



Department of History and Civilization

Making Memories
The Politics of Remembrance in Postwar
Norway and Denmark

Clemens Maier

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to obtaining the degree of
Doctor of History and Civilization of the European University Institute

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Abbreviations

DKP	Dansk Kommunistisk Parti
DNH	Udgiverselskab for Danmarks Nyeste Historie
EU	European Union
FM	Frihedsmuseet
FV	Frihedskampens Veteraner
Gestapo	Geheime Staatspolizei
HIPO	Hilfspolizei
HT	Historisk Tidsskrift
INO	Institutt for norsk okkupasjonshistorie
Milorg	Militærorganisasjon (the Norwegian armed resistance organisation)
Natmus	Nationalmuseet (Copenhagen)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NHM	Norges Hjemmefrontmuseet
NKP	Norges Kommunistiske Parti
NS	Nasjonal Samling
DNSAP	Danmarks Nationalsocialistiske Arbejderparti
SS	Schutzstaffel
Stm (DK)	Staatsministerens kontor (Denmark)
Stm (N)	Statsministerens kontor (Norway)

**THIS THESIS IS DEDICATED TO THOSE WHO FOUGHT THE NAZI-
OCCUPATION IN NORWAY AND DENMARK. ALTHOUGH THEY MIGHT NOT
AGREE WITH MY IDEAS, I PAY HEARTFELT RESPECT TO THEIR DEEDS.**

INTRODUCTION

"HISTORY IS THE VERSION OF PAST EVENTS THAT PEOPLE HAVE DECIDED
TO AGREE UPON."
Napoleon Bonaparte

Since the 1970s numerous museums and exhibitions have been opened and new monuments erected in many European countries. This 'memory boom' came to a head in the middle of the 1990s with the arrangements for the half-centenary anniversary of the end of the Second World War.¹ The last 15 years have seen a tremendous change in international politics. The fall of the Soviet Empire also affected the mental mapping of its former western adversaries. New or repressed questions and debates flared up about the nations' pasts and the conduct of their citizens or politicians during times of war and hardship. The Second World War, Europe's most recent and traumatic event thereby served as a point of reference. Sometimes it was a lawsuit against a perpetrator, but often it was because of an anniversary that debates arose. Another reason has frequently been the disappearance of the generation of contemporary witnesses. Those, who as adults actually experienced the time in question were becoming old and starting to die. Programmes to save their testimonies were started. This was supported by the increasing importance of oral history as a field of historical research. In the wake of these developments, a vast amount of literature dealing with the war as well as its memory was produced. Scandinavia – or to be more precise – the two occupied countries of Denmark and Norway have somehow missed the attention of scholars, not just abroad but also at home. Since the late 1990s some Danish and Norwegian academics did approach the field of the memory of the occupation, contributing well-written and in-depth studies on their native countries, but as far as I can see, a comparative study is still missing. I will try to fill the gap.

Patriotic memories

The war years have misleadingly been referred to in both countries as the 'dark parenthesis'. But they constituted much more. Like in other occupied countries, the occupation was mentally structuring for the self-perception and identity of Danes and Norwegians not just in the immediate postwar period but up to today. The experience of the war and occupation, of the

¹ Huysen, Andreas, *Twilight memories. Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia*, New York/ London: Routledge 1995, p. 9 and more specifically on its impact on contemporary historical writing: Winter, Jay, *Die Generation der Erinnerung. Reflexionen über den "Memory-Boom" in der zeithistorischen Forschung*, in: *Werkstatt Geschichte: Memory*, no. 30, 2001, pp. 5-16.

losses, of defeat, humiliation and persecution as well as the memory of hardship and food- and fuel rationing left deep wounds on the collective soul. Even the liberation did not come from its own hands but from yet another foreign force, albeit friendly. Of course for some, especially in the resistance movements, the years of hardship were also years of unity, mutual help and solidarity. Still, the majority of the population was traumatized. The nation-state that had often just recently been built (in the case of Norway it was just 40 years old) to protect the integrity of the territory and to protect its citizens had lost its legitimacy. The experience of treason and helplessness added to the deep sense of insecurity. The nations were in "urgent need of patriotic memories" to support the process of reconstruction – of both souls and infrastructure.² The most widespread patriotic memory was a focus on the resistance – armed and unarmed. As the precondition for national recovery, the governments as well as political movements 'nationalized' any resistance and glorified it, claiming the merits of the relatively small proportion of the population that had been active during the last years. That often required "active denial of the actual experience of the occupation" as experienced by the majority.³ The resistance, as was the widespread belief, had defended the nation.⁴ This was also needed in order to give the victims of the fights and the opposition a meaning, which because of the foreign liberation would otherwise risk being lost. In Norway, where the Nazi-government's head Vidkun Quisling had become the synonym of collaboration and where a whole party made themselves available to the Germans, the wounds were deep and the legal purge that followed the liberation harsh. The situation in Denmark was no less difficult and perhaps even more complex, since the majority of parliamentary parties had founded a coalition government and officially cooperated with the occupation power, persecuted the domestic resistance and only recently had turned and joined forces with the resistance. The two societies were in turmoil, thousands of young men were in arms and many feared the possibility of major trouble, if not a civil war like the one that had emerged in Greece, whether that danger was real or not. In both countries the image of resistance was a chance to gather and unite the people and served to re-integrate all sectors of the population. Scandinavia was not alone in this, the crisis was global. The newly-invented nation states, whose foundations lay shattered by the onslaught of the war literally had to re-invent themselves. The myth of the resistance was needed during the initial

² Lagrou, Pieter, *Victims of Genocide and National Memory: Belgium, France and the Netherlands 1945-1965*, in: *Past & Present*, 1997, 154, pp. 181-222, p. 194. Lagrou also published a highly recommendable in depth study on the same matter: Lagrou, Pieter, *The Legacy of Nazi Occupation. Patriot Memory and National Recovery in Western Europe, 1945-1965*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2000, *Studies in the Social and Cultural History of Modern Warfare*.

³ Lagrou, *Victims of Genocide*, p. 195.

⁴ Flacke, Monika, *Erinnerungen*, in: Flacke, Monika, *Mythen der Nationen. 1945 – Arena der Erinnerungen*, Begleitband zur Ausstellung (Catalogue), vol. I, Berlin: Deutsches Historisches Museum 2005, pp. 7-12, p. 8.

hot phase of the purges but might even have helped to keep Europe at peace in later years. It was a construction that gave the minimum stability that was needed. Just when that function was not needed anymore the legendary resistance could yield to a more critical confrontation of the war history.⁵ When the immediate postwar period was over, western populations, starting with the Federal Republic of Germany in the 1960s, gradually started calling the traditional interpretations into question – a process that was intensified and accelerated in the 1970s and 1980s. In Eastern Europe, due to the prevailing strength of the dictatorial regimes, the narrative of the 'Great War for the Liberation of the Fatherland' reigned supremely.⁶

In Scandinavia, the war experience also naturally shaped country's politics. The pre-war policy of non-alliance and neutrality was exchanged with a membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and, particularly in Norway, the war-time unity was the cornerstone of the newly emerging welfare-state.⁷ It also meant a cultural swing from an admiration of and orientation towards German culture to an unprecedented orientation towards the West – Great Britain and the US.⁸ The war was also to have long-lasting implications on the European integration policy of both nations and was for decades easily evoked whenever the questions of joining the European Community or Union came up – not just as a trauma but also as something that had shaped the self-perception of the two people. As in other countries, the invocation of the image of a country united in resistance served the reconstruction – both physically and psychologically. Astonishingly enough, however, the process of coming to terms with the past began to deviate from the western European path some time in the 1970s. The north of the continent proved to be impregnated against radical challenges of the established traditions and continued a fairly unified version of the narrative of the postwar years. Certainly grass-root organisations formed and groups emerged that demanded their 'fair share' in the commemorations and tried to challenge the prevailing interpretation of the war, but, at a time when everywhere in Europe the state-sponsored and state-imposed memory was complemented by one 'from below', these developments did not manage to endanger the Scandinavian

⁵ Flacke, *Erinnerungen*, p. 7.

⁶ François, Etienne, *Meistererzählungen und Dammbürche. Die Erinnerung an den Zweiten Weltkrieg zwischen Nationalisierung und Universalisierung*, in: Flacke, Monika, *Mythen der Nationen. 1945 – Arena der Erinnerungen, Begleitband zur Ausstellung*, vol. I, Berlin: Deutsches Historisches Museum 2005, pp. 13-28, p. 18.

⁷ Lenz, Claudia, *Haushaltspflicht und Widerstand. Erzählungen norwegischer Frauen über die deutsche Besatzung 1940-1945 im Lichte nationaler Vergangenheitskonstruktionen*, Tübingen: edition diskord, 2003, p. 90. For Denmark please refer to: Villaume, Poul, *Fra 'hypnotiseret kanin' til 'pindsvinestilling'. Besættelsen i efterkrigstidens sikkerhedspolitik* (pp. 693-712) and Lidegaard, Bo, *'Vi opnaede da, at København ikke blev bombarderet...'. Tilpasningspolitik, samarbejdspolitik og ikke-blokpolitik*, in: Dethlefsen, Henrik, Lundbak, Henrik (eds.), *Fra mellemkrigstid til efterkrigstid. Festskrift til Hans Kirchhoff og Henrik S. Nissen på 65-årsdagen oktober 1998*, København: Museum Tusulanums Forlag, Københavns Universitet 1998, pp. 673-691.

narratives. However, the last ten years have seen two different developments. In both countries a very small number of social scientists and historians have started examining the memory itself, trying to understand the translation of the narratives. In Denmark, a very important self-scrutiny has started and an abundance of books on the 'dark spots' of the countries war history is currently being published – one could even talk about a historiographical hypermnesia. In Norway, on the other hand the production of literature is comparably small but here some of the burning issues have been addressed by the King and the prime ministers and have led to public apologies on behalf of the Norwegian people for the treatment of certain groups. One of the leading questions in the latter part of the thesis will be, how or even if that has really challenged the main narrative.

The Project's Aim

The aim of this thesis is essentially to describe the historiographical developments and the memory-landscapes in Norway and Denmark, their changes and the tenacity of their basic outlines. It tries to combine a description of the basic structures of the prevailing history cultures and the discourses on the war past with an analysis of the agents and motivations determining it. The main objective of the thesis is to understand the way, a dominant version of the war history, a narration of good and evil, of resistance and treason, was established after the end of the occupation in Scandinavia and to follow its transmission during the following years. This thesis will hopefully contribute to a wider understanding of the way nations, and specifically liberal societies, deal with a traumatic past and how their institutions are acting on the field of memory production. I will show that not only in autocratic but also in liberal and democratic societies it is possible to put a finger on both processes and agents of memory production and that the 'memory political' forces were of an astonishing endurance in Scandinavia. These agents acted and act deliberately and use a whole set of tools to safeguard their version of the past. The same set of tools that their opponents use in the game that is called politics of remembrance or memory politics.

The thesis should be understood to be part of a broader movement in Western Europe around the turn of the millennium that tries to understand general structures in coming to terms with one's past. There is a distinct development from the national myths to challenged narratives and currently towards a European perspective. Not just the war but also the memory of it and the

⁸ Kjeldbæk, Esben, *Besættelsen: Tidslomme eller livsmøder?*, in: Nationalmuseet (ed.), *Spærretid. Hverdag under besættelsen 1940-45* (Exhibition Catalogue), København: Nationalmuseet 2005, pp. 262-267, pp. 266-267.

development of this memory should be understood as a shared European experience.⁹ I would like to contribute to this debate with this study of the two occupied Scandinavian countries and thereby re-introduce these Nordic countries into the European memory-space. Hence, the central questions of this project are about agency, interests and hegemony. I will describe the agents both on an institutional and personal level, their aims and interests and the efforts to establish a dominant and at times hegemonic narrative of the occupation. The means of their politics of remembrance were the creation of institutions as well as setting agenda for the discourses. This type of project needs a limitation to a set of units with which the examination is carried out. In this analysis these will be the three 'instruments of history culture' – museums, acts of remembrance and the current media discourses on the national narratives. I will further combine an international comparison with an analysis of a temporal development since these three instruments might have changed over the course of time or even stand for specific temporal paradigms.

In the first section I will try to show how a certain consensus on the way the war is remembered was established and who the agents for this establishment and its further promotion were and to describe their instruments. Books, movies, academic and educational schemes and the multiple ways of social communication are hard to catch and describe if one wants to give every part its rightful space. A limitation is therefore necessary and the approach of this thesis is to define and describe a sample of instruments through which a public agency or individuals tried to take part in the discourse and shape it. I am aware that I run the risk of implicitly downplaying the bargaining character of memory production by choosing this top-approach but hope to be able to show that the assumption of the existence of dominant versions, key-narratives and the like does neither presuppose a homogenous nor a monolithic structure. It would be wrong to understand the social bargaining of memory solely as a mechanic relationship between dominant and alternative versions within an overall collective memory. And yet, even at the outset of this project it became clear that in both countries state agencies engaged in the memory production at a very early stage and actively tried to influence it according to a special agenda, and that has not changed since. The differing trajectories of both people during the war have resulted in differences in these efforts to produce a certain image of the war but they also resulted in common features. A striking similarity is the importance of the interplay between the politicians and the veterans from the resistance which shaped the commemorations and representations of the war. These efforts are at the core of the project. The subjects of this part are a discussion of

⁹ There is a distinct similarity with the development of the memory of genocide on the European Jews, which is probably becoming the first global memory ever.

the historiography of the war, two museums and the celebrations of the liberation. For each country, I will examine the history and the development of these three features with an emphasis on the latter two.

In western societies, where historical research is not usually state-controlled, it was and is often state-sponsored and takes place at the universities or within state-funded institutions. If historical research found its expression in textbooks, it had been approved by boards and government authorities before. Historiography is influenced by the public and influences the public. As I will discuss in more detail in the chapter on methodology the mutual dependency and influence of the historian posing questions and addressing certain topics and his environment accepting findings and interpretations is one of complex entanglements. In this project the research conducted within special institutions and promoted by certain parties or agencies is at the centre of attention. The existence of works on certain topics or inexistence are telling evidence of not only research priorities but also of more general agendas. The question of what can be researched and what is allowed to be ignored gives a hint at the common people's outlook on a certain topic. In this respect, the establishment of research- and university-based *canons* of narration will also be examined with respect to its function as the yardstick to which all later critical research was related to.¹⁰ The field of textbook research though, will not be focussed on – which is mostly due to a lack of space – but I will pay due attention to some influential school material.

