Mercier did not hear back, he pointedly requested “a word of consolation” to the Belgians.[86] In response to the continued silence, the Cardinal issued his famous pastoral letter just before Christmas, “Patriotism and Endurance.”

In January 1915, Benedict finally condemned the German invasion, but only as a violation of the country’s neutrality and a breach of international law. No mention was made of the executions and arson. Frustrated by the Vatican’s policy of *imparzialità*, Mercier and Cardinal Thomas Heylen, the Bishop of Namur, who had zealously publicized German crimes in his dioceses, called for a joint German-Belgian Catholic Commission to investigate the issue. This was, of course, torpedoed by the German bishops, headed by Cardinal Hartmann, though they naturally wished to exculpate priests.[87] Faced with the Vatican’s continued intransigence, Alfred Baudrillart, rector of the Catholic Institute in Paris, concluded bitterly, and prophetically, “There was a time when the Holy See took the trouble to see which side was in the right and had the courage to say it. By assuaging everyone, the Holy See will concede the role of moral arbiter at the end of the war to the President of the Protestant United States.”[88]

A REHEARSAL IS NOT A PERFORMANCE

Clearly, there are limits to the way in which war crimes in Belgium in 1914 were a rehearsal for later exploits. World War I was not a racial war nor a war for Lebensraum. It was launched and prosecuted by generals, not by a brutal and paranoid megalomaniac with an apocalyptic agenda. (The Kaiser, it's fair to say, was manipulated into declaring war—by the government's withholding from him the Serbian response to the Austrian ultimatum and withholding from the Ballhausplatz his own proposal for a halt in Belgrade. He was informed of strategic decisions, but did not initiate them, and was increasingly marginalized after 1916. Conversely, the War Minister, the Foreign Minister, and the Commander-in-Chief of the Army were appalled when they learned of Hitler's war plans on November 5th, 1937. But the Führer got rid of them, and neither they nor the Army protested.) Anti-Catholicism was hardly a core belief of the military leadership in 1914. The War Ministry had no wish to jeopardize the *Bergfrieden* by alienating German Catholics, nearly a third of the population. Even among anti-Catholic zealots, the idea of subordinating military objectives to an ideological crusade would have been unthinkable.

The Second Reich was also far more sensitive to American public opinion than the Third; foreign policy was in the hands of professional diplomats. One would not, however, wish to underestimate the role of Allied machine-guns, barbed wire, and trenches in curbing German operations against civilians. The conversion of a blitzkrieg into a stalemate after the check on the Marne undercut the military rationale as well as the occasion for the terror campaign.

Nonetheless, the differences in the treatment of civilians in the two World Wars are striking. On the morning of August 21, it may be recalled, an incongruous debate took place in the Place de Tilleuls in Andenne. Eva Comes, a twenty-five-year-old Rhinelander, took on Captain Junge, the Prussian directing the killing in the square. It is difficult to imagine a young German woman arguing heatedly with an SS officer on behalf of group of Poles—not to mention Jews—about to be executed. It is harder still to imagine a repetition of the denouement, when the captain chivalrously pretended to call off the mass execution, promising to kill only two instead of fifty men. Both Junge and Comes would have been aware that appealing to his sense of fair play was not only futile but dangerous: he easily could have had her shot as well, an option that certainly would not have occurred to him in 1914. An Eva Comes who turned up in Poland in 1939 or in Russia in 1941 would have been told for years that the civilians about to be executed were not only *Untermenschen* unworthy of compassion, but a menace to Germany. And of course the indoctrination, in the case of Jews, would have drawn on centuries of prejudice.

In the end, the events of August 1914 in Belgium anticipate the treatment of civilians in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Russia and other Central and Eastern European countries, rather than that of Jews.[89] Something had allegedly happened before each of the mass executions that the Wehrmacht and S.S. carried out so promiscuously in the East[90], as was the case with Belgian civilians a quarter century earlier. The attack or act of sabotage that became the pretext may not, in fact, have occurred, or it may have

been the work of enemy soldiers or, in Eastern Europe, partisans—or agents provocateurs. In any case, there was never any serious attempt to link the civilian victims to the alleged crime. The point was to use terror to deter future resistance. With the case of Jews, however, there was seldom a precipitating incident.[91] No lesson was being administered. They were killed because they were members of a “race” that was intent on exterminating Germans, their murderers believed.

In Belgium, though fewer than 8% of the Jews residing in the country in 1940 were citizens (about 4,341 of about 55,670), 46% survived the war. The contrast with the Netherlands is striking: 80% of Jews perished in a country where 83% were Dutch citizens, and the community dated back to the 17th century.[92] This partly has to do with the fact that Belgium was administered by the military and the Netherlands by a *Zivilverwaltung* dominated by committed Nazis under Seyss-Inquart. (Also, owing to their high degree of assimilation, Dutch Jews may have been more complacent than their co-religionists to the south.) But the survival of nearly twice the percentage of Jews in Belgium has something to do as well with the country’s experience during the First World War. As a result of the August massacres and the occupation, Belgians were more wary of Germans, more skeptical about German promises, and, of course, possessed the hard-won knowledge that came of organizing and participating in a resistance movement for four years.[93] The victims of 1914, in short, were not forgotten; their martyrdom insured there would be fewer Holocaust victims than would otherwise have been the case the next time the Germans invaded. It is not coincidental that the only instance in which

a train bound for a death camp was stopped and captive Jews liberated was in Belgium,
between Boortmeerbeek and Haacht. [94]

ENDNOTES

1. *American Historical Review* (June 2008), 930-931. For my reply, see AHR (October 2008), .
2. I also found, of course, various other omissions. So during that summer I also revised a dozen endnotes. Apart from its Preface, the Afterword was completed in December 2007, and is not a response to any reviews.
3. I regretted as well not stipulating that in calling attention to passages in which post-World War II historians and journalists dismissed “the Belgian atrocities,” I was not issuing a blanket condemnation of the book or article in which the reference occurred, which might otherwise be quite valuable. I trusted this was self-evident, but it would have been politic, at least, to have offered the caveat. As to my examining in such detail the survival of revisionist myths, it seemed incumbent upon me to document my claim that the German war crimes were widely disparaged or denied right down to the present.
4. R. Lukas, *The Forgotten Holocaust: The Poles Under German Occupation, 1939-1944* (Lexington, KY, 1986), 3, 5-7, 37.
5. Hitler repeatedly alluded to his famous “prophecy” of January 30, 1939, and by October 1941 was declaring, “By exterminating this pest [the Jews], we shall do humanity a service of which our soldiers can have no idea.”(S. Friedlander, *Nazi Germany and the Jews, 1939-1945: The Years of Extermination* (New York, 2007), 273.) Goebbels took up the refrain the following month: “[Jewry] is now gradually being engulfed by the same extermination process that it had intended for us...”(*Ibid.*, 276.) This is essentially the thesis of Jeffrey Herf’s *The Jewish Enemy* (Cambridge, 2006), which also emphasizes the activity of Otto Dietrich, director of the Reich Press Office, operating independently of Goebbels and with daily access to Hitler.
6. A great number of scholars have discussed the roles of fear and greed in the Holocaust, but some recent books on these subjects have received considerable attention, apart from Herf’s *The Jewish Enemy*, notably Götz Aly’s *Hitlers Volksstaat* (2005), translated as *Hitler’s Beneficiaries* (2006), Adam Tooze’s *The Wages of Destruction* (2006), and Saul Friedlander’s monumental *Nazi Germany and the Jews: The Years of Extermination, 1939-1945* (2007). In another controversial and widely reviewed book, *Fear* (2007), Jan Gross analyzes the greed behind the fear that triggered the pogroms in post-war Poland: the ancient blood libel enabled Poles to retain confiscated property.
7. It is part of a larger literature on messianic political movements. Notable contributions include E. Kedourie, *Nationalism*; J. Talmon, *The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy* and its two successors; G. Mosse, *The Nationalization of the Masses*; J. Billington, *Fire in the Minds of Men*; M. Burleigh, *Earthly Powers and Sacred Causes*; N. Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium*; E. Voegelin, *Political Religions and From Enlightenment to Revolution*; for its infinitely more benign British incarnation, see, among other works, T. J. Wright, *The Religion of Humanity: Comtean Positivism in Victorian Britain*; M. Oakeshott, *Rationalism in Politics*, S. Letwin, *The Pursuit of Certainty*; B. Knights, *The Idea of the Clerisy in the Nineteenth Century*; and, for the perennial debate on Mill’s sacralization of politics in particular, J. Hamburger, *John Stuart Mill on Liberty and Control*, J. Carlisle, *John Stuart Mill and the Writing of Character*, L. Raeder, *J. S. Mill and the Religion of Humanity*.
8. That German nationalism was inspired by and inextricably linked to Protestantism was a recurring theme in the work of the great 19th century Prussian historians Droysen,

Sybel, and Treitschke, and was repeated ad nauseum by journalists, politicians, pastors and theologians after 1870. See H. W. Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict: Culture, Ideology and Politics* (Princeton, 1995), 27-34; A. Hoover, *The Gospel of Nationalism: German Patriotic Preaching from Napoleon to Versailles* (Stuttgart, 1986), 40-42. For Ranke, see J. Toews, *Becoming Historical: Cultural Reformation and Public Memory in Early Nineteenth-Century Berlin* (Cambridge, 2004), 372-418.