Museums and Celebrations

Museums and celebrations as instruments of the wartime memory production belong, on the other hand, to the sphere of quasi-official, often state-sponsored public memory. The museums are *Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum* (The museum of the Norwegian Resistance) and *Museet for Danmarks Frihedskamp* also known as *Frihedsmuseet* (The Museum of Danish Resistance or literally The Museum of the Danish Struggle for Freedom) and the celebrations of the liberation – *Frigjøringsjubileer* in Norway and *Befrielsesjubileer* in Denmark. Both instruments can be called *lieux de mémoire* according to the concept of Pierre Nora. They are or supply symbols and signs through which the individual participates in what could, for now be called the collective memory. The first museum is located on *Akerhus festning*, the medieval fortress at the

¹⁰ Daniel Levy stated the importance of 'canonical' writing on history saying that "an important site for the organization of collective memory is historiography. Vested with a legitimacy imparted by expertise, historians are important players who help shape collective identity by connecting past and present, providing continuities and a memory repertoire upon which the national collectivity may draw to define itself", Levy, Daniel, *The Future of the Past: Historiographical Disputes and Competing Memories in Germany and Israel*, in: *History and Theory*, no. 38, 1999, pp. 51-66.

harbour in the heart of Oslo. Here the *Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum* (NHM), housed in an old warehouse looks itself like an impregnable fortress. Yet, since its opening in 1970 it has become one of the city's most important tourist attractions and, as I will try to show, an instrument but at the same time also an important agent of memory production of the German occupation. The Hjemmefrontmuseum, founded, furnished by and under the supervision of leading figures of the resistance movement, can in my opinion be described as the official shop-window to the Norwegian occupation-history. It stands for the way that influential postwar politicians wanted the war history to be interpreted and represented. The fact that its exhibition has not been revised since its opening in 1970 shows the persistence of this interpretation. Already 13 years earlier, in 1957, veterans of the Danish resistance gave at its opening the *Museet for Danmarks Frihedskamp 1940-1945* or *Frihedsmuseet* (FM) as a present to the Danish people. It contained an exhibition, set up by the veterans themselves, in a new building, which was specially designed to house it. It became a great success with parents and grandparents visiting the exhibition together with their children, explaining the vast amount of original objects that were put up in a corridor around a green yard which bears striking resemblance of a cloister. The FM was revised in the early 1990s but still occupies a similar position in the topography of memory on the war in Denmark as the Hjemmefrontmuseum does in Norway. Both museums, were originally erected by veterans. The different trajectories during the war had resulted in differing moral problems and a different position of the veterans with regard to public life and politics, but in both countries the museums were taken over by the mainstream interpretation as well as the political elite. This thesis will focus on these mechanisms.

The use of museums as a primary hermeneutic parameter for the understanding of memory practices is not as self-evident as it might seem; a majority of scholars in this field have in fact concentrated on another feature of memory production: memorials – the 'embodied' site of memory. Works and anthologies in the field of memorials and monuments are legion. So it would almost be natural to include or even concentrate on them as the spine of the social memory. It is barely possible to systematize their great variety; they range from figured representations of the traditional iconography of victimhood or martyrdom to completely abstract pieces of art.¹¹ They are not left out and, as will become clear, the museums in themselves also constitute memorials. The choice of the specific set of memory-political instruments is based on the idea that museums and rituals are invested with a very special authority and therefore suitable for an analysis of this sort. Museums are expected to keep a

¹¹ See for a first overview on the different artistic expressions: Bredekamp, Horst, *Bildakte als Zeugnis und Urteil*, in: Flacke, Monika (ed.), *Mythen der Nationen. 1945 – Arena der Erinnerungen*, Begleitband zur Ausstellung, vol. I, Berlin: Deutsches Historisches Museum 2005, pp. 29-66.

scholarly standard and have a dedication to facts. Rituals, on the other hand have an official air and thereby public approval. Memorials are often unveiled on special occasions and invested with their authority by the ritual that stands at the beginning.

The ritual is one of the most important and powerful agents for memory, especially the ritual or rituals connected to the celebrations of anniversaries. An examination of the ways the war is commemorated over the course of the years is, I claim, likely to produce interesting insights into the perception of the occupation, since these re-enactments are not only commemorative acts but are also used to shape memory by imposing their interpretations of the event. Days of remembrance belong to the set of symbols through which a state publicly portrays itself.¹² Anniversaries seem to have a special meaning wherever we look. They are essential to the strengthening of group-identities and they are a "central component of the collective memory."¹³ But through the connected rituals they also become creating agents of tradition themselves.¹⁴ Thus anniversaries are, according to Paul Connerton, even means to control the collective memory.¹⁵ Anniversaries that fall on the 10th, the 25th or the 50th jubilee of the commemorated event especially seem to attract a lot of efforts and discussion around the celebrations. In Norway and Denmark, the celebrations around the liberation days are part of the annual calendar of national events and have been celebrated with more or less intensity throughout the postwar period. Therefore the festivities on the *frigjørings-* and *befrielsesjubileer* are likely to represent the dominant version of the perception of the war.¹⁶ I will describe their course and conduct and the arrangements on the central level in Oslo and Copenhagen on the occasion of the more important anniversaries. The aim is to show the character of the celebrations and the commemorative rites conducted on this day in Denmark and Norway and also to show how they are used to perpetuate the basic narration of the Danish and Norwegian resistance. I will restrict myself to the capitals, Oslo and Copenhagen, and I will focus on the official celebrations and ceremonies conducted by the Parliaments, the Kings of Norway and the Queen of Denmark, the governments and the other arrangements in the city, such as wreath-laying and the two-minute-silence.

¹² Kölsch, Julia, *Politik und Gedächtnis. Zur Soziologie funktionaler Kultivierung von Erinnerung*, Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag 2000, p. 211.

¹³ Binder, Beate, *Jahrestag*, in: Pethes, Nicolas/ Ruchatz, Jens (ed.), *Gedächtnis und Erinnerung. Ein interdisziplinäres Lexikon*, Reinbeck bei Hamburg: Rowohlt 2001, pp. 290-291, p. 290.

¹⁴ Eriksen, Anne, *Det var noe annet under krigen. 2. verdenskrig i norsk kollektivtradisjon*, Oslo: Pax 1995, p. 121.

¹⁵ Connerton, Paul, *How societies remember*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1989.

¹⁶ 'Frigjøringen' (liberation) normally refers to the liberation in May 1945 and the days of the German surrender in central and northern Europe on 8 May 1945. 'Frigjøringsjubileer' consequently depicts the anniversaries of this event. The same applies to the Danish word 'befrielsen', albeit the surrender of the German forces in Northern Germany, the Netherlands and Denmark already came into effect on the 5th of May. In both countries the news of the imminent surrender reached the population already the day before and resulted in widespread celebrations on the 4th and the 7th respectively.

Challenges and Continuation

Not less important will be the second major section of the thesis where I attempt to show to what extent the mainstream interpretation – as reflected in the historiography and the two institutions described in the previous chapter – is changed and challenged by the media- and academic discourse. I will try to analyse the new paradigms emerging after the end of the Cold War with the help of a selected set of 'painful memories'. Of course there are many difficult memories and challenges to once-established patriotic narratives; the space though permits just a small sample. The first one will be on the cooperation of individuals and state authorities with the occupying force in the two countries and how both societies have coped with it. The specificities of the trajectory of the war made this question a particularly difficult one to answer in Denmark with its first three years of collaboration with the Germans under a legal government. The next difficult memory will deal with possible offences and mistakes on the side of the resistance and how the fact that parts of the resistance pioneers came from undemocratic sides of the political spectrum affected their perception. After that I will look at the treatment of the girlfriends of German soldiers to understand the ways these women – a considerable number – and their offspring were integrated into the narrative before I turn to the question of the existence of a Norwegian and Danish Holocaust and whether they have been integrated into the Scandinavian narratives on the war.

I hope to be able to show how the tradition or its promoters were able, with minor modifications, to keep a relatively unanimous picture of the war. This part is arranged thematically unlike the previous one. In order to connect it to the previous chapters on the construction of the narrative, this chapter will also focus on the same instruments and fields of history cultures as the first one. The aim is to see how these were used for both the dominant version as well as its contestation. By choosing these different arrangements for the different parts I hope to be able to be able to best reflect the similarities as well as the differences of the two cultures and their trajectories.

Public and Archival Sources

The sources of the project are therefore manifold and diverse. Besides the vast number of academic books on the war and the German occupation published in both countries, novels and non-academic books of documentary character have been included in the description. The aim was to outline not only the research and research-paradigms that prevailed throughout the postwar period but also to understand all kinds of sources for the historical knowledge of the common Danes and Norwegians. Hence, if possible, also movies and TV programmes have

been included. Newspapers proved as often the most reliable source for the actual performances during the celebrations and for the speeches held. Even though newspapers reflect the events in a topical manner, they often do not reflect the considerations behind the orchestration of the same event. In order to understand those, supplementary sources have been used. Both governments have formed advisory boards or committees for the planning and the organization of the celebrations. These boards have left archival traces such as minutes, letters and proposals as well as draft-schedules, which give insights into in the motivations of the participants and which I have used intensively.

Also the museums themselves have been important sources by virtue of their current exhibitions. Again, the considerations behind the artistic set-up and the texts could not be established solely by looking at the presentation. Another difficulty was of course to describe earlier exhibitions. Here the archives of both institutions proved to be of utmost importance since they keep the first drafts and documentations of earlier exhibitions as well as collections of photos and other audiovisual material. The generous access to these archives has been of tremendous help.

Comparative Study or Study of Entanglements?

As can be seen from this outline, the thesis at hand is not restricted to a description of the history of historical research; the scope is much broader, encompassing all sorts of expressions or signs, of history culture which I am going to subject to a trans-national and chronological comparison. The method of cross-country comparison will hopefully help to yield findings that otherwise would not be found in purely national analyses. Public discourse does not take place in closed national spaces, countries do look across their borders and are influenced by experiences and debates in other nations, especially, as I will show in the methodological remarks, when it comes to the production of memory which more often than we tend to think is co-determined by the perception of a past in other cultures. Academics are often inspired by debates in other countries to address and formulate problems within their own cultures. But also when a community of remembrance is seemingly not influenced by others, the comparison is helpful to understand the group's features and agents of memory production; especially when two nations are compared which share cultural norms to a large degree. One might expect to find very similar features in the cases at hand and their absence is as telling as the existence of shared phenomena. Unfortunately there is, except for some articles, not yet a comparative study of these two countries which do invite for comparison and have otherwise been subject to comparative studies in a wide array, for example in the field of welfare state studies. By

following mechanisms and processes of memory production in those two liberal societies, I might be able to draw conclusions on the reception of the narrative. The aim is not only to determine the existence of a dominant narrative in the Danish and Norwegian postwar memory production and its origin but also the agents of its continuation and reworking as well as the processes of re-negotiation and incorporation of challenges and conflicting memories. It is not the first attempt of this kind. Comparing historiographies has been done before. The impact of the First World-War has been intensively examined by Jay Winter in a series of major books.¹⁷ The aftermath of the Second World-War, which is of greater interest here, has been treated by the above-mentioned Pieter Lagrou who published in 2000 his excellent study on "patriot memory and national recovery in Western Europe" in which he compared the history cultures in the Netherlands, Belgium and France in the immediate postwar period.¹⁸ A newly published anthology compares the post-1945 *cultures of remembrance* in Germany, Italy and Japan.¹⁹ The contributions of the latter each focus on smaller parts of the comparison but are compiled according to topics, whereas Lagrou tried to integrate the national paradigms in a parallel demonstration and a symmetric comparison. In the two countries that are the subject of this examination, there have also been some studies on the memory production, of which especially the work of Claus Bryld and Anette Warring²⁰ in Denmark and of Anne Eriksen²¹ and Claudia Lenz on Norway have to be mentioned.²² But as already mentioned there are, except for some articles, no comparative studies of these two countries.

¹⁷ Out of the numerous titles I just mention two here: War and remembrance in the twentieth century (edited by Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan), Cambridge, U.K., New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999 and Winter, Jay, Remembering war: the Great War between memory and history in the twentieth century, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.

¹⁸ Lagrou, Pieter, The Legacy of Nazi Occupation. Patriot Memory and National Recovery in Western Europe, 1945-1965, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2000, Studies in the Social and Cultural History of Modern Warfare.

¹⁹ Cornelißen, Christoph, Lutz Klinkhammer, and Wolfgang Schwentker (eds.), Erinnerungskulturen. Deutschland, Italien und Japan seit 1945, Frankfurt/ M.: Fischer 2003.

²⁰ Bryld, Claus, Warring, Anette, Besættelsestiden som kollektiv erindring. Historie og tradisjonsforvaltning af krig og besættelse 1945-1997, Frederiksberg: Roskilde Universitetsforlag 1998.

²¹ Amongst others the main contribution of Anne Eriksen is probably the already quoted: Det var noe annet under krigen. 2. verdenskrig i norsk kollektivtradisjon, Oslo: Pax. 1995.

²² Lenz, Claudia, Haushaltspflicht und Widerstand. Erzählungen norwegischer Frauen über die deutsche Besatzung 1940-1945 im Lichte nationaler Vergangenheitskonstruktionen, Tübingen: edition diskord 2003.

National History Cultures and National Historiographies

Today, the notion that societies or their members also share common *recollections* is widely accepted. These recollections "are a condition for the cohesion of social communities."²³ Ernest Renan went even so far as to claim that people do not form nations because of a common language or religion, not because of geography or common interests, but simply because they share a common recollection about a common past and because they share the wish to pursue this common life even in the time to come.²⁴ There is reason to assume that this past, which is the basis of the group coherence, needs visualisation or representation through historical narratives, through acts of remembering in order to be recognised.²⁵ Based on this assumption it becomes clear that, "History as an academic discipline has a social function which is closely linked to social structure and state building."²⁶ But it is not just an academic historiography and scientific works that fulfil this function. There are several agents that create the recollection of the individual as well as of the whole group. The outcome of their actions – speech-acts, media reports, publications, personal discussions, school materials – is given several names. Some refer to it as *collective memory* or *cultural memory*, some prefer terms like *public memory*, others use the words *history culture* or *memory culture*. In the following chapter, I will discuss these terms and concepts with regard to their genesis, the connotations they cause and their usefulness for my endeavour. This is by no means a complete discussion and the focus is very much the European, and specifically the German debate. This is not surprising since the German debate in the field of memory research has probably been the most intense for one or two decades in Europe. Not only has Germany alongside its former Axis-allies been subjected to a "democratization from the outside"²⁷ and therefore been coerced into a more critical preoccupation with its war history, but as the main perpetrator of atrocities on the European theatre of war and the county responsible for the murder of millions of Jews across the continent, the debate on the necessity to remember and the historization of the past seems to have played a great role in the shaping of a German postwar identity at least after an initial

²³ Carrier, Monuments and National Memory Cultures in France and Germany since 1989. The 'Vél d'Hiv' in Paris and the 'Holocaust Monument' in Berlin, thesis, Freie Universität Berlin 2000, p. 6.

²⁴ Renan, Ernest, Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?, Conference at the Sorbonne, March 11th 1882, in: Psichari, Henriette (ed.), Œuvres complètes de Ernest Renan, vol. I, Paris 1947, pp. 887-906.

²⁵ Bergem, Wolfgang, Barbarei als Sinnstiftung?, Das NS-Regime in Vergangenheitspolitik und Erinnerungskultur der Bundesrepublik, in: Bergem, Wolfgang (ed.), Die NS-Diktatur im deutschen Erinnerungsdiskurs, Opladen: Leske + Budrich 2003, pp. 81-104, p. 85..

²⁶ Meyer, Frank, Social structure, state building and the fields of history in Scandinavia. A personal and comparative view, in: Meyer, Frank/ Myhre, Jan Eivind, Nordic Historiography in the 20th Century, Tid og Tanke, vol. 5, Oslo: University of Oslo, department of History 2000, pp. 28-49, p.29.