9. This was the year Falk was dismissed and a rapprochement reached with Windthorst, the Center Party leader, and the new pope, Leo XIII. Some historians argue that it only ended in 1887, with the repeal of most, though not all, of the anti-Catholic legislation. The ban on Jesuits remained in force until 1917 and the Pulpit Paragraph persisted until 1953. This forbade discussion by clergy of political issues “in a manner endangering public peace.” (M. Gross, *The War Against Catholicism: Liberalism and the Anti-Catholic Imagination in Nineteenth Century Germany* (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 2004), 255). The *Kulturkampf* began by secularizing schools, but in May 1873, it set educational requirements for the ordination of all priests and ministers, and then, a year later, began expelling clerics who had not been certified. Soon a third of Prussian parishes were without a priest and many were in jail, including the Primate of Poland.

10. For anti-Catholicism after Bismarck, see R. Ross, *Beleaguered Tower: The Dilemma of Political Catholicism in Wilhelmine Germany* (Notre Dame, 1976), 1-32.

11. Beginning in the late 1890s, there was a proliferation of European-wide conferences, congresses, and exhibitions. Brussels, already with ambitions of becoming the European capital, was the site of a number of these. Every summer more than 20,000 German families vacationed on the Belgian coast. (E. Waxweiler, *Belgium Neutral and Loyal: The War of 1914* (New York, 1915), 2.) It was far cheaper than the Riviera and more *gemütlich* than Normandie. Some villages--Blakenberghe, Heyst, Knocke, Westende--became virtual German colonies in July and August. Many thousands of Germans lived in Belgium year-round; there were at least 5,000 seeking to leave Brussels at the outbreak of the war. (B. Whitlock, *Belgium: A Personal Narrative*, v. 1, (New York, 1920), 86.) In Antwerp, the colony had its own social clubs, choral societies, gymnasia, churches, Masonic lodges, newspapers, and schools. (J. Claes, “Belgium Before the War” in J. Claes, et. al., *Life and Death in Belgium, by Ten Belgian Journalists in Exile* (Sydney, 1917), 33.) The German schools in Brussels attracted a large number of Belgian students as well, so impressive was the reputation of Teutonic educational methods. For some time it had been considered highly desirable for Belgian scholars, and almost obligatory for scientists, to have studied at a German university. Even among Walloons, Heidelberg, Bonn, and Berlin had acquired more cachet than the Sorbonne. Eventually German undergraduates trickled west to study with the students of the illustrious emeriti of German universities. Journals—including some published jointly by German and Belgian scholars—and conferences insured a continuous exchange of ideas and more extensive acquaintance between scholars in the same discipline. (Waxweiler, 7.)

Belgian and German socialists also collaborated closely. Emile Vandervelde, the venerable leader of Belgian socialism, was president of the Second International at the outbreak of war. Trade unionists from both countries mingled at these and other conferences, and Belgian socialists and non-socialists alike conscientiously studied German experiments in state-funded health, unemployment and retirement insurance, and reported on municipal services in model cities like Frankfurt and Dusseldorf. (*Ibid.*, 5.)

German penetration of Belgian markets and competition in exports was naturally not welcomed by all. There were widespread complaints, particularly in Antwerp, about unfair practices. After the outbreak of war, the large and wealthy German colony there was also accused of various subversive activities, with some credibility. (Claes, "Belgium Before the War," 31-37.) Nonetheless, contacts between urban Belgians and Germans in all walks of life were extensive and largely amiable in the two decades before the war.

12. For Schönerer and Austrian Pan-Germanism, see A. Whiteside, *The Socialism of Fools* (Berkeley, 1975)

13. See above, 537, 353.

14. Gross, 283. The introduction ("Who are the Elders?") to the most widely circulated English translation of the most influential antisemitic tract, *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, begins, "This is a secret which has not been revealed. They are the Hidden Hand," and goes on to quote Disraeli: "The world is governed by very different personages from what is imagined by those who are not behind the scenes." (V. Marsden (trans.) *The Protocols of the Meetings of Learned Elders of Zion* (Houston, 1934), 7.)

15. As Saul Friedlander notes, subsequent ethnic cleansing campaigns cannot be compared to the Nazi project to eliminate Jews from Europe: Jews were to be removed from countries no Germans had ever lived in or intended to live in.