²⁷ Cornelißen, Christoph, Klinkhammer, Lutz, Schwentker, Wolfgang, Nationale Erinnerungskulturen seit 1945 im Vergleich, in: Cornelißen, Christoph, Klinkhammer, Lutz, Schwentker, Wolfgang (eds.), Erinnerungskulturen. Deutschland, Italien und Japan seit 1945. Frankfurt/ M.: Fischer; 2003, pp. 9-27, p. 11.

phase of denial in the 1950s. The early 1990s were especially known as a time when the *amnesia* of the Adenauer period turned into a *hypermnesia* in which remembering almost became an obsession of the ruling elite and a cornerstone of the identity of the Federal Republic.²⁸ But also the long-lasting effects of the war with the German partition, the development of an alternative narrative in East Germany to the more intense debate in the West and finally a reunification that necessitated yet another period of intense attempts to appropriate and cope with a dictatorial past fostered a strong strain of research in the field.²⁹ It has to be added that this field in Germany has been, and still is, dominated by historians with sociologists and other social scientists playing a minor role. The experience of two consecutive dictatorships with Germans being actors as well as victims has fostered research as much as it at times, it has resulted in conflicts on the question of which experience (the Nazi- or the Socialist dictatorship) is of superior importance and consequently should be assigned greater attention or on the question of how to connect both experiences. The German research therefore is, with exceptions, not so much focussed on a general theory of memory but rather on the specific structures at hand when dealing with a traumatic and dictatorial past. It is precisely because of this character that I hope to find helpful aides in it for my own project that deals with the traumatic experience of a war and an occupation.

Of course Germany does not stand alone in Europe as an experience of one dictatorship replacing the other; there are several countries in Eastern Europe that share this trajectory.³⁰ Maybe it was the parallel development of two German states that also today facilitates a discourse intended to 'cope' with the past. But since the end of the Cold War in those countries now also liberated from Soviet domination, the interest in the research in memory has intensified and yielded highly interesting results, although, I may allege, it did for some time not become as intense as the (West-) German, having not yet reached its full potential. Another especially theoretically important approach in European research comes from France. The most important being the concept of the *lieux de mémoire* and the cultural representations of the past, here especially with respect to the French experience of the Vichy-regime. The North American

²⁸ Bergem, Wolfgang, *Barbarei als Sinnstiftung*, p. 81.

²⁹ The West-German perception is a rather well explored field of study, and the amount of works enormous. I just want to point to some of the more recent publications: Wolfrum, Edgar, *Geschichtspolitik in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Der Weg zur bundesrepublikanischen Erinnerung 1948-1990*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1999; Wolfrum, Edgar, *Geschichtspolitik in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1949-1989*, in: Bock, Petra/ Wolfrum, Edgar (ed.), *Umkämpfte Vergangenheit. Geschichtsbilder, Erinnerung und Vergangenheitspolitik im internationalen Vergleich*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1999 as well as Bergem, Wolfgang (ed.), *Die NS-Diktatur im deutschen Erinnerungsdiskurs*, Opladen: Leske + Budrich 2003.

³⁰ A new and very interesting study on the memory of the war in former Yugoslavia is the PhD thesis by Heike Karge *Steinerne Erinnerung – versteinerte Erinnerung? Kriegsgedenken im sozialistischen Jugoslawien*, Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz 2008, Rehei Balkanologische Veröffentlichungen.

research, albeit based on the same foundations, cast its eyes rather on explanations and contributions of social scientists, anthropologists, literary scientists and psychologists with scholars from Israel taking an important part in the discourse here.³¹ The focus of the bulk of this work has been the destruction of European Jewry, even to such an extent that one of the most important journals of the field of research of memory *History & Memory*, published by these scholars is, despite the more general title, overwhelmingly characterized by research on the memory of the Holocaust.³² The different discourses are often led completely disconnected. The reasons might be found in a language barrier as much as in the differing theoretical foundations.³³

Two last comments might be allowed here: All translations from Danish, German, Norwegian and Swedish have been, if not indicated otherwise, done by myself. Any errors in content or grammar are mine alone. In the age of web-based communications a great deal of newspaper articles during the last decade have been drawn from the internet. Whereas I quoted printed issues just with the date of publication I supplied the URL of articles taken from the web. All links have been checked again over the course of the first two months of 2007.

³¹ Patrick Hutton said that memory research is a cross-road of interdisciplinary research from different fields where historians have arrived rather late. Hutton, Patrick H., *History as an Art of Memory*, Hanover, London: University Press of New England 1993, p. 1.

³² Jaraus, Konrad H., *Zeitgeschichte und Erinnerung. Deutungskonkurrenz oder Interdependenz*, in: Jaraus, Konrad H., Sabrow, Martin (eds.), *Verletztes Gedächtnis. Erinnerungskultur und Zeitgeschichte im Konflikt*, Frankfurt/M., New York: Campus 2002, pp. 9-37, p. 11.

³³ A very good overview on recent and older literature especially from this school of thought can be found in: Confino, Alan, *Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method*, in: *The American Historical Review*, no. 5, 1997, pp. 1386-1403; Hutton, Patrick, *Recent Scholarship on memory and History*, in: *The History Teacher*, no. 4, 2000, pp. 533-548 and Olick, Jeffrey K., Robbins, Joyce, *Social Memory Studies: From "Collective Memory" to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices*, in: *Annual Review of Sociology*, no. 24, 1998, pp. 105-140.

MEMORY, HISTORY AND COMPARISON

1. COLLECTIVE MEMORY VERSUS HISTORY CULTURE

Albeit the differentiation between two research fields which from now onwards will be called *memory* and *history culture* is rough and does not give credit to the complexity of all approaches described on the next pages, I argue that it gives a certain order to the concepts and notions by grouping them according to the outlook of their core ideas and thus helps to find a way through the difficult terrain and on the winding roads of memory-research. The first modern scholars dealing with what is the context of this chapter have concentrated on the construction of memory and its social genesis and therefore will be dealt with first. Those scholars, who have developed notions of history cultures and the like, grounded their notions on the others and will accordingly be dealt with afterwards. The supply of ideas is legion and often enough supposedly similar concepts are used in very different ways. The authors quoted on the following pages have all contributed in various ways to my notion of a the key concepts which I will name at the end of this chapter; some by delivering the fundamental ideas of a socially communicated memory, some by describing the multitude of cultural expressions and agents of it and some simply by pointing at the pitfalls inherent in almost every model.

Collective Memory

The reflection on the connection of processes of remembering and identity is ancient. The classical writers and philosophers already dedicated a substantial amount of their words to the problem. Modern times continued that line of thinking and Nietzsche and Marx were among the most well-known and probably most influential writers dealing with the association of memory and identity and memory and violence.³⁴ This chapter nevertheless will start the description with Maurice Halbwachs, since he could be regarded the founder of the school of a "social construction of knowledge" and has been proven to be a fitting starting point.³⁵

Maurice Halbwachs

Halbwachs, a disciple of Durkheim and Bergson, a socialist and scholar of sociology, wrote the two books which are considered to be the basic work on collective memory, inventing the term

³⁴ Assmann, Jan, *Erinnern, um dazuzugehören. Kulturelles Gedächtnis, Zugehörigkeitsstruktur und normative Vergangenheit*, in: Platt, Kristin, Dabag, Mihran, *Generation und Gedächtnis*, Opladen: Leske & Budrich 1995, 51-75.

as such.³⁶ His main focus was on the social dependence of the memory of the individual. He was not concerned with the neuronal or physical pre-supposition of the brain, but emphasised the social and collective realms of memory. In *Les cadres sociaux* as well as in later works he explained why he thought there could be no memory outside the framework which the group makes available to the individual to fix his memory. A memory without these frameworks is impossible.³⁷ It is still the individual that actually *possesses* the memory for the simple fact that there is no collective neuronal system but this memory is coined by the group. The past as such is unable to survive, but is re-constructed in the context of our cultural present – it is a social construction.³⁸ When the frames and pre-requisites of the reconstruction are changed or disappear, the memory goes through the same process – and the effect is oblivion.³⁹ The collective memory as he has described it could therefore be summarized as:

*"[...] an elaborate network of social mores, values, and ideals that marks out the dimensions of our imaginations according to the attitudes of the social groups to which we relate. It is through the interconnections among these shared images that the social frameworks (cadres sociaux) of our collective memory are formed, and it is within such settings that individual memories must be situated if they are to survive."*⁴⁰

One of the essential new notions of Halbwachs was an understanding of the memory as being different from a mere passive storage or archive. He interpreted it as an entity which *actively* reconstructs the past, and hence recollection as a procedure directly linked to the present through which an individual is enabled to develop an abstract thinking which is directed towards a future. The innovation was that Halbwachs interpreted remembering as a *collective* endeavour but also as an *act*.⁴¹ Thereby, Halbwachs broke with the view that memory was organised along the same lines as a warehouse. If remembering was a process directed *at* and directed *by* the

³⁵ Niethammer, Lutz, Diesseits des 'Floating Gap'. Das kollektive Gedächtnis und die Konstruktion von Identität im wissenschaftlichen Diskurs, in: Platt, Kristin, Dabag, Mihran (eds.), *Generation und Gedächtnis*, Opladen: Leske & Budrich, 1995, pp. 25-50, p. 25.

³⁶ Halbwachs, Maurice, *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire*, Paris 1925, new edition Paris 1985; Halbwachs, Maurice, *La mémoire collective*, Paris 1950

³⁷ Halbwachs, *Les cadres sociaux*, p. 121.

³⁸ Assmann, Jan, Kollektives und kulturelles Gedächtnis. Zur Phänemologie und Funktion von Gegen-Erinnerung, in: Borsdorf, Ulrich, Grütter, Heinrich Theodor, *Orte der Erinnerung. Denkmal, Gedenkstätte, Museum*, Frankfurt/ M., New York: Campus 1999, pp. 13-32, p. 14.

³⁹ Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis*, p.37.

⁴⁰ Hutton, *Art of Memory*, p. 78.

⁴¹ This notion has recently been examined and corroborated by a project of the Volkswagenstiftung on the processes how group memories are constructed anew in every communication. The study dealt with German families and the way they talked about the Second World War. Welzer, Harald, Moller, Sabine, Tschuggnall, Karoline, 'Opa war kein Nazi'. *Nationalsozialismus und Holocaust im Familiengedächtnis*. Frankfurt/ Main: Fischer 2002.

present, it was also the means that enabled the individual to envision and think into the future.⁴² Moreover, for Halbwachs an individual is not just a participant of just one community of communication and memory but often of many. Thus the memory of the individual is the very specific entanglement of the collective memories an individual is part of and it is also the most complex one.⁴³ It is therefore also is an 'observation tower' to the collective memories of the groups the individual belongs to. Within this, the multitude of collective memories could and often do engage in a competition about the allegiance and loyalty of the individual. A decisive factor of memory-processes therefore is social power. The outlines of an individual memory are drawn by the inferiorities and the superiorities of the collective memories the individual is partaking as is our collective memory a reflection of the social forces at work within the group.⁴⁴ Halbwachs was the one, who for the first time showed the interaction and interdependence of memory and group, of memory and communication. As an analytical category his concept was, and still is, too vague. It is not able to describe the complex relationships between the various groups that hold collective memories of their own and the processes on the side of the individual that is part of several collective memories. Another weakness is that it gives a rather unified idea of the group memory not allowing for contested versions of the one memory within a given social group. It is also not suitable to explain the processes of the transformation of memories over time and their transmission through the generations, because in his opinion they were not part of the memory but of history, which for him was a different phenomenon. Change was for him not a category applied to memory – but something assigned to the realms of history which he distinguished sharply from those of memory. In his opinion, history begins where memory ends, where the memory is not inhabited anymore.⁴⁵ This rather positivist idea of history would today be considered to be too static. Historiography is what reconstructs history and it, as well as memory, is a product of communication and therefore also subject to the same processes as the memory. He also totally rejected concepts that are connected to the psychology of the individual as Sigmund Freud has conceptualised them in the notions of repression and projection. When talking about traumatic experiences, these mechanisms certainly deserve greater attention than Halbwachs had dedicated them.⁴⁶

⁴² Kirsch, Jan-Holger, "Wir haben aus der Geschichte gelernt": der 8. Mai als politischer Gedenktag in Deutschland, Köln, Weimar, Wien: Böhlau 1999, p. 27.

⁴³ Halbwachs, Maurice, Das kollektive Gedächtnis, Stuttgart: 1967, French: La mémoire collective, Paris 1950, p.127.

⁴⁴ Hutton, Art of Memory, p.79.

⁴⁵ Assmann, Jan, Das kulturelle Gedächtnis, p. 50.

⁴⁶ Assmann, Aleida, Erinnerungsräume. Formen und Wandlungen des kulturellen Gedächtnisses, München: C.H. Beck 1999, p.131. Of course there lies a danger in applying notions of individual psychology to social processes. Burke, Peter, History as social memory, in: Butler, Thomas (ed.), Memory: History, Culture and the Mind, Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1989, pp. 97-113, p. 98.

The notion of a socially communicated memory is important for this project since the focus on the celebrations and the rituals connected to them does presuppose that memory can and has to be communicated in order to exist. As will be seen later, with the primary group of veterans getting old and vanishing the memory of the war as they had communicated it was put into crisis. But more importantly the notion that one memory that produces texts and testimonies could be seen as an observation tower on the collective represents the main argument for my choice of sources. But still, Halbwachs' collective memory is not able to catch the complex connections between the communication of an experience that takes place in the present and a cultural production on the same event as well as the institutionalization of the same. Jan and Aleida Assmann have suggested a widely acknowledged way out of that dilemma.

Communicative and Cultural Memory – Jan and Aleida Assmann

Also Jan Assmann points out that all recollection emerges out of communication and interaction. We remember what others tell us as well as what the group "acknowledges being of importance".⁴⁷ Based on the idea of the collective or social dependence of memory Assmann made an attempt to develop these categories further for scientific usage. He came to the conclusion that in fact it is impossible to distinguish between an individual and a social memory. The individual memory is as such imminently social as are language and awareness. That is why he and his wife Aleida Assmann have introduced the term *communicative memory* for the social aspect of memory described by Halbwachs. This memory belongs to the sphere of interaction between people where it also has its origin. However, this interaction is no one-way street. The group does enable the recollection, but the recollection is in turn the necessary ingredient for the socialisation of the individual. The common recollection is the social bond between the members of the group – and communicative memory a memory of bonds and commitments.⁴⁸ The contents of the communicative memory comprises all varieties of recollections that depend exclusively on day-to-day communication, is unorganised and not yet consolidated and comes closest to Halbwachs' notion of a collective memory and in the historical sciences would be the field of oral history.⁴⁹ If the bearers (or a generation) dies, the communicative memory ceases as well. In that sense, the communicative memory is the 'short-term memory' of a society. Since individuals generally tend to attribute a certain importance to their life stories or their

⁴⁷ Assmann, Jan, Das kulturelle Gedächtnis. Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in den frühen Hochkulturen, München: Beck 2002, p. 36.

⁴⁸ Assmann, Jan, Religion und kulturelles Gedächtnis. Zehn Studien, München: C.H. Beck 2000, p. 13-15. Also here one could point at the above mentioned study of Welzer, Moller and Tschuggnall on the family memory.

⁴⁹ Assmann, Jan, Kollektives Gedächtnis und kulturelle Identität, in: Assmann, Jan, Hölscher, Tonio (eds.), Kultur und Gedächtnis, Frankfurt/ Main: Suhrkamp 1988, pp. 9-19, p.10.

achievements, and, hence, to their memories, the disappearance of a generation sparks off a wave of memoirs, publications or the founding of archival collections. The notion of the loss of memories that would happen with the disappearance of a generation of witnesses is often also felt by the younger contemporaries. Oral-history projects like that of the Spielberg-foundation are expressions of a fear of the younger generations that a memory worth protecting would fade. A Danish book published in 2006 with the reports of veterans explicitly expressed this fear in its title *Om lidt er de borte* (Soon they will be gone).⁵⁰ After this 'boom', approximately every 80 years, there is a floating gap, the bridge of transformation of what is kept of the communicative memory into something Jan and Aleida Assmann called *cultural memory*. This floating gap has no fixed point in time but changes as times go by.⁵¹ Beyond that gap is the realm of the culturally-shaped recollections and institutionalised communication. This area of objectified culture and organized or ceremonial communication expresses itself with texts, rituals, memorials and communication in the form of recitals, observance, celebrations and viewing.⁵² Assmann calls these *figures of remembrance*.⁵³ Assmann describes six characteristics of the cultural memory. It is: 1) *identitätskonkret* – it always refers to one special group, that draws its awareness of unity and distinctiveness from it; 2) it is *reconstructive* – no memory is able to preserve a past as such, what is preserved depends very much on the frames a certain time is able to offer; 3) it is *culturally shaped* – transmission of memory depends on the objectivisation and crystallisation of memory into texts and rites; 4) *organised* – the bearers of the cultural memory are specialised and the communication is institutionally safeguarded by a certain degree of ceremonialization; 5) it is *binding*; and 6) cultural memory is *reflexive*.⁵⁴

Based on these characteristics, Assmann defines cultural memory as follows:

"We summarise under the term cultural memory the characteristic set of customary texts, images and rites a society in its time makes use of and that is necessary to stabilise and transmit its self-image. It is collectively shared knowledge, preferably (but not necessarily) of the past, on which a group bases its consciousness of unity and peculiarity."⁵⁵

The two different *modi memorandi* – communicative and cultural memory – should analytically be separated, even if, in practice they are manifoldly intertwined.⁵⁶ Communicative memory and cultural memory, therefore, could be distinguished as *day-to-day-memory* and *festive-memory*.

⁵⁰ Wolden-Ræthinge, Anne. *Om lidt er de borte*. Modstandsbevægelsens topfolk fortæller til, Hedehusene: Nyt Dansk Litteraturselskab 2006.

⁵¹ Vansina, Jan, *Oral Tradition as History*, Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press 1985, esp. p. 23 and Assmann, J., *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis*, p. 51.

⁵² Welzer, Harald, *Das kommunikative Gedächtnis. Eine Theorie der Erinnerung*, München: C.H. Beck 2002, p.14.

⁵³ Assmann., *Kollektives Gedächtnis*, p. 12. The term 'Erinnerungsfiguren' is difficult to translate into English.

⁵⁴ Assmann, *Kollektives Gedächtnis*, p. 13-14.

⁵⁵ Assmann, *Kollektives Gedächtnis*, p. 15.

Whereas some cultures might have a clear cut division between both memories, others will prefer to use a whole range of nuances of the two, cultural memory is still always associated with celebrations and notions of sacrality and holiness.⁵⁷

The idea of the cultural memory enriches the discussion on the nature of remembering and adds to the concept of Halbwachs – a dimension that reaches further back in time. It describes how interrelated acts of remembering in our daily lives are today with acts of remembering on a broader and often more official scale and it shows how similar the processes of the two actually are. However, it falls short of explaining the bargaining process behind the memory production and gives a rather uniform idea of memory in a social group. Assmann has opened a window for the understanding of the complex processes of societal remembering, and yet his ideas have some serious shortcomings. They appear to be too rigid for example. In the thesis at hand it becomes very clear that the two *modi memorandi* are entangled and intertwined. The production of a cultural memory on a given event (in the case of this thesis: the occupation), the transformation of memory embodied in the contemporaries into a memory administered by institutions begins immediately after the event has happened.⁵⁸ The Assmanns do not exclude such an immediate process but do not pay it the due attention. In the cases of both Denmark and Norway, as will become clear later on, the ritualization of the acts of commemoration started very early, even within the first year of the occupation, albeit it certainly could draw from well established western European traditions of mourning. Bearers and promoters of this ritualization were, besides the families of the victims, the veterans. The two terms can in fact just be separated *analytically*; within the memory-practice of individuals and social groups, their shapes and usage are highly entangled and related. Without these entanglements, the cultural memory could not change its shape in the long run which it does though by always up- or downgrading some aspects.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis*, p. 51.

⁵⁷ Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis*, p. 52-56.

⁵⁸ Meyer, Erik, *Erinnerungskultur als Politikfeld. Geschichtspolitische Deliberation und Deziision in der Berliner Republik*, in: Bergem, Wolfgang (ed.), *Die NS-Diktatur im deutschen Erinnerungsdiskurs*, Opladen: Leske & Budrich 2003, pp. 121-136, p. 121.

⁵⁹ Welzer, *Das kommunikative Gedächtnis*, p. 15.

Lieux de mémoire – Pierre Nora

If Halbwachs was the first to state a social origin of recollections, Assmann is occupied with what he had had left out, the cultural and symbolic frames. Now, in order to remember things beyond the three generations threshold of the communicative memory, humans create mnemonic aids – imaginary spaces – *lieux de mémoire*.⁶⁰ The concept of the *lieux* borders on the two concepts of memory and history. Pierre Nora states that a fundamental difference between *mémoire* and *histoire* exists. The *mémoire* is what the people live and it is in a permanent transmission – the *histoire*, on the other hand, is what historians want to describe. It is an abstract reconstruction of events in the past and it claims a certain truthfulness. Thus Nora writes:

*"Memory and history, far from being synonymous, are thus in many respects opposed. Memory is life, always embodied in living societies and as such in permanent evolution, subject to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, unconscious of the distortions to which it is subject, vulnerable in various ways to appropriation and manipulation, and capable of lying dormant for long periods only to be suddenly reawakened. History, on the other hand, is the reconstruction, always problematic and incomplete, of what is no longer. Memory is always a phenomenon of the present, a bond that is tying us to the eternal present; history is a representation of the past."*⁶¹

This representation of the past calls for analysis and is open to debate, whereas memory is embraced by a notion of sanctity. "At the heart of history is a criticism destructive of spontaneous memory. Memory is always suspect in the eyes of history, whose true mission is to demolish it, to repress it."⁶² Between the two poles of history and memory now hide the lieux de mémoire which are described by Nora also as "focal points of our national heritage".⁶³ Virtually everything could be a lieu de mémoire – topographical sites, of course, but also typical food, buildings or famous people. The quality that constitutes the lieu de mémoire is that it is "a focal point of shared emotional attachment".⁶⁴ They are "fundamentally vestiges, ultimate embodiments of a commemorative consciousness".⁶⁵ Nora compiled these sites of memory for France – it became a seven-volume work. And the notion of the lieux de mémoire has become increasingly popular. I cannot entirely agree with this static division and the positivist idea of

⁶⁰ Assmann, Religion, p. 19.

⁶¹ Nora, Pierre, *Entre Mémoire et Histoire*, in: Nora Pierre (ed.) *Les lieux de mémoire*, vol. 1, La République, Paris: Galimard 1984, pp. XV-XLII, p. XVII, here the English version: Nora, Pierre, *Between Memory and History*, in: Kritzman, Lawrence D. (ed.), *Realms of Memory. Rethinking the French Past*, vol. 1, *Conflicts and Visions*, New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 1-20, p. 3.

⁶² Nora, *Between Memory and History*, p. 3.

⁶³ Nora, Pierre, *Das Abenteuer der Lieux de mémoire*, in: Francois, Etienne et al (eds.), *Nation und Emotion*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1995, pp. 83-92, p. 83.

⁶⁴ Carrier, Peter, *Monuments and National Memory Culture in France and Germany since 1989*, thesis, Freie Universität Berlin 2000, p. 45-46.

⁶⁵ Nora, *Between Memory and History*, p.6.

historical sciences that looms behind those lines – historians as members of groups and as bearers of memory are prone to reconstructing and perpetuating memory in historical writing by the sheer choice of topics and sources – however, the concept of the lieux de mémoire could serve as a suitable term for the description of what Jan Assmann called *figures of remembrance*. It could serve as a name for the smaller units of the past that are referred to in communication and acts of remembering. In this sense the museums that are interpreted in this study as well as the conduct of the celebration of the liberation should be understood as lieux de mémoire. However, one might call it, be it collective or cultural memory – all these terms refer to a changeable but in itself rather consensual interpretation of a given past. They do not refer to the complexity of all existing interpretations but already to the outcome of a process of negotiation which seems to be, at least for a certain time, uniform until it is challenged again. The gravest objection against collective memory and its related terms therefore is that they somehow imply a quality of immobility, of something given. However, to recall is a process, something that depends on a vast number of factors and is changing.

History- and Memory Cultures

Each of the terms discussed contributed equally to a deepened understanding of the nature of memory construction but falls short of a uniform and sufficient definition, let alone, an explanation of the complex nature of the processes of remembering – be it on an individual or national level. A scholarly debate that has taken place for several years in Germany offers a chance to find such a way in the combination of the notion of a memory dependent on collective processes and a reference to cultural sciences.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ I will not get into a discussion of the well-known term, coined for the German, *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, but just mention it here for the sake of being complete. The word is literally untranslatable, just some imperfect suggestions were made translating it into 'coping with the past' or 'overcoming the past'. It comprised a lot of different features of the way the new democratic regime should deal with the bequest of an overcome dictatorship including the question on new ways of self-definition. It is mostly used by politicians trying to 'talk big'. For a discussion see for example: König, Helmut, Von der Diktatur zur Demokratie oder was ist Vergangenheitsbewältigung, in: König, Helmut, Kohlstruck, Michael, Wöll, Andreas (eds.), *Vergangenheitsbewältigung am Ende des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts*, Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag 1998, Leviathan Sonderheft, no.18, pp. 371-392, p. 379 and König, Helmut, *Die Zukunft der Vergangenheit*, Frankfurt/ M.: Fischer 2003

History culture

The term *history culture*⁶⁷, rather than the term collective memory, contains the moment of a multitude of sometimes even differing memories within a given unit. This unit might be a group of peers, a milieu, a social group or an organisation as well as the nation/society as a whole. The larger this unit is the more possible it seems that differing interpretations exist side by side. Even though the term history culture seems blurry it might be more suitable for analysis because it opens up more categories than the fairly restricted notion of a unified collective memory as used by Assmann and it allows to include the change of modes of recollection. It originates in the field of didactics of history. It replaced the somewhat older concept of historical consciousness and focuses on the practices in social life.⁶⁸ Historical consciousness can be understood according to Jörn Rüsen and Karl-Ernst Jeismann as the relationship between the interpretation of the past, the understanding of the present and the development of a perspective towards the future.⁶⁹ Scholars have used it as a parameter of their research but for example in the German public debate the term developed into a notion which was directly connected to a 'right' or 'proper' interpretation of the dark past. The questions were not about which historical consciousness an individual held or developed, rather if it had one – which meant it held the political correct interpretation about the dictatorial parts of German history. It is a certain openness and vagueness of the idea of a historical consciousness that allows different uses of it and which makes it appear to be too abstract.⁷⁰ Therefore Jörn Rüsen pleads for the use of *history culture* as every "practically effective articulation of historical consciousness in the life of a society."⁷¹ Therefore, it covers all kinds of different references to the past. Museums and guided tours are as much a part of it as monuments, schoolbooks, speeches, TV programmes and fictions about past events are. The references are not necessarily a part of an academic discourse

⁶⁷ *Geschichtskultur* is hard to translate without defying the English language – both *history culture* and *historical culture* seem to be possible translations. Historical culture would certainly represent a grammatically correct term but implies that a culture is old which is not the part of the German meaning of the term. I favour the term history culture in order to emphasize the meaning of a culture that refers to a certain history as opposed to a culture that belongs to a part of history.

⁶⁸ Rüsen, Jörn, Auf dem Weg zu einer Pragmatik der Geschichtskultur, in: Baumgärtner, Ulrich, Schreiber, Waltraud (eds.), *Geschichts-erzählungen und Geschichtskultur. Zwei geschichtsdidaktische Leitbegriffe in der Diskussion*, München: Herbert Utz Verlag 2001, pp.81-97, p.82.

⁶⁹ The literature on historical consciousness in the field of history didactics is abundant. For examples of definitions of the term see: Jeismann, Karl-Ernst, *Geschichtsbewußtsein als zentrale Kategorie der Geschichtsdidaktik*, in: Schneider, Gerhard (ed.), *Geschichtsbewußtsein und historisch-politisches Lernen*, Pfaffenweiler: Centaurus 1988, pp. 1-24.

⁷⁰ Jeismann, Karl-Ernst, *Geschichtsbewußtsein. Überlegungen zur zentralen Kategorie eines neuen Ansatzes der Geschichtsdidaktik*, in: Jacobmeyer, Wolfgang, Kosthorst, Erich (eds.), *Karl-Ernst Jeismann: Geschichte als Horizont der Gegenwart. Über den Zusammenhang von Vergangenheitsdeutung, Gegenwartsverständnis und Zukunftsperspektive*, Paderborn: Schöningh 1985, pp. 41-71, p. 47.

⁷¹ Rüsen, Jörn, Was ist Geschichtskultur? Überlegungen zu einer neuen Art, über Geschichte nachzudenken, in: Fußmann, Klaus/ Grütter, Hans/ Rüsen, Jörn, *Historische Faszination. Geschichtskultur heute*, Köln/ Weimar/ Wien: Böhlau 1994, pp.3-36, p. 5.

nor do they follow scientific rules. History culture combines the differing strategies of academic research, artistic production and of political struggle for power, of education in- and outside of schools, of leisure time entertainment and all other public historical recollections in a way that they can be understood as the expression of a sole mental power.

By doing so history culture creates a wide field of cultural activities and marks it off from other fields in a way that the common quality of the sometimes very different activities becomes evident.⁷² These activities in the history culture of a given society can be divided into three dimensions: 1) the aesthetic dimension where historical recollections are present as works of art, 2) the political dimension where they serve to legitimise political power and the approval of it and 3) the cognitive dimension where these activities are rooted in a scientific environment. Clearly, all these dimensions are not strictly separated but have multiple relations. Within the aesthetic dimension, any forms of historical recollection expressed in art like historical novels and dramas, pieces of art are to be found. The political dimension has, according to Rüsen, its foundation in the assumption that all kinds of power need approval by the subjects and that this approval is often connected to historical memory, whereas the cognitive dimension in modern societies is mainly the field of the historical sciences.⁷³ Research on history culture can therefore be divided into some bigger areas of research like: 1) history as political argument, 2) national memorials, 3) celebrations and ceremonies, 4) public interest in history and 5) memorial culture.⁷⁴ Thus history culture encompasses the whole sphere in which the experience of time and the changing of time is transformed into allegorical forms. In the last instance that means all efforts of society to create a stable self-image through acts of collective remembering and to keep its historical identity. This encompasses the production, distribution and reception of historical knowledge.⁷⁵ The relationship of the three dimensions is one of mutual dependence and entanglement. Rüsen writes:

*"As emotions, will and mind are cohering units and through this relation form something like subjectivity, mentality or even intentionality and determinateness of meaning, so are the three dimensions interfused and entangled. It is solely by means of this entanglement that historical consciousness is able to accomplish its innate cultural achievement of historical remembering."*⁷⁶

It is possible that one of the dimensions at sometime gains a certain dominance over the others, instrumentalizes and subdues the others, and becomes the clincher for the appropriation of the

⁷² Rüsen, Was ist Geschichtskultur, p. 4.

⁷³ Rüsen, Was ist Geschichtskultur, p. 12-19.

⁷⁴ Schönemann, Bernd, Didaktik und Geschichtskultur, in: Mütter, Bernd, Schönemann, Bernd, Uffelman, Uwe, Geschichtskultur. Theorie – Empirie – Pragmatik, Weinheim: Deutscher Studienverlag 2000, pp. 26-58, p.30.