16. J. Horne and A. Kramer, *German Atrocities, 1914: A History of Denial* (New Haven, 2001), 276

17. The curtain raiser is usually held to be the dissolution of the Catholic Section of the Prussian Ministry of Culture in June of 1871. The head of the Section was accused of encouraging the teaching of Polish in Posen. (R. Healy, *The Jesuit Specter in Imperial Germany* (Boston, 2003), 57; G. Craig, *Germany, 1866-1945* (New York, 1978), 72.

18. J. Harris, *A Study in the Theory and Practice of German Liberalism: Eduard Lasker, 1829-1884* (Lanham, Maryland, 1984), 49.

19. Healy, 67. Subsequent Chancellors would use Bismarck's plea of self-defense even more imaginatively. For more on Lasker, Jews, and the Jesuit Law, see Gross, 258-267. Gross reveals the extent to which the Kulturkampf was a Liberal crusade, the contribution of the progressive middle-classes to German unification. (Bismarck was more preoccupied with the perceived political threat posed by the Center Party.) Gross further argues that the Kulturkampf did not represent a betrayal of core Liberal beliefs in individual rights and tolerance, as is sometimes assumed. Rather, Liberals insisted that freedom and social progress required energetic action by the state to combat the influence of the Church. German Liberals were no more libertarian than their British and American counterparts would be a century later.

20. David Blackbourn, "Roman Catholics, the Center Party, and Antisemitism in Imperial Germany," in H. A. Strauss (ed.), *Hostages to Modernization: Studies in Antisemitism, 1870-1933* (Berlin, 1993), 111. There was of course much antisemitism in the Church itself in the '70s. Apart from traditional accusations dating back to the Church Fathers, liberalism was identified with Jews, who were blamed for the *Kulturkampf*, and the Depression of 1873 elicited renewed outbursts against Jewish capitalists. Jews were especially linked by Catholic polemicists to Freemasons, still another group inspiring rampant paranoia.

21. For the lone, but influential, British version, see Carlyle, particularly *Sartor Resartus*, *Frederick the Great*, and *Latter Day Pamphlets*. However, the Sage of Chelsea's

- admiration for “captains of industry” owed nothing to Germany, and certainly found few takers there. (There is a fainter echo of German motifs in Coleridge.) Other English and Scottish intellectuals went into the import business, naturally, and by the end of the century there were British Idealists, Historicists, and Nietzscheans. But no one is now referred to as “the English Hegel,” any more than there is a “German John Stuart Mill.”
22. Healy, 7. Pater Filuzius, with the help of a Frenchman and a socialist, plots to murder the spinster’s rightful heir, Gottlieb Michael, representing the innocent and naive German. The trio is thwarted, and wind up being hurled onto a dung heap. (*Ibid.*, 24, 70; Gross, 236-7).
23. W. Arndt, (ed. and trans.) *The Genius of Wilhelm Busch: Comedy of Frustration. An English Anthology* (Berkeley, 1982), 41.
24. cited by J. Katz, *The Darker Side of Genius: Richard Wagner’s Antisemitism* (Hanover, New Hampshire, 1986), 35.
25. Katz, 115.
26. Katz, 33. Wagner had, of course, generous Jewish patrons, including Meyebear, the target of his 1850 pamphlet, and there were several Jewish musicians in his entourage. For discussions of Wagner’s antisemitism, see, in addition to Katz, M. Weiner, *Richard Wagner and the Antisemitic Imagination* (Lincoln, NB, 1995), M. Brener, *Richard Wagner and the Jews* (Jefferson, NC, 2006), H. Zelinsky, *Richard Wagner: Ein deutsches Thema, 1876-1976* (Vienna, 1983), and P. Rose, *Wagner: Race and Revolution* (New Haven, 1992) and *Revolutionary Antisemitism in Germany from Kant to Wagner* (Princeton, 1990), among others. Rose makes the case that Wagner’s intellectual development is misrepresented when it is bifurcated into “liberal, democratic” and “racist, nationalist” phases. The two were of a piece. The antisemitism of the radical Left has a long pedigree. However, the attempt to show, by Rose, Zelinsky and others, that Wagner’s operas are permeated by the antisemitism he gave vent to in essays, letters and conversation has not convinced most musicologists.
27. Rose, 373.
28. E. Newman, *The Life of Richard Wagner*, v. 3, (New York, 1941), 517.
29. Newman, *Ibid.*, v. 4 (New York, 1946), 72.
30. However, the *Kulturkampf*, he felt, had been a clumsy blunder. Chamberlain hoped German Catholics would increasingly ignore the siren-call of the Vatican, and he defended the creation of an “affirmative action” chair for Catholics at University of Strassburg. (G. Field, *Evangelist of Race: The Germanic Vision of Houston Stewart Chamberlain* (New York, 1981), 308.)
31. L. Poliakov, *The History of Anti-Semitism*, v. 4, *Suicidal Europe, 1870-1933*, 58, 294.
32. “All religions that depart from the true Christian religion are ex opere operato, that is, teach ‘this I will do, and that will please God.’ But one must hold fast to the rule that every opus operatum is idolatrous. Whatever the papists taught was opus operatum. At all events, their rules and regulations remind me of the Jews, and actually very much was borrowed from the Jews.” (T. Tappert (ed.), *Luther’s Works*, v. 54, “Table Talk” (Philadelphia, 1967), 436-7.) The author of the classic biography of Luther in English famously wished that his subject had died before he published “On the Jews and their Lies” in 1543. (R. Bainton, *Here I Stand* (New York, 1950), 379.) The level of the invective in this pamphlet has to be read to be believed; see especially the fourth section. (F. Sherman (ed.) *Luther’s Works*, v. 47, “The Christian in Society” (Philadelphia, 1971),