⁷⁵ Fußmann, Klaus, Historische Formungen. Dimensionen der Geschichtsdarstellung, in: Fußmann, Klaus (ed.), Historische Faszination: Geschichtskultur heute, Köln, Weimar, Wien: Böhlau 1994, pp. 27-44.

construct of history. A historical recollection that disposes of a balanced and critical correlation of the three dimensions is best able to fulfil its function as a point of cultural orientation. Unfortunately history culture does not offer a control system for a 'proper' process of remembering, but it might offer criteria for an effort of evaluation of the same.⁷⁷

One of the strengths of the approach of history culture is its ability to reflect on the different layers and fields in which history is effective, reflected or in use. There is no need to assign each product of memory a fixed location in the network of Rüsen's dimensions. A product of historical research done by historians might be assigned a place in the aesthetic dimension as a piece of art or craft but used as a textbook, it is arguably as well a part of the cognitive dimension.⁷⁸ I would argue that if not the book itself, a surrounding discourse might also play an active and violent part within the dimension of politics. The example of the now completed *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe* in Berlin is an excellent example for the entanglements and interplay between all the dimensions of history culture.

Klas-Göran Karlsson and a group of academics at the University in Lund dealing with the memory of the Holocaust use history culture as their key concept of their project and a structural device in order to enable them to understand history "not only as a scholarly operation or a teaching subject, but as a cultural product in a much broader sense: one including exhibits, historical fiction, films, rituals and public debates that engage and influence a broad strata of society."⁷⁹ History culture presents, according to their definition, "a concept denoting the artefacts, the social and institutional contexts and the arenas, scholarly, educational, political and others, in which history is represented and operated in society, as well as an activity to communicate and use history for various individual and societal purposes; history as cultural products or commodities, of various forms and contents."⁸⁰ The basic assumption is that history-cultural products give evidence of the notions and valuations of history that individuals and various collectives hold and make use of in and as part of society, a nation and a state. It is this wide scope and this all-encompassing nature that is one of the big advantages of the concept of history culture when compared to the different concepts of memory. History culture is a concept knit closely to the practices of everyday life. It is related to another term – *memory culture* (or

⁷⁶ Rüsen, Was ist Geschichtskultur?, pp. 16-17.

⁷⁷ Rüsen, Was ist Geschichtskultur?, pp. 17-20.

⁷⁸ Lenz, Claudia, *Haushaltspflicht und Widerstand. Erzählungen norwegischer Frauen über die deutsche Besatzung 1940-1945 im Lichte nationaler Vergangenheitskonstruktionen*, Tübingen: edition diskord 2003, p. 86.

⁷⁹ Karlsson, Klas-Göran, *Making Sense of the Holocaust after Sixty Years. An Introduction*, in: Karlsson, Klas-Göran, Zander, Ulf (eds.), *Holocaust Heritage. Inquiries into European History cultures*, Malmö: Sekel 2004, pp. 9-34, p. 22.

⁸⁰ Karlsson, Klas-Göran, *The Holocaust as a Problem of History culture. Theoretical and Analytical Challenges*, in: Karlsson, Klas-Göran, Zander, Ulf (eds.), *Echoes of the Holocaust. History cultures in Contemporary Europe*, Lund: Nordic Academic Press 2003, pp. 9-57, p. 32.

sometimes *remembrance culture* or *culture of remembrance*).⁸¹ The relation is so close that both terms became interchangeable in the debate, but both still retain a set of specific connotations. Jan Assmann, combines his terms communicative memory and cultural memory and called the entirety of both *memory culture*. He described it as the "compliance with a social obligation" which is related to a group and is about the question of what is to be remembered or as he puts it "What are we not allowed to forget?"⁸²

As with all the other concepts introduced so far, memory culture is the result of the interaction of memory and communication and its *media*.⁸³ Thus, the special emphasis of memory culture is the political influence on the ways the past is remembered and the process of the construction and negotiation of memory.⁸⁴ Memory culture is here seen as the result of disputes between different parties, pushing their versions and the authority to decide what is remembered and what is forgotten.⁸⁵ Unfortunately the term is not used uniformly in the public debate and but could also be understood in a narrower sense as references to the past by which means togetherness and community is created and group identity is cultivated. In a broader sense it encompasses the whole cultural sphere that is connected to history – thus becoming identical with history culture.⁸⁶ The most important implication of the term and the use of the concept of memory culture is according to Otto Gerhard Oexle the understanding of those historians involved that they are themselves part of the very memory culture they are writing about and even more importantly, that this culture is establishing and limiting their knowledge about the past.⁸⁷

Having heard these arguments I would like to plead for a cautious use of history culture as the analytic term for the field this and similar studies are set in. It gives, much more than any

⁸¹ The translation of *Erinnerungskultur* into *memory culture* is not entirely satisfactory. *Gedächtnis* and *Erinnerung* can be translated into memory, the first having a connotation to the actual structure, the precondition to remember things, the latter also having the connotation of the act of remembering. In the following memory culture will be used. The term *Gedenkkultur* (culture of remembrance) that is used by some authors alongside the others will be left out.

⁸² Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis*, p.30.

⁸³ Jeismann, Ernst-Karl, *Verlust der Geschichte?*, in: *Geschichte als Horizont*, cited in Rauthe, Simone, *Public history in den USA und in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Essen: Klartext Verlag 2001, p. 33.

⁸⁴ Lenz, Claudia, Schmidt, Jens, von Wrochem, Oliver, *Einleitung*, in: Lenz, Claudia, Schmidt, Jens, von Wrochem, Oliver (eds.), *Erinnerungskulturen im Dialog. Europäische Perspektiven auf die NS-Vergangenheit*, Hamburg, Münster: Unrast 2002 9-18, p.9.

⁸⁵ Oexle, Otto Gerhard, *Memoria und Erinnerungskultur im alten Europa - und heute*, in: Escudier, Alexandre (ed.), *Gedenken im Zwiespalt. Konfliktlinien europäischer Erinnerungs*, Göttingen: Wallstein 2000, Berlin-Brandenburgisches Institut für Deutsch-Französische Zusammenarbeit in Europa, Genshagener Gespräche, vol. IV, pp. 9-32, p. 12 and Jarausch, *Zeitgeschichte*, pp. 12-15.

⁸⁶ Hockerts, Hans Günther, *Zugänge zur Zeitgeschichte: Primärerfahrung, Erinnerungskultur* *Geschichtswissenschaft*, in: Jarausch, Konrad H., Sabrow, Martin (eds.), *Verletztes Gedächtnis. Erinnerungskultur und Zeitgeschichte im Konflikt*, Frankfurt/ M., New York: Campus 2002, pp. 38-73, p. 41 incl. footnote 5.

⁸⁷ Oexle, *Memoria*, p. 23.

memory-concept, a broad basis to include various source materials, groups and forms of representations of the past and thereby omits the shortcomings of narrower definitions of memory, be it communicative or cultural. Even though most scholars of memory-research are well aware of the entanglements of short-term memory and the culturally-shaped expressions and transmissions, history culture or memory culture do avoid them altogether from the beginning. The notion of culture does also allow the inclusion of a processural idea of development or constant change. History culture could also be seen as an active process of "preserving, registering and sorting, of establishing historical meaning."⁸⁸

The Uses of History: History-Politics and Politics of Remembrance

If history culture might serve as the matrix of a multitude of processes – one that is constantly changing over time with differing agents being superior in importance than others – it is also a general concept of long duration. Within this long duration, history is instrumentalized and used. Klas-Göran Karlsson introduced a typology of 'uses of history' that respond to different needs of those who use history and which correspond to different cultural and societal circumstances. He identified 1) a scientific use, 2) an existential use (history is used as an orientation-aid in the present and the future), 3) a moral use (history might serve as a teacher), 4) an ideological use, and 5) as a vague category – the non-use of history.⁸⁹ The project at hand and a multitude of studies concentrate on a particular field – the political use of history.

Unfortunately, no consensus on the usage of terms at hand has developed here either. The words *politics* and *political* or *memory* and *remembrance* as well as *history* and *historical* are used by all of them, albeit in different ways and with differing connotations. On the following pages there will be an attempt to group them around some of the core concepts. I will begin with *history-politics* or *politics of history*. Again, the German origin of this word monster is apparent. The word denotes the tight relation of history and historical consciousness (of which it is an extension) and the field of politics. According to Edgar Wolfrum, history-politics is a constant feature of pluralistic societies, because their political elites shape and define the set of notions and norms, values and symbols that are constitutive for the society.⁹⁰ Therefore, history-politics

⁸⁸ da Fonseca, Liselotte Hermes, Zur Wiederholung: Heimliches unheimliches Wissen vom Menschen in wissenschaftlichen Museen, in: Pazzini, Karl-Josef (ed.), *Unschuldskomödien. Museum und Psychoanalyse*, Wien: Turia + Kant 1999, pp. 76-109, p. 93.

⁸⁹ Karlsson, Klas-Göran, *Historia som vapen. Historiebruk och Sovjetunionens upplösning 1985-1995*, Stockholm: Natur och Kultur 1999, pp. 57-61. In a series that was published in Lund some years later the scientific use is exchanged with the scholarly and the moral with an ideological use. Karlsson, Klas-Göran, Introduction, in: Karlsson, Klas-Göran, Zander, Ulf (eds.), *The Holocaust – Postwar Battlefields*, Lund: Sekel, 2006, pp. 9-20. p. 13.

⁹⁰ He introduces the term to pluralistic societies albeit it has been used before with pejorative connotations to denounce the role of the historical sciences in dictatorships. Wolfrum, Edgar, *Geschichtspolitik in der*

is a policy field in which several different agents load the past with their interests and compete for approval in the public arena. Since politicians have easier access to the media than historians, history-politics is not about the truth but rather about questions such as: who, with what motivation and by what means makes history the subject of a discussion.⁹¹ In that sense history-politics emphasises "the political instrumentalization of the past".⁹² It is the "purposeful attempt to legitimise political decisions with history".⁹³ But, a little bit more neutral, it can also be any "public construction of images of history or identity, which can be carried out by ritual and discourse".⁹⁴ Heinrich August Winkler once described the term as follows:

*"Politics of history is the usage of history for purposes in the present. [...] In a democratic society always several different interpretations of history [Geschichtsbilder] compete with each other. Politics of history aim at an assertion of one's own interpretation. The outcome of such battles over the interpretation is often a broad consensus concerning important historical events."*⁹⁵

Referring to the two German states born out of the end of the war, Peter Reichel identifies four fields in which history is used as a medium, weapon and argument in the political struggle by group-agents as well as individuals: 1) the field of the political-legislative and political-cultural action, 2) the rather wide field of public commemorations, 3) the field of contemporary historiography and 4) the field of aesthetic production. The first contains the introduction of a new political system after a regime change has occurred – the legal purge and compensation but also the re-integration of the perpetrators. The second field deals with buildings of the old regime but also with the memorials and the documentation emerging from social action of victims and bystanders. It is precisely here in the rather 'affective sphere' of the commemorations that the official and the civil rituals and actions clash. The third field comprises those historians that critically interpret the past. Since history politics are intrinsically politics of interpretation, their works can cause major debates. This is even more so the case for the fourth field where the artists move and contribute to the discourse with movies, plays and the like, often not just interpreting history but even structuring the minds of the people. In this sense

Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1949-1989, in: Bock, Petra, Wolfrum, Edgar (eds.), *Umkämpfte Vergangenheit. Geschichtsbilder, Erinnerung und Vergangenheitspolitik im internationalen Vergleich*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1999, pp. 55-81., pp. 56-58.

⁹¹ Wolfrum, Edgar, *Geschichtspolitik*, pp. 58.

⁹² Carrier, Peter, *Monuments and National Memory Cultures*, p.41.

⁹³ Steinbach, Peter, *Postdiktatorische Geschichtspolitik. Nationalsozialismus und Widerstand im deutsche Geschichtsbild nach 1945*, in: Bock, Petra/ Wolfrum, Edgar (ed.), *Umkämpfte Vergangenheit. Geschichtsbilder, Erinnerung und Vergangenheitspolitik im internationalen Vergleich*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1999, pp. 17-40, p. 25.

⁹⁴ Bock, Petra, Wolfrum Edgar, *Einleitung*, in: Bock, Petra/ Wolfrum, Edgar (ed.), *Umkämpfte Vergangenheit. Geschichtsbilder, Erinnerung und Vergangenheitspolitik im internationalen Vergleich*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1999, pp. 7-13, p. 9.

politics of history are at their core politics of interpretation.⁹⁶ Reichel also frequently uses *politics of remembrance* or *memory politics*. "Political systems depend on associations with the past. It serves the purpose of social integration inside the nation, the cultural construction of identity and the political and symbolic legitimation of power. Every polity has to know and make tangible, where it comes from and what it is built upon." He continues that no-one should therefore not speak of abuse of history in, for example, in the Third-Reich or the GDR lopsidedly and deprecatingly, as if history had just been instrumentalised in for political aims. Such an approach would be precarious, since it depreciates any political dealings with history. He concludes that "Politics of Remembrance are legitimate and their core, the commemoration of the dead, is constitutive for any society."⁹⁷ The same policy field, yet another label. Politics of history and politics of remembrance are as regards to contents totally identical. Various authors use them interchangeably. I, however, prefer in the context of this project the term politics of remembrance or memory politics because it gives a plainer expression to what the struggle in Norway and Denmark was about – the way it was remembered.

Some suggested that history-politics should be differentiated from *Vergangenheitspolitik* (roughly 'politics of the past'). According to them, politics of the past are a more concrete set of political acts and it is connected to the political dimension of the process of coming to terms with a dictatorial past and consists of three elements: 1) punishment – the criminal investigation of the persecutors and old elites, 2) disqualification – the restriction of the civil rights of the defendants and the old elites and 3) restitution – the compensation of the victims.⁹⁸ It becomes clear why politics of the past have a close relationship to what has been labelled history politics; the measures taken are often, albeit not always, legitimised by and based upon history political decisions and propaganda.⁹⁹ But, while studies on politics of the past are first and foremost concerned with practical political measures and give public symbolic acts a rather second-class treatment, the focus of studies on history-politics mainly concentrate on the public construction of images of history and identity through rituals and discourses and virtually neglect legal and judicial acts. But it is obvious that for the present study a sharp distinction between all of the above is very difficult to draw. History political deliberations must necessarily be based on the

⁹⁵ Winkler, Heinrich August, Einleitung, in: Winkler, Heinrich August (ed.), *Griff Nach Der Deutungsmacht. Zur Geschichte Der Geschichtspolitik in Deutschland*, Göttingen: Wallstein 2004, pp.7-13, p. 11

⁹⁶ Reichel, Peter, *Erfundene Erinnerung. Weltkrieg und Judenmord in Film und Theater*, München: Hanser 2004, pp. 9-12.

⁹⁷ Reichel, Peter, *Politik Mit Der Erinnerung. Gedächtnisorte Im Streit Um Die Nationalsozialistische Vergangenheit*, München: Fischer 1999.

⁹⁸ Bock, Wolfrum, Einleitung, p. 8.

⁹⁹ Bock, Petra, *Vergangenheitspolitik in der Revolution von 1989*, in: Bock, Petra, Wolfrum, Edgar, *Umkämpfte Vergangenheit. Geschichtsbilder, Erinnerung und Vergangenheitspolitik im internationalen Vergleich*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1999, pp. 82-100, p. 83.

decisions taken in a policy of the past that passed laws and has led to the condemnation of groups and individuals but may also be the prerequisite for the same.

After having described how memories are based on social communication, how they need to be narrated and transmitted and how they are therefore subject to cultural processes and not least also to deliberate politics, it is now time for a short discussion of the very nature of those narratives. Since narrative will in the course of the project evolve as key-concept, it might be useful to lay out a map of the notions that surround it. It is here that polemics and demagogical notions of truth and reality in history and memory are contrasted with 'lies' and myth.

Myth – Narrative – Grundfortællingen

When dealing with narratives and the functional relationship between them, historiography and identity the word 'myth' is never far away. A common sense interpretation of myth assigns it rather negative connotations as being something invented and false – something that is invented to legitimise territorial claims or power. A discourse, which is ascribed to a myth, is usually "deemed to be a-historical, unscientific, illogical and irrational; in a word, everything conceived to be 'uncivilised'."¹⁰⁰ The general assumption is that a ruling elite or as priests caste deliberately disseminates the myth to cling to power. In democratically-ruled societies the media or even historians come up with 'revelations' of 'myths' and make breaking news which often happens when the so-called black spots of a nation's past or traumatic events are addressed or when history is used as legitimation for territorial claims.¹⁰¹ This is why scholars dealing with the topic of memory production have attempted to find a meaning of myth which takes the edge off the term but also allows its use as an analytical tool in order to understand its social function in the framework of the concept of narration. Mostly they refer to Roland Barthes' writings as a way to dismantle these negative connotations. Barthes' concept of myth as a message and a statement – almost an apodictic one – that is not specified by its object but rather by the manner it is communicated opens up the possibility to free the term from the otherwise prevailing interpretation of myth as a lie or as something false. It merely becomes a secondary semiologic system, which uses the first one – the language, texts, and images – to create a new meaning.¹⁰² Naturally this happens through simplifications and omissions. The result is something that is

¹⁰⁰ White, Hayden, *Catastrophy, Communal Memory and Mythic Discourse: The Uses of Myth in the Reconstruction of Society*, in: Stråth, Bo (ed.), *Myth and Memory in the Construction of Community. Historical Patterns in Europe and Beyond*, Bruxelles, Bern, Berlin, Frankfurt/Main, New York, Wien: P.I.E. Lang 2000, pp. 49-74, p. 49.

¹⁰¹ As an example might serve: Kaschuba, Wolfgang, *The Emergence and Transformation of Foundation Myths*, in: Stråth, Bo (ed.), *Myth and Memory in the Construction of Community. Historical Patterns in Europe and Beyond*, Bruxelles, Bern, Berlin, Frankfurt/Main, New York, Wien: P.I.E. Lang; 2000, pp. 217-226.

¹⁰² Barthes, Roland, *Mythen des Alltags*, Frankfurt/ Main: Suhrkamp 2003, pp. 85-92.

beyond the original connotations – the message has become 'nature'. It is the myth's true character and principle to render contexts and events which depend on history and social circumstances into something innocent, self-evident and undisputable.¹⁰³ This is not the same as falseness – myths are rather explanations through the reference to something that is intrinsic and at the same time beyond themselves.¹⁰⁴ A narration becomes mythic, according to Barthes, when it is embedded into a meta-narrative and relies on something that is outside the discourse. In the sphere of religion that position is held by God. Such a notion of myth is at least theoretically stripped of connotations of deliberate political use or abuse simply describing a myth's form as a semiologic sign, albeit endowed with a special authority. But of course, there is more to it since there are also functions of the myth: One is to give meaning, the other is to work as aid for identity-building processes. As a sign in a semiologic system the myth consists of a signifier and a signified and therefore bears and creates meaning. It reflects identity at the same time as it helps building it. Since history and memory function as sources of identity as well, one could assume a connection between them and myth.

*"History does not exist 'out there', waiting to be discovered, but is permanently invented in order to give meaning to the present – and to the future – through the past. Myth in this sense of constructed memory and oblivion, is emancipated from its pejorative connotation and assumes the role of the provider of meaning, becoming a constituent element of politics and social cohesion. In this context, emancipating takes on a different meaning from that on the self-understanding of positivist historiography, where activity in the name of the science and source criticism is seen as an emancipation or liberation of the sources from the myths which enshroud them."*¹⁰⁵

From this perspective, myths cannot be separated or distinguished from reality. It is their nature that they create reality through language. The historian does not stand above or beyond the processes that he or she is analysing, but is part of them through the language that, by means of the act of translation or representation, connects the present with the past. Those considerations touch the discourse and the following debate on the *cultural* or *linguistic turn*, when in the 1970s the humanities recognized the importance of language as a structuring agent. The main argument was that reality was not regarded as something pre-existing but instead as discursively constructed.

And yet, it would be too easy to dismiss efforts to understand myths in the above described sense as rendering the historical sciences into something arbitrary at par with fiction. Clio is still not writing poetry. A risen awareness of the restrictions of historiography with respect to

¹⁰³ Eriksen, *Det var noe annet*, p. 17.

¹⁰⁴ Barthes, *Mythen*, p. 112-113.

language and the challenge to understand the strengths as well as the weaknesses of any given narration and/or myth as social reality does not turn historical writing into journalism, albeit the borderline between the two might have dissolved in some parts. But in the end, the writing of historical research is bound to its sources and restricted by a craft that follows certain artisan rules.¹⁰⁶ Historians do have the duty to legitimise their approaches and to unveil methods, and especially their sources, to give their reader the chance to fathom and to follow or to dismiss. But it seems hard to apply a concept of myth in this more 'neutral' sense. Firstly the pejorative notion of myth as an even falsely constructed narrative is still very strong and maybe the word has to remain ambiguous? The same author who has initially identified myth as a mere source of meaning can be tempted to describe differing interpretations again as myths, i.e. false. But secondly, scholars also easily blunder into the trap of their own argumentation. Deconstructing a myth seems to be easy, but understanding that the deconstruction is itself embedded in a wider narrative whose foundations were assigned the same validity as any given myth seems to be even harder. That means: Historical research has to be written to be consumed. Therefore total relativity cannot be an objective and neither can the total ignorance of the dependence of historiography on language. Deliberate forgery or omission and careless amateurism do not have the same legitimacy and standing in front of the historian's scrutiny. Surely, a real analysis of the myths prevailing in all narratives can not stop at the analysis of the myths' function, albeit that means already deconstructing the myths but must go beyond and unveil the preconditions of the myths' genesis. And yet, it also must include the effort of a reflection on the new myths and narratives that are created.¹⁰⁷ Some might say that that is an impossible task. In order to avoid these problems with the word myth, Claus Bryld and Annette Warring who worked on the Danish perception of the Second World War called a certain group of motifs that recur in most of the popular and academic treatises on the war which was developed in the months before and after the end of the war 'basic narrative'.¹⁰⁸ Here it stands as a dominant version of the interpretation of the events during the war.

Anne Eriksen, a Norwegian scholar in folklore simply speaks about the 'narrative' referring to exactly the same set of motifs.¹⁰⁹ Additionally, she supplies something like a summary of the concepts explained above in her notion of a *collective tradition*: All gathered experience and

¹⁰⁵ Stråth, Bo, Introduction. Myth, Memory and History in the Construction of Community, in: Stråth, Bo (ed.), Myth and Memory in the Construction of Community. Historical Patterns in Europe and Beyond, Bruxelles, Bern, Berlin, Frankfurt/Main, New York, Wien: P.I.E. Lang 2000, pp. 19-46, p. 26.

¹⁰⁶ Hockerts, Zugänge, pp.65-73.

¹⁰⁷ Stråth, Introduction, p. 26.

¹⁰⁸ The translation of the Danish term 'grundfortællingen' though is a bit unsatisfactory, 'grund' translates into 'foundation', 'cause' as well as 'basis'. Bryld, Warring, Besættelsestiden, p. 55.

memories of a given social group or population can be described as collective tradition, which is quantitatively smaller than the sum of the individual memories of the same event, but its content is perceived as being more valid or correct. Such collective tradition is generally fed by more than just scientific sources. It is enriched by individual memories, movies and books. Complex symbols keep the collective memory alive, symbols that are easily understood by all memories of the group.¹¹⁰ They can be found in school books and other educational material, in popular culture as well as in the editorial pages of newspapers, in speeches or at official celebrations. The collective tradition is "the narrative with which everybody can identify, which everybody can claim as his own. It functions as a replacement narrative which the individual has the right to quote and to refer to without having created it."¹¹¹

The word basic narrative borders dangerously close to a notion that has been dismissed by François Lyotard. He stated an "obsolescence of the metanarrative apparatus of legitimation" that had ruled the trajectory of modernity have to crumble under the circumstances of what is referred to as postmodernity and in the age of mass-media.¹¹² After what has been discussed earlier in this part, that would then in turn mean that also the myths built upon the meta-narratives have to plummet. The findings of this thesis might help to understand whether this is necessarily the case or whether we will be able to modify our understanding of the relationship of narratives and our perception of social reality and the past. Maybe there are still needs of meta-narratives (or adjusted or smaller versions of them) or maybe we find that just their contents have been changed to adapt to new realities. In the context of this project, (basic) narrative will be applied in the sense that it is used by Bryld and Warring and Eriksen as a useful term in the combination with history culture when referring to a version and interpretation of past events that either exerts or is seeking to exert a certain supremacy over other variations by means of history-politics.¹¹³

¹⁰⁹ Eriksen, Anne, *Det var noe annet under krigen. 2. verdenskrig i norsk kollektivtradisjon*, Oslo: Pax 1995. She uses the Norwegian "fortellingen".

¹¹⁰ Eriksen, *Det var noe annet under krigen*, p.14-15.

¹¹¹ Eriksen, Anne, *Historie, minne og myte*, Oslo: Pax 1999, p. 101-106.

¹¹² Lyotard, Jean-Francois, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, Manchester: Manchester University Press 1984, *Theory and History of Literature*, vol. 10, p. xxiv.

¹¹³ François, *Meistererzählungen*. He uses master narratives and claims, that "[T]he formative mastern narratives [Meistererzählungen, CM] of the imediate postwar period emerged firstly within the victorious powers. The developped pretty fast, often within just a couple of years, made up by a joint effort of official authorities and representatives of the victorious forces of society. They had such a persuasiveness and their function for reconstruction and the new beginning of the nation after the catastrophe was so evident and eminent, that the majority of the population of countries affected adopted and taken as plausible for a long time to come," (p.15).

An Attempt at a Conclusion

The previous pages have been full of discussions of terms and concepts. They combined a description of the evolution of the concepts that surround the field of memory-studies since these are often based on each other. Several authors would agree on the parallel use of some of them, others view them as being opposed. As we can see, there is no such thing as a single term that satisfactorily covers the complex cobweb of connotations and concepts dealt with within this work. This work will therefore not get around to using all of them, albeit with a critical distance. They are so closely related to each other, and developed out of each other that clear separation is impossible. But the previous pages have, of course, not been in vain since some serve the purpose of analytical categories better than others – albeit just in some respects. The social processes that create the multitude of representations of a given past are, in my view, too complex to integrate them into one of the existing concepts of memory. At the same time, memory research provided important knowledge for the understanding of the different qualities and structural origins of different types of memories. Certainly, what is called *cultural memory* does contain a different set of recollections and is subjected to different ways of transmission than what is called *communicative memory*. However, the separation into two different categories did, besides the identification of some major agents of the transmission of one or the other, not supply an analytical tool – especially with regard to the processes behind the transformations happening from one to the other. To view cultural and communicative memory as successive mental structures does oversee the fact that they might as well develop simultaneously. I hope later to be able to show to what extent they were actually entangled right from the start in 1945.

History culture and memory culture contain the moment of a multitude of sometimes even differing memories within a given unit. This unit might be a group of peers, a milieu, a social group or an organisation as well as the nation or society as a whole. The larger this unit is, the more possible it seems, that differing interpretations exist side by side. Even though the term 'culture' might seem blurry it is more suitable for analysis, because it opens up for more categories than the fairly restricted notion of a unified collective memory as used by Assmann. It allows the inclusion of the change of modes of recollection that can be understood as an evolution, a development or the outcome of struggle and negotiation. Therefore memory culture seems to be most useful to describe the *field* this project is occupied with. What both, history culture and memory culture, have in common, is that their contents or expressions represent mediated and later constructed views on the past, views which are indispensable for the cultural

identity and stability of a political community.¹¹⁴ But additionally to their wide scope, they also include communication as the instrument of construction; and not just communication but deliberate politics. I think that the term *history culture* could be called the matrix of the investigation. Its features, I will try to present by examining the memory cultures (with respect to the Second World War) of the two countries at hand. Memory culture would thereby be interpreted as the cultural process of creating a meaning by recourse to past events through culturally-shaped symbols and rituals.¹¹⁵ That memory cultures are shaped by politics, became evident in the previous thoughts; consequently representations and expressions of history politics or politics of remembrance are the main sources of the thesis. I am aware that this approach is to a large extent an actor-oriented one, which might cause fierce criticism among those who assign structures rather than agents the crucial role in social processes; but I do hope it nevertheless proves to be a practical one. It appears to me that this thesis might illuminate the difficulties with a fixed terminology, no matter how much they would be appreciated as heuristic tools. The abundance of theories and models, of terms and notions simply fails in the face of the multicomplexity of life and society.

2. COMPARING MEMORY CULTURES

Another challenge of most of the terms suggested is that they tend to be attached to the national paradigm, that their bearers or fields in which they take effect are those 'imagined communities' which ruled the European and international landscapes over the last centuries. However, as became clear in the previous discussion of the notions, theoretically we deal with recollections that could be active on a much larger scale but very often are active on a much smaller scale, that is, in much smaller groups. The last pressing matter of methodological concern in the framework of the project is the use of historical comparison. Why and how should one compare cultural products like rituals and historiographies? These questions are addressed on the following pages. After a brief overview on some of the features of a comparative approach and some of its disadvantages, I will plead for an even wider use of comparison.

The question of whether comparative approaches in the social sciences are means or rather obstacles to fostering understanding in a case studied is either intensively discussed – or it is not

¹¹⁴ Lenz, Claudia/ Schmidt, Jens/ von Wrochem, Oliver, Einleitung, in: Lenz, Claudia/ Schmidt, Jens/ von Wrochem, Oliver (ed.), *Erinnerungskulturen im Dialog. Europäische Perspektiven auf die NS-Vergangenheit*, Hamburg/ Münster: Unrast 2002, pp. 9-18, p. 9.

¹¹⁵ The recourse on the ideas of Jan Assmann is evident here.

discussed at all. Comparative analyses are still in a minority position.¹¹⁶ Whereas Durkheim stated that comparison was not just a branch of sociology, but sociology itself and thereby confirmed its central position for the social sciences, historians tended to be reluctant to use it, claiming they were just interested in the particular and the unique.¹¹⁷ One reason might also have been the importance that was assigned to the national histories and historiographies. Historical writing was one of the pivotal columns on which the national identities of the emerging modern nation-states rested and the right to write a national history was seen as crucial in the nation-building process.¹¹⁸ Thus, works that reached over the national borders were rare and 'unpatriotic'. Just as reluctantly comparison was admitted to the historical sciences and firstly embraced by scholars like Marc Bloch and Otto Hintze. Some countries seem to have scholarly traditions that embrace the comparison stronger than others¹¹⁹ - or earlier than others; but in general, comparison is a rather recent phenomenon.¹²⁰ One of the problems of working within a comparative framework or with comparison as a tool is the discord that already exists about its definitions and forms and, last but not least, about its aims and perspectives. One possibility to describe comparative history is that it is a study that aims to ask "[...] for similarities and differences in at least two compared cases [...]"¹²¹. Already in this short description lies one of its challenges: Similarities *and* differences. Both are for the scholar of heuristic importance and interest. Still, it highly depends on the aim of the researcher whether he equally incorporates both or whether he, for the sake of the argument, emphasizes one or the other.¹²² But the picture is even more complicated. *Transfergeschichte* or *histoire croisée* are supplements or rivals to a comparative history. The *Transfergeschichte* or history of transfers asks about the cultural influences or the influences on the culture of groups of people (often countries) that are in contact, the subject of analysis therefore escapes from the national

¹¹⁶ Kocka, Jürgen, Comparison and Beyond, in: History and Theory, vol. 42, no. 1, 2003, pp. 39-44, here p. 39.