121-307.) But Luther lived another three years, writing additional antisemitic tracts and castigating Jews in letters and conversations. As with Jews, his attacks on the “The Robbing and Murdering Hordes of Peasants” in 1525 had been preceded by milder sentiments. (See R. Schultz, ed. *Luther’s Works*, v. 46 (Philadelphia, 1967), 45-56. (These are strange times,” Luther admits near the end of the tract, “when a prince can win heaven with bloodshed better than other men with prayer!” (*Ibid.*, 54.) The attack had been preceded by the conciliatory “Admonition to Peace,” just as his attack on Jews had been preceded, two decades earlier, by the conciliatory “Jesus Christ was Born a Jew,” which blamed the Church for the Jews’ continued resistance to message of the Gospels.) But the failure of the Jews to now convert and the peasants’ insistence on taking subversive Old and New Testament passages literally caused the splenetic Reformer to redirect some of his fury from the Church to those who had disappointed him. The Luther-to-Hitler case owed much, of course, to German scholarship of a century ago, which clearly differentiated the two forms of Protestantism. Whether or not the doctrine of predestination infected its believers with “the spirit of capitalism,” Calvinism and other Western European heresies fostered a different set of attitudes toward secular authorities, toward the law, and toward commerce and banking, as well as toward the Old Testament and Jews, which were to have repercussions subsequently. (Similarly, French racialist thinking, that of Gobineau and Renan, was not antisemitic, in stark contrast to versions flourishing east of the Rhine.) There can also be no denying that the movement Luther founded contributed both to the protracted weakness of Germany, in dividing it politically and religiously (though this is hardly what he intended), and to the keen resentment this weakness occasioned. As to Luther’s antisemitic writings, however, while one can say they “anticipated” or even re-enforced Nazi beliefs, they were probably without much influence from the late 17th to the late 19th centuries, reproduced only in editions of his collected works, and not even cited by Eisenmenger, the most important German antisemite before Duhring.

33. See above, 98.

34. See above, 291, 466.

35. Ministère des affaires étrangères, *Belgium’s Martyrdom* (reprint from *Current History*) (New York, 1918), 517.

36. B. Whitlock, *Belgium: A Personal Narrative*, v. 2 (New York, 1920), 365.

37. Ministère, *Belgium’s Martyrdom*, 517.

38. Using the CPI, and over \$64 billion using nominal GDP per capita.

(www.measuringworth.com)

39. As noted, the real scandal of Versailles was the treatment of the Belgians, not the Germans. Promised “privilege” and “priority”—that their claims would be met first, and would include the country’s war costs—the Belgians would have received neither had it not been for the insistence of Colonel House, and in the end recovered less than a quarter of the cost of the damages inflicted by the Germans. (S. Marks, *Innocent Abroad: Belgium at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919* (Chapel Hill, 1981), 183-195.)

40. Bissing told the Chancellor that he “knew of no means available to a civilized state to extract labor from people unwilling to give it.” (F. Passelecq, *Déportation et Travail Forcé des Ouvriers et de la Population civile de la Belgique occupée, 1916-1918* (Paris, 1928), 441, cited by L. Zuckerman, *The Rape of Belgium: The Untold Story of World War I* (New York, 2004), 151.) He further argued that the deportations would violate

international law, unless the work was non-war-related, and would offend neutrals. But then, overcoming these unpatriotic scruples, he suggested that the government might get around the Hague Conventions by claiming that the deportations were necessary to maintain public order.

41. Leading industrialists like Walter Rathenau, the AEG chief in charge of wartime economic planning, and Carl Duisberg, director of Bayer, urged the General Staff to force Belgians to work in German factories. Hindenburg and Ludendorff were more than happy to oblige. (Zuckerman, 150).

42. *Ibid.*, 153.

43. RDE, v. II, 67-115. The most complete information on German tactics comes from documents abandoned in the district of Nivelles, located midway between Brussels and Charleroi. The scenes outside the centers were memorable, family members shouting, sobbing, and trying to hand over packages, the captives singing La Brabaçonne and La Marseillaise, and chanting that they would not sign. Naturally many individuals were seized mistakenly—students, rentiers, small businessmen, and farmers. (*Ibid.*, 111.)

44. *Ibid.*, 24-5.

45. *Ibid.*, 50; Certainly the Germans were not entirely to blame for Belgian unemployment, except insofar as they'd started the war. The blockade crippled international trade and workers in war-related industries were not eager to assist the conquerors.

46. He is accused of grossly exaggerating the extent to which ordinary Germans escaped paying for the war. While corporate tax revenues rose more rapidly than revenues from taxes on wages, this merely reflected soaring business profits; the share of the national income going to working class Germans declined. Indeed, real wages declined, for Aly failed to factor in inflation. Adam Tooze in particular condemns Aly's argument that payment for the war was deferred by borrowing. Goods and "services" required by war have to be paid for in the present, by the transfer of resources from consumption. Money used to purchase bonds can't be used again. The percentage of war costs borne by Germans versus foreigners is the exact opposite of what Aly claims, according to Tooze and others: ordinary Germans subsidized 70% of the war costs, not 30%. In response, Aly argues, focusing on perceptions rather than numbers, that declines in consumption were partially offset by the flow of goods sent by soldiers from occupied territory, and that these did indeed sustain morale, as did financing the war by credit rather than taxation: through 1942 bond purchasers were confident they would be reimbursed by revenue from further German conquests. (For a summary of some criticism, see A. Mierzejewski, "The Latest Phase of Germany's Effort to Master its Nazi Past" H-Net German 15 September 2005, (<http://h-net.msu.edu/cgi-bin/logbrowse.pl?trx=vx&list=H-German&month=0509&week=c&msg=T4Vz9eCQ0vqppY%2bZMH64hg&user=&pw=>); A. Tooze, "Economics, Ideology and Cohesion in the Third Reich: A critique of Goetz Aly's *Hitler's Volksstaat*" available at http://www.hist.cam.ac.uk/academic_staff/further_details/tooze-aly.pdf; G. Aly, *Hitler's Beneficiaries: Plunder, Racial War, and the Nazi Welfare State* (New York, 2006), 327-332.

47. Aly, 136.

48. *Ibid.*, 136-7.

49. *Ibid.*, 138-141.