¹¹⁷ Burke, Peter, History and Social Theory, Cambridge: Polity Press 1992, p. 22, with quote from Durkheim.

¹¹⁸ Hölscher, Geschichte als "Erinnerungskultur", pp. 150-151.

¹¹⁹ Haupt, Heinz-Gerhard, Eine schwierige Öffnung nach außen: Die vergleichende Geschichtswissenschaft in Frankreich, in: Haupt, Heinz-Gerhard, Kocka, Jürgen (ed.), Geschichte und Vergleich. Ansätze und Ergebnisse international vergleichender Geschichtsschreibung, Campus, Frankfurt/ Main, New York 1996, pp.77-90, p. 77-78.

¹²⁰ Paulmann, Johannes, Internationaler Vergleich und interkultureller Transfer. Zwei Forschungsansätze zur europäischen Geschichte des 18. Bis 20. Jahrhunderts, in: Historische Zeitschrift 267 (1998), pp. 649-685, p.649f.

¹²¹ Haupt, Hein-Gerhard, Kocka, Jürgen, Historischer Vergleich : Methoden, Aufgaben, Probleme. Eine Einleitung, in: Haupt, Hein-Gerhard, Kocka, Jürgen (eds.), Geschichte und Vergleich. Ansätze und Ergebnisse international vergleichender Geschichtsschreibung, Frankfurt/ Main, New York: Campus 1996, pp, 9-45, p. 9.

¹²² Cohen, Deborah, O'Connor, Maura, Introduction: Comparative History, Cross-National History, Transnational History – Definitions, in: Cohen, Deborah, O'Connor, Maura (eds.), Comparison and History. Europe in a Cross-National Perspective, New York, London: Routledge 2004, pp. ix-xxiv, p. xi.

paradigm.¹²³ These transfers do by definition not have to be reciprocal but could also deal with specific transfers of knowledge or beliefs. Very often though the influence is mutual. Studies of *entangled history* (or *histoire croisée*) are another, even more reflexive way of understanding developments as being influenced above the national level. *Histoire croisée* which I understand rather as a programmatic claim than a proper methodological approach asks for a certain awareness not only of the entanglements of the objects of investigation but also of the subjects, the historians, and their categories and basic assumptions.¹²⁴ The difference between the listed approaches is hardly ever clearly defined and some studies work again better with an 'eclectic' melange of the lot. But, whatever of the above is pursued, which aims are at play, there are different ways of pursuing them. A comparison of the history cultures of Denmark and Norway would for many a scholar look like a project that is directed at a parallel demonstration of theory since Scandinavian countries are normally assumed to be very close in layout and history. I hope I will be able to prove that the picture is, as usual, much more complex. Otto Hintze once said that there were two distinct functions of comparison: one is to find general assumptions, the other is to find out about the uniqueness of a case – and a historian probably uses *both* functions at the same time.¹²⁵ What I would like to stress here with regard to the present study is the use of comparison for one main reason: Comparison could as well display "connections between aspects of society" that hitherto have not been identified or thought to be unrelated to each other like the interplay of institutions.¹²⁶ I dare say that does play an important part in the field of memory production and the Scandinavian countries with very similar institutions can serve as an excellent ground for such an assumption.

There are however, besides the advantages and gains of a comparative study, always disadvantages lurking underneath. One lies in its very structure. The comparative approach assumes that the units of comparison actually can be seen as individual cases of analysis. Herein lays the danger of cutting entanglements or breaking continuities.¹²⁷ But these entanglements and continuities might not just be of great importance to understanding, they might actually be the core of the explanation. Since the 1990s more scholars accept the notion that ideas and

¹²³ The classic work of this genre probably is: Espagne, Michel, Werner, Michael (eds.), *Transferts. Les Relations interculturelles dans l'espace franco-allemand (XVIIIe et XIXe siècle)*, Paris: Editions Recherches sur les Civilisations 1988.

¹²⁴ Werner, Martin, Zimmermann, Bénédicte, *Penser l'histoire croisée: entre empirie et réflexivité*, in: *Annales HSS*, no. 1, 2003, pp. 7-36.

¹²⁵ Hintze, Otto, 1962-1967: *Gesammelte Abhandlungen*, 3 vols., ed. by Gerhard Oestreich, Göttingen, cited in: Kocka, Jürgen, *Historische Komparatistik in Deutschland*, in: Haupt, Heinz-Gerhard, Kocka, Jürgen (eds.), *Geschichte und Vergleich. Ansätze und Ergebnisse international vergleichender Geschichtsschreibung*, Campus, Frankfurt/ Main, New York 1996, pp. 47-60, see for the quote and the comment p. 52.

¹²⁶ Cohen, *Comparative History*, p. 30.

¹²⁷ Kocka, *Comparison*, p. 4.

concepts cross borders with migrating people or by the means of modern communication and media. Separating neighbouring countries or societies that are in contact therefore neglects these entanglements and denies the value and power of processes like 'globalization'. In this context, new and somehow fruitful approaches have been framed like the 'transfer history'¹²⁸ or the 'histoire croisée'.¹²⁹ For the latter one might, however, argue that a 'all-over entangled history' runs the danger of overseeing the fact that those processes do not necessarily have to be reciprocal and that this approach can put overwhelming demands on the work and the flow of the narrative. For other cases though there might not be an alternative to an overall-entangled approach – and the study of memory, could be argued, is one of them.

Comparing Memory Cultures and Historiographies in the 'Norden'

"In the history of memory, the national paradigm continues to reign supreme."¹³⁰ This, argues Sebastian Conrad in an article in the *Journal of Contemporary History* in 2003 where he deals with the postwar memory production in Japan and Germany, comes as a surprise when otherwise the historical profession, as also shown on the previous pages, starts embracing comparative approaches to a growing extent. His explanation for this fact is the strength and importance of memory as a means of identity-construction especially for the 'imagined community' of the nation. If nations are the product of memory, communicated and perpetuated through rituals and holidays, the point of reference had to be the nation, it seemed. The problem of such a notion is not so obvious but might turn out to be crucial for any analysis. As with all investigations that are based on one (mostly their own) nation, analyses of history culture can tend to declare the findings to be of a general nature or to be of limited validity. But, as Conrad argues: "Interpretations of the past [...] do not originate and develop within one country but rather must be understood as the product of the connection and exchange between different discourses and practices. [...] The seemingly national discourses on what were considered problematic legacies of war and violence was always inscribed into larger transnational contexts."¹³¹ One example for the otherwise neglected embeddedness of rather global trends of history cultures is the concurrence in the 1980s of visits of Japanese Prime Minister Nakasone to the Yasukuni-Shrine (which also pays respect to war-criminals) and the Bitburg-Ceremony (a war cemetery where besides fallen ordinary soldiers also SS men found their resting place) with

¹²⁸ See for one example, Paulmann, *Internationaler Vergleich*, footnote 4.

¹²⁹ See for an example, Werner, Martin/ Zimmermann, Bénédicte, *Penser l'histoire croisée: entre empirie et réflexivité*, *Annales HSS*, no. 1, 2003, pp.7-36.

¹³⁰ Conrad, Sebastian, *Entangled Memories: Versions of the Past in Germany and Japan, 1945-2001*, in: *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 38, no. 1, 2003, pp. 85-99, p. 85.

¹³¹ Conrad, *Entangled Memories*, p. 86.

German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and US President Ronald Reagan. Even though Conrad did not include the hotly debated visits of Prime Minister Koizumi which coincided with the opening of the Berlin Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, a comparison, not least with regards to entanglements, would be of great interest. The question at hand is, when and under which circumstances are countries more or less influenced by others and when are social processes symmetric or asymmetric? Such an approach could be capable of putting notions of delayed development or 'inability to mourn' into perspective, notions that otherwise are too easily concluded. Naturally, entanglements and influences can just be assumed where the similarities between the units of comparison are addressed. Dissimilarities logically mean less of an influence or at least a delayed process of influence.

The extent to which a scholar pushes the idea of entanglements, might however differ. Not everyone might agree fully with Conrad when he claims that:

*"The history of memory is part of an entangled and transnational history. Debates about the past bear the traces of a globalizing world which are deeply engraved in what is often still perceived as the realm of the uniquely national, of a peculiar mentality and mindset. The various exchanges and interventions across national boundaries introduce multiple temporalities into an arena where these conflicting narratives of the past are negotiated."*¹³²

But – that there at least some entanglements exist, should easily be acknowledged. There are signs that the memory of the Holocaust becomes the first global recollection, being a point of reference not only to the victims and perpetrators as well as their offspring but also to people around the world.¹³³ The UN conventions on Genocide as well as the spreading of representations of the Holocaust in the US history culture are some of the causes for the developments. But, as already mentioned, most of the present studies on memory production use one nation as a primary point of reference and just a few are comparative. One possibility to start a trans-national project is to choose one single issue of memory production and try to understand its effects in a multitude of countries. A traumatic event as the destruction of European Jewry suggests itself as object of such a project.

Some countries appear to be suitable for studies of entangled memories just by virtue of their cultural proximity or because of a shared past. Both are strong arguments for a study like the one of Pieter Lagrou in which the effects of the war and the national reconstruction of the

¹³² Conrad, *Entangled Memories*, p. 98.

¹³³ See for example: Levy, Danie, Sznajder, Nathan, *Erinnerung im globalen Zeitalter: Der Holocaust*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp 2001, Edition Zweite Moderne.

Netherlands, Belgium and France are described.¹³⁴ The three countries obviously shared to a great extent a common experience and were culturally close enough for a very direct way of comparing institutions, law-making processes and social movements. Even though Lagrou did not address entanglements directly, their presence was noticeable. Following the assumptions just made, two other countries in Europe become obvious, but also precarious objects of examination – the two Germanys. The cultural proximity is out of the question, the shared history though is problematic. If Austria and the Federal Republic of Germany, which share very similar cultures and could be said to have shared similar developments in Western-Europe, East Germany was forced into a different development within the sphere of Soviet influence. And yet, it is here, between West and East that entanglements can be shown. A very good example for the way the memory culture of a country can influence that of another is for example the way the celebrations and speeches held in the German Democratic Republic influenced those in the Federal Republic of Germany in the 1960s. West German politicians conceived the East German celebrations on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the German surrender, which portrayed the 'socialist Germany' as part of the victors as a threat to their own perception in the western world. Together with the celebrations on the part of the Western Allies, they triggered an odd series of political statements from West German politicians denoting the 'end of the postwar era' and calling on the West Germans to be proud of the last twenty years.¹³⁵

A comparison could as well yield findings that otherwise would not be found in purely national analyses, since a public discourse does not take place in "hermetically closed national spaces" and the "preoccupation with the past of one's own country rather is co-determined by the perception of the memory-achievements [Erinnerungsleistungen] of other cultures."¹³⁶ The German 'model of coping with the past' is, for example, much more discussed in Italy and Japan than the other way round. The project at hand attempts a comparative study and hopefully also a

¹³⁴ Lagrou, *The Legacy of Nazi Occupation. Patriot Memory and National Recovery in Western Europe, 1945-1965*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2000, *Studies in the Social and Cultural History of Modern Warfare*, edited by Jay Winter.

¹³⁵ Wolfrum, Edgar, *Die Suche nach dem 'Ende der Nachkriegszeit'. Krieg und NS-Diktatur in öffentlichen Geschichtsbildern der 'alten' Bundesrepublik*, in: Cornelißen, Christoph, Klinkhammer, Lutz, Schwentker, Wolfgang (eds.), *Erinnerungskulturen. Deutschland, Italien und Japan seit 1945*, Frankfurt/ M.: Fischer 2003, pp. 183-197, pp. 184-185.

¹³⁶ Cornelißen, Christoph, Klinkhammer, Lutz, Schwentker, Wolfgang, *Nationale Erinnerungskulturen seit 1945 im Vergleich*, in: Cornelißen, Christoph, Klinkhammer, Lutz, Schwentker, Wolfgang (eds.), *Erinnerungskulturen. Deutschland, Italien und Japan seit 1945*, Frankfurt/ M.: Fischer 2003, pp. 9-24, p. 14. The study is in my opinion a step forward to an understanding of memory production across national borders as a process of entanglements since it presents a comparison of countries with shared trajectories (as countries which eventually harboured in the western world but were part of the axis during WW II) on the somehow lower level of expressions of history culture and history politics like legal purges, compensation, textbooks and

study of entanglements by including two countries into the study of history culture and history politics with expressive references to influences. Denmark and Norway invite for comparison as much as for an entangled history approach. The countries which are subject of this thesis are part of a broader region that is in English often referred to as 'Scandinavia'. The people living in the region often refer to it with the term 'Norden'. Linguistically, the Scandinavians are in a "[...] narrower more precise sense – [...] the three countries of Denmark (excluding the Faeroes and Greenland), Norway and Sweden."¹³⁷ Their people usually have a strong feeling of (at least culturally) unity. This unity is also expressed through the belief in the existence of a 'Nordic Model' – whatever might be understood by such and whether it really exists – and the widespread intercommunication, the root for it being the fact that at least the stronger languages are widely mutually intelligible.¹³⁸

An essential asset for the comparison of Denmark and Norway is exactly this shared linguistic background. Even though Danish and Norwegian are languages of their own right, they do have a common origin and are closely related, especially their written forms. This is reflected in the fact, that Danes are generally able to read any given Norwegian text and vice versa. It is safe to assume that scholars and political elites are at least aware and possibly also influenced, by the debates in the neighbouring countries and due to the feeling of cultural proximity can also appreciate them. Besides this, printed primary sources can, due to the missing language barrier, be compared in a very direct manner without a loss for the interpretation that might occur during a process of translation. Moreover, the common linguistic background is complemented by shared cultural features in general. Here it is decisive for my analysis, that the set of institutions of social fabric, parliamentary democracy and administration are again directly comparable since they exist in a strikingly similar manner in both countries. A strong parliamentary democracy with a king as symbol of national unity and comparatively small social differences, but most importantly the branches of administration are governed in ways as similar as two peas in a pod. Therefore it seems that they are ideal for the present kind of study.

Logically, it seems most likely that the processes of memory production within each one of the two would influence the other. In the light of an "internationalisation of the debates about the

historiographies. Albeit the contributions are still separated and it is up to the reader to do the hard work of finding the influences.

¹³⁷ Vikør, Lars S., *The Nordic Languages. Their Status and Interrelations*, Novus Press, Oslo 1995, p. 15.

¹³⁸ Larsen, Stein Ugelvik, Ugelvik, Ingrid Louise, *Scandinavia*, in: Eatwell, Roger (ed.), *European Political Cultures. Conflict or Conversion*, London 1997, pp. 210-232, see p. 210. And for a deeper understanding of the common traits Sørensen, Øystein/ Stråth, Bo, *Introduction: The Cultural Construction of Norden*, in: Sørensen, Øystein/ Stråth, Bo, *Introduction: The Cultural Construction of Norden*, Scandinavian University Press, Oslo, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Oxford, Boston, 1997, pp. 1-24.

past"¹³⁹ as can be observed in the case of the genocide on the European Jews, we could expect similar developments in other aspects in Scandinavia. The study will show, whether that is indeed the case.

¹³⁹ Francois, Meistererzählungen, p.19.