40. *Ibid.* 156-7.
51. M. Foote, *Resistance: European Resistance to Nazism, 1940-1945* (New York, 1977), 257; V. Mallinson, *Belgium* (New York, 1970), 121-2.
52. L. Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa* (New York, 1994), 143-4.
53. *Ibid.*, 85, 143-4; P. Harclerode and B. Pittaway, *The Lost Masters* (New York, 2000), 15.
54. "When he first heard of the murders..., Wilhelm was almost euphoric about what he considered a 'splendid opportunity' for taking action. He immediately drafted a telegram ordering the East Asian squadron to occupy Jiaozhou Bay." J. Schrecker, *Imperialism and Chinese Nationalism: Germany in Shantung* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1971), 33.
55. The Boxers, actually the Boxers United in Righteousness, succeeded other charismatic anti-Christian movements in which members were trained in the martial arts and practiced rituals to make them, they believed, invulnerable. Severe flooding and then drought in the northern provinces, and the famine and lawlessness that followed, increased membership, as did mass unemployment among bargemen and others affected by the European steamboats and railroads. A particularly acute source of resentment were the legal protections afforded converts by the Church and Protestant missionaries.
56. P. Cohen, *History in Three Keys: The Boxers as Event, Experience, and Myth* (New York, 1997), 311. A Japanese consular official was also killed.
57. W. Schroeder (ed.), *Das persönliche Regiment: Reden und sonstige öffentliche Äusserungen Wilhelms II* (Munich, 1912), 40-42 (trans., Richard Levy). The famous speech was recorded by a single reporter from a local newspaper who knew shorthand. Other papers published the anodyne version released by the Chancellor.
58. Shrecker, 136.
59. C. Tan, *The Boxer Catastrophe* (New York, 1955), 145.
60. D. Preston, *The Boxer Rebellion: The Dramatic Story of China's War on Foreigners that Shook the World in the Summer of 1900* (New York, 2000), 306.
61. I. Hull, *Absolute Destruction: Military Culture and the Practices of War in Imperial Germany* (Ithaca, 2005), 10-11; J. Bridgman, *The Revolt of the Hereros* (Berkeley, 1981), 12.
62. Hull, 56.
63. *Ibid.*, 28.
64. *Ibid.*, 29.
65. *Ibid.*, 31.
66. Bridgman, 19.
67. Hull, 47. See also J. Bridgman and L. Worley, "Genocide of the Hereros" in S. Totten, et. al (eds.), *Century of Genocide: Eyewitness Accounts and Critical Views* (New York, 1997), 3-40.
68. M. Kitchen, *The German Officer Corps, 1890-1914* (Oxford, 1968), 206.
69. He was accompanied to jail by two colleagues, but then released.
70. Kitchen, 202.
71. The above account is based on Kitchen, H.-U. Wehler, "Der Fall Zabern von 1913/14 als Verfassungskrise des Wilhelminischen Kaiserreichs," *Krisenherde des Kaiserreichs, 1871-1918* (Göttingen, 1970), 70-88, and D. Schoenbaum, *Zabern 1913: Consensus Politics in Imperial Germany* (London, 1982). The latter offers a somewhat more upbeat conclusion.

72. B. Pitt, *1918: The Last Act* (New York, 1963), 285-6. Pitt does not provide a source for this story, unfortunately.
73. After May 1915, subs that did surface to give advance warning to their target, it must be noted, risked being sunk by naval vessels disguised as merchantmen, though the Q-ships were not very effective compared to depth charges and subs that surfaced in front of the decoys normally did so to use their deck guns and conserve torpedoes, not to save lives.
74. Catholics taking an oath of loyalty to the King were permitted to own and inherit land, and laws targeting priests were repealed.
75. "The Wreck of the Deutschland" by Gerard Manley Hopkins. The nuns' destination was America, but many other priests and nuns fled to Britain.
76. W. Rubinstein, *A History of Jews in the English Speaking World: Great Britain* (London, 1996), 95.
77. *Ibid.*, 120.
78. *Ibid.*, 313-14.
79. Nor is there a chapter on Italy. R. Levy, *Antisemitism in the Modern World* (Lexington, Massachusetts, 1991).
80. "H.M.S. Pinafore" opened in 1878, two years after the Ring cycle. Gilbert and Sullivan's first collaboration took place during the year the foundation stone was laid for the Bayreuth Festspielhaus, 1871.
81. The belief that one German death was sufficient justification for mass killing—or war—was hardly unique to Dr. Berghausen. The murder of a German diplomat in Paris was the pretext for the *Kristalnacht* pogrom, just as the *Anschluss* was to have been provoked by the deliberate murder of von Papen, the Ambassador, and the invasion of Czechoslovakia, was to have been precipitated by the assassination of a German diplomat in Prague. Hitler understood that these would be acceptable pretexts for most Germans.
82. The controversy was ignited by Rudolf Hochhuth's 1963 play *The Deputy*. See, among other works, G. Lewy, *The Catholic Church and Nazi Germany* (1964), S. Friedlander, *Pius XII and the Third Reich* (1966), J. Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope* (1999), S. Zuccotti, *Under His Very Windows: The Vatican and the Holocaust in Italy* (2000), M. Phayer, *The Catholic Church and the Holocaust* (2000), and, for sympathetic treatments, P. Blet, *Pius XII and the Second World War: According to the Archives of the Vatican* (1999) and R. Rychlak, *Hitler, the War, and the Pope* (2000). For more polemical approaches, see D. Goldhagen, *A Moral Reckoning* (2002) and D. Lapin, *The Myth of Hitler's Pope* (2005).
83. After the war, he did not hesitate to excommunicate all communists, even as he lobbied for clemency for Nazi war criminals. The counterfactual argument that protests by the Pope would have accomplished nothing and may have harmed the Jews are not persuasive, any more than are arguments that the bombing of the rail-lines or crematoria at Auschwitz would have been counterproductive. It is hard to imagine how either initiative would have resulted in a worse outcome than the failure to act. The Vatican was exceptionally well informed about the scope of the Final Solution.
84. Diplomats from Britain and the U.S. had been withdrawn around the time of the loss of the Vatican's temporal power in 1870 and France, regarded as the bastion of anti-clericalism, had broken relations in 1905.(J. Pollard, *The Unknown Pope: Benedict XV and*

the Pursuit of Peace (London, 1999), 89. For a more critical take, see D. Zivojinovic, *The United States and the Vatican Policies, 1914-1918* (Boulder, Colorado, 1978)

85. When the Papal nuncio, who had fled, returned to Brussels and was briefed, he wrote the Vatican Secretary of State, "One would be tempted to say that an order circulated among the troops to massacre, destroy and terrorize the population throughout their passage." (J. Horne and A. Kramer, *German Atrocities*, 268.)

86. *Ibid.*, 270.

87. The total of 45 clergymen who were executed includes members of religious orders, lay brothers, and seminarians. (A. Mélot, *Le Martyre du Clergé Belge* (Paris, 1915), 10, 15, 16-17, 21-2.) The German Church had a pretty good idea as to what had happened. Matthias Erzberger, the Center Party politician who was in charge of foreign propaganda, confessed that "It has been proven beyond doubt, including by the testimony of German officers, that there have been cases of gross pillage, that many houses were set on fire without due cause, and that many Belgians were executed, without a judgment or without their guilt being shown." (Horne and Kramer, 275.) The Church hierarchy was also aware that Governor General von Bissing himself had acknowledged the war crimes in a letter of 28 February 1915 to the War Ministry. (*Ibid.*)

88. *Ibid.*, 269. Baudrilliet edited a book of essays condemning the German invasion from a Catholic standpoint, *The German War and Catholicism* (Paris, 1915).

89. See A. Rossino, *Hitler Strikes Poland* (Lawrence, Kansas, 2003) for an account of how the 1939 Blitzkrieg itself anticipated the brutality of the 1941 invasion of the Soviet Union.

90. And occasionally in the West, the most notable case being Oradeur-sur-Glane near Limoges.

91. Among the exceptions would be those cases where the NKVD murdered their prisoners before they pulled out, following the German invasion of the Soviet Union. These were routinely blamed on the Jews, who were accused either of collaborating or merely sharing the ethnicity of the killers, for it was believed, of course, that Jews ran the organization. But the killing of prisoners inspired revenge by local populations as a rule, not Germans.

92. M. Steinberg, "The Judenpolitik in Belgium Within the West European Context: Comparative Observations" in D. Michman (ed.), *Belgium and the Holocaust: Jews, Belgians, Germans* (Jerusalem, 1998), 202-6; B. Moore, *Victims and Survivors: The Nazi Persecution of Jews in the Netherlands, 1940-1945* (London, 1997), 20, 37. Alternative figures for native Belgian Jews are 4,341 of 65,696, or 6.6%. (B. Moore, *Victims*, 37.) Jews in France fared better still: "only" 20-27% were sent east. But about 44% of foreign Jews were deported, nearly the same percentage as in Belgium. Some 56% of Jews in France were citizens, about 17% of whom were deported, compared with the approximately 23% of Jewish Belgian citizens who were deported. Belgian officials had clearly indicated, according to the SS, that "they only wanted to take care of the Jews who were Belgian nationals;" the Belgian people, however, sheltered Jews of all nationalities, at great risk. About 4% of the deportees survived Auschwitz. (*Ibid.*, 214, 219)

93. Very effective organizations for spirited British servicemen, and then downed American and British flyers, to safety were established, drawing on the experience, and sometimes the personnel, of the networks with which Edith Cavell and Gabrielle Petit

were involved. The underground press was also revived, and flourished. Eight papers called themselves *La Libre Belgique*, after the most famous clandestine journal of the first occupation. (P. Lagrou, "Belgium" in B. Moore (ed.), *Resistance in Western Europe* (Oxford, 2000), 39.) Valuable information on German troop movements was also passed to the British, though the reports of the most effective spy organization, the Rote Kappelle, went directly to Stalin, who did not choose to share them with the Allies. (M. Foote, *Resistance: European Resistance to Nazism, 1940-1945* (New York, 1977), 254-7.)

94. Three members of the Resistance accomplished this, armed with one pistol, a pliers, and a hurricane lantern covered with red paper. Five Jews were liberated. But, inspired by the rescue attempt, two hundred twenty-six others escaped before the train reached Germany, though ninety were recaptured and twenty-six killed. The train was guarded by sixteen soldiers. (For a detailed account, see M. Schreiber, *Stille Rebellen* (Brussels, 2001).)