I. THE ORIGIN AND AGENTS OF BASIC NARRATIVES IN NORWAY AND DENMARK

As discussed, “patriotic memories” emerged in many of the occupied countries. It is likely that this applied to Norway and Denmark as well, since both countries had comparable experiences – a fast and devastating military defeat, the occupation and the emergence of co-operation and collaboration. How does one establish a dominant positive version? Through what means can it be manifested in a society and what are the means of its communication? The following chapter will try to shed light on those questions by taking a closer look at the Norwegian and Danish cases. I will try to identify some traits of such versions and their genesis which has its roots again in the historic events after the war and the end of the occupation.

1. NORWAY – A HEROIC STRUGGLE OF 'JØSSINGER' VERSUS 'QUISLINGER'

German troops entered Norwegian and Danish territory in the early hours of April 9th 1940. Whereas the Danish government decided to spare lives in an already lost fight and surrendered, the Norwegian army took up the fight and resisted in several places successfully enough to allow the king and the government to escape from the Germans. And yet, the Norwegian resistance that was later identified with the term 'hjemmefront'¹⁴⁰ was very much aware that the superior German troops would not be defeated without help from the outside. This outside help failed when the British forces that were shipped to the North of the country to help the retreating Norwegian army to establish a second front withdrew. The main character of the following struggle during the war was not so much against the German occupant, but against its Norwegian henchmen – Vidkun Quisling and his party of collaborators Nasjonal Samling.¹⁴¹ The main challenge for the population and the resistance movement after the end of the military campaign was to defend the Norwegian minds and souls against defeatism and manipulation by the Nazi propaganda. The aim was to prevent a 'Nazification' of the population. Vidkun Quisling, who before the German assault had already shown what could be expected of him,

¹⁴⁰ The term 'hjemmefront', which can be literally translated into 'home-front', is used in modern Norwegian to refer to the totality of the organised resistance against the German occupation forces and their Norwegian accomplices from within the country. The loyal Norwegian forces outside the country and the work of the legitimate government in London is consequently called 'utefront', i.e. 'the outside-front'.

visited Berlin in December 1939 and met with Hitler.¹⁴² Except for a short term as minister of a coalition government, that was probably his greatest political achievement. With the German troops in the country he saw his chance to finally gain power. In the early hours of the attack he therefore captured the radio station in Oslo and transmitted a speech in which he 'ordered' the Norwegian army to surrender and to acknowledge his authority. He claimed that he was the right man to deal with the Germans and that under his reign the country was served best. In this moment his name became synonymous with treason.

The situation was nevertheless confusing enough that some Norwegians, individuals as well as public bodies, were tempted to follow him in his claim. It was later that the illegitimacy of this act was clearly seen. The Germans, on the other hand, sensing his dislike by large parts of the population dropped and dismissed him and tried to find agreement with the legitimate institutions. For a while, until September at least, it looked at times as if they were going to succeed. Life was continuing in the seized cities, Norwegian units were overpowered or surrendered and the king fled the country. In September 1940 though it became clear that in the long run the majority of the Norwegians would not cooperate with the Germans to the extent they wished, Josef Terboven the 'Reichkommissar für die besetzten norwegischen Gebiete' appointed provisional 'ministers' and in 1942 he made Quisling prime minister. The democratic parties were forbidden and the NS got all the support they needed for their programmes of Nazification. The reaction of the resistance was therefore rather the attempt to counter these programmes and to safeguard the integrity and the morale of the population than to take up the fight with the almost 400.000 German soldiers that protected Quisling and his accomplices. The weapons in this struggle were taken from the tool box of civil disobedience. The churches, sport clubs, labour unions, associations and the teachers refused to follow the new policies or disobeyed openly to orders. Even parents were getting involved in the fight for the souls of the children. The acts of disobedience were led by the self-appointed leaders of the resistance, the *hjemmefrontens ledelse* by the clandestine press or illegal pamphlets that directed the struggle with words and slogans. The members of this group came from the highest echelons of society. They and all the Norwegians that resisted the efforts of the Nazification called themselves *jøssinger*.¹⁴³ In contrast to the Danish case where resistance, as we will see later, was mainly an

¹⁴¹ Nasjonal Samling was the name of the party that was founded in 1933 by Vidkun Quisling. Its organization was adjusted to the German NSDAP. For further reading: Dahl, Hans Fredrik, Hagtvet, Bernt, Hjeltnes, Guri, Den norske nasjonalsosialismen. Nasjonal Samling 1933-1945 i tekst og bilder, Oslo: Pax 1995.

¹⁴² Moland, Arnfinn, Det norske forsvar under den andre verdenskrigen 1939 – 1945, in: Erslund, Geir Atle, Bjørlo, Stein, Eriksen, Knut Einar, Moland, Arnfinn, Forsvaret. Fra leidgang til totalforsvar, Oslo: Gyldendal 1999, pp. 88-128, p. 92.

¹⁴³ The term was derived from Jøssingfjord where a German ship before the attack of April 1945 was boarded by the British under breach of Norwegian neutrality. The NS had used the term initially as an insult where it meant

uprising originating in the extremist parts on both side of the political spectrum and a movement of the youth, in Norway the resistance was backed by all political parties (except of course the NS) and the high court. It was argued too that this character of the resistance curbed the military resistance that developed secondary to the civil resistance and besides some important operations¹⁴⁴ never reached the amount of activity as it did in Denmark in terms of sabotage acts.

But when the NS regime tried to conscript young men to a forced labour programme that would have been the first step to a mass conscription to forced military service in the German Forces the clandestine resistance groups were joined by thousands of young conscripts fleeing into the woods and hills where they received food and training. Gradually a real clandestine army developed that mustered at the end of the war around 50.000 men, armed with stenguns dropped by the SOE or produced in hiding. By order of the exile government and with the consent of the resistance leadership this home front was merged with the soldiers trained in exile in Canada and Britain (the *utefront* – outer-front) and placed under a common command. These *gutter på skauen* came down the hills into the urban areas and took over the German military installations together with the British Forces. This way they became the living expression of the Norwegian will to defend their country – more than the sailors in the allied service or the soldiers of the *utefront*.

the 'cowardly' Norwegian government. The resistance adopted their term proudly and used it as the antipode to the quislings – the traitors.

¹⁴⁴ One has to especially name the destruction of the heavy-water plant that helped to destroy the German programme on nuclear weapons. A joint operation of the British Special Operations Executive and Norwegian resistance.

1.1. A NARRATION OF GOOD AND EVIL – OF DAVID AND GOLIATH

The Norwegian narrative on the war has been described as a classical narration of the fight between good and evil – as a myth. Anne Eriksen claims that the *myth on the war* has become a *creation-myth* for modern Norway.¹⁴⁵ This myth needs rehearsal, and repetition to be enforced and kept. There are certain mechanisms and rites to do this. The most widespread are commemoration ceremonies. Celebrations of memorial days are world rites that enable nations to reassure themselves of their identity. Myths are political power and are tied closely to rituals and commemorations but their scope reaches further and includes elements of popular culture as well. The symbols and metaphors they invoke, influence scientific theory and discourse as well as everyday language. Myths bestow history and social relations with a meaning. Myths reduce complex events to something all members of society can manage. How can one identify the motifs to the master narration? Sometimes it is told in a very straightforward manner by leading historians, as is the case with the following quotation:

*"The main theme of Norwegian history 1940-45 is without doubt the resistance movement, as organised and carried out by the Government abroad and the by 'Home Front' leaders in Norway. Its origins, its growth, its organisation, its widening scope, its multiple activities, its tests of strength, its defeats, its final triumph that gave Norway a small but undisputed, and to Norwegians significant, place among the victorious Allies – this is what Norwegian history during the Second World War is all about."*¹⁴⁶

This quotation is taken from a book, written by Johannes Andenæs, Olav Riste and Magne Skodvin, the first being the leading figure in the Norwegian legal sciences and the latter two being the leading historians on international relations and the war. It contains most of the features that could be identified as central to the prevailing basic narrative: unity among the leaders home and abroad, a resistance, strong and important, and Norway as an ally. The patron of the book was the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the book was published as a reaction to a biography by Ralph Hewin that portrayed Quisling in a positive light.¹⁴⁷ Nothing was considered as threatening to the Norwegian self-understanding than an outsiders view of Norway that deviated from the resistance-image that was so essential to the development of

¹⁴⁵ Eriksen, Det var noe annet, p. 163 and Eriksen, Anne, '...Norge er atter fritt!'. Om den norske markeringen av 50-årsjubileet for frigjøringen, in: Tradisjon, Nr. 1, 1997, Særtrykk, p. 3.

¹⁴⁶ Andenæs, Johannes, Riste, Olav, Skodvin, Magne, Norway and the Second World War, Oslo: Aschehoug ⁵1996, p.64.

¹⁴⁷ Hewin, Ralph, Quisling.Propeht without Honour, London: Allen 1965.

postwar Norway and its international relations.¹⁴⁸ Although one of the authors, Olav Riste, wrote in the foreword that the book was not supposed to be an official version of the Norwegian war history, it is clear that there was a distinctive wish that this version would prevail, since it was so essential to the country's foreign policy as an allied nation.¹⁴⁹ Very clearly, also Paul Engstad's book *Også vi, når det blir krevet* of 1985 is a representation of the master narrative.¹⁵⁰ In the arrangement of the chapters, most of the features are represented. In the text the basic 'truth' is presented. The book that was published with the help of the Hjemmefrontmuseum has an introduction by Olav Riste in which the basics are named. The book illustrates them afterwards with pictures. The development of the holdningskampen is described as the sabotage of the Milorg and Norwegian agents on order of the British Special Operations Executive (SOE). Holdningskampen and Milorg – both are the main ingredients of the basic narrative, which sometimes are assigned different importance depending on the narrator. They would not be exchanged but the weight they have can differ. One of the motifs that changes in its importance and emphasis is the holdningskampen. Holdningskampen is hard to translate and means something like 'the struggle to keep up moral' and also 'the struggle on the Norwegians minds' since 'holdning' is both, composure, attitude and manner. Sometimes this very strong and effective form of resistance is rightfully stressed in the reports, sometimes the 'real' – the military – resistance of the Milorg is given more space.

Another feature that sometimes receives a strong emphasis is the role of the king. The picture, taken of the king and the Crown Prince standing near a birch tree in Glomstua during their flight into central Norway, became a symbol for the king's steadfastness during the attack and the war. His refusal to abdicate and to surrender the Norwegian forces is often referred to as the sign that gathered the people around his person and against the Norwegian Nazis.¹⁵¹ The tree itself became the 'royal birch' (Norw. Kongebjørka) and was given symbolic meaning in itself. In the Encyclopaedia of the War it is referred to as "national symbol and monument."¹⁵² This was enhanced by a poem of Nordahl Grieg, the resistance's poet with a direct reference to the tree. This is slightly surprising since the flight of the king into exile was initially seen by a lot of

¹⁴⁸ Maerz, Susanne, Landesverrat versus Widerstand. Stationen und Probleme der "Vergangenheitsbewältigung" in Norwegen, in: Nordeuropaforum, no. 2, 2005, pp. 43-73, p. 50. Susanne Maerz is at the time being finishing a thesis on the postwar debates in Norway.

¹⁴⁹ Riste, Olav, Foreword, in: Andenæs, Riste, Skodvin, Norway and the Second World War, p.5.

¹⁵⁰ Engstad, Paul. *Også vi når det blir krevet*. Hjemmefronten under krigen 1940-1945, Oslo: Tiden 1985.

¹⁵¹ A very early manifestation of this is the book of the former prison inmate Cappelen, Hans. *Vi ga oss ikke*. En Nacht- und Nebelfange forteller, Oslo, Nasjonalforlaget 1945.

¹⁵² Nøkleby, Berit, "kongebjørka", in: Dahl, Hans Fredrik et al., (eds.), *Norsk krigsleksikon 1940-45*, Oslo: Cappelen 1995.

Norwegians as "misguided and even cowardly"¹⁵³ Nevertheless, the picture became very popular. It is also shown in the Hjemmefrontmuseum where it is the antipode to the picture of the traitor Quisling. It is also the first picture in its guidebook where it is shown without a caption or a comment. A symbol does not need to be commented. In *Også vi når det blir krevet*, the picture is also shown, together with a poem of Arnulf Øverland praising the king. The text of Engstad says that the content of the poem was a common feeling of all Norwegians. So here feature of unity is repeated again.¹⁵⁴ The tree later acquired a slightly different meaning. After it had been accidentally destroyed in the early 1980s it was replanted in 1982 by King Olav and in 1997 a grove was created around it dedicated to freedom, peace and human dignity and a writers, among them a number of Nobel-prize-winners, planted additional trees.¹⁵⁵ Thus it is an example of how a symbol, even after its destruction, can be revived and even up-dated by adjustment to the present values. Still in 2003, when *Aftenposten* put a picture series of 17 images online about Kong Håkon and the war, and the first one was the birch tree again.¹⁵⁶



King and Crown Prince at the birch tree (memorial postcard of Posten in 2005)

The text under the picture read: "The King's birch tree near Molde. King Håkon was a uniting symbol during the war. But also the Crown Prince Olav played personally a very important role. He showed a steadfast and clear posture against the Nazi-occupation of Norway."

¹⁵³ Stokker, Kathleen, *Hurry Home, Haakon: The Impact of Anti-Nazi Humor on the Image of the Norwegian Monarch*, in: *The Journal of American Folklore*, no. 109 (433) 1996, pp. 289-307. Stokker argues that via a calculated spreading of humour and jokes describing the king as a good father of the nation the government-in-exile turned the mood in their favour.

¹⁵⁴ Engstad, *Også vi*, p. 26-27. The king is given a rather big space, considering the size of the book.

¹⁵⁵ Bruland, Bjarte, *Norwegen - Wie sich erinnern? Norwegen und der Krieg*, in: *Mythen der Nationen. 1945 - Arena der Erinnerungen*, vol. 1, Edited by Monika Flacke. Berlin: Deutsches Historisches Museum 2004, pp. 453-480, p. 457.

¹⁵⁶ The picture series was published under the heading *Et samlende symbol* (A uniting Symbol) in 2003 but was updated in 2005 again. The series can be found under <http://www.aftenposten.no/spesial/bildeserier/article489151.ece?start=1>.

Not only did the tree become a symbol, moreover the same stories are told over and over again. There is the story of an old and weak teacher who was as widower, responsible for a group of children and who was held prisoner in a internment camp in the north of the country under extremely harsh circumstances together with other teachers who had refused to sign the declaration demanded by the NS that they would be loyal to the new regime. When he was again asked to sign he refused to do so. It is said that after he had refused none of the other teachers imprisoned could possibly sign it. Nobody intends to diminish the bravery of this teacher. One has to take into account though that if the story is told over and over again, it becomes a metaphor. In this case the story became the substitute for a whole range of acts of civil disobedience. By telling it, all other aspects of the war history can be represented. The courageous act of a single person becomes an icon – and a myth in its own right. The story is of course also told in the Engstad-book.¹⁵⁷ It tells the reader about certain national characteristics – being courageous, anti-fascist and stubborn – which everybody can relate to and postulate as their own as well. This way individuals can remember even that which they have no experiences of themselves.¹⁵⁸ Of course the individual memories and the historiography are in a mutually reinforcing dialogue.¹⁵⁹ Both get a meaning and legitimacy from each other, they cannot be separated. The narrative makes sense to the individual because it corresponds with some of his own memories and an individual gives meaning to his memories by relating them to the narrative.

Anne Eriksen thus summarises the Norwegian master narrative as follows:

"[...] the occupation became a description of being Norwegian (Norw. norskhet), of Norwegian nature and characteristics. The collective memory (!) tells us of a small and peaceful country which was attacked by a superior enemy. A badly organised and partly failed defence showed that we are a small non-belligerent people without any sense for military organisation and discipline – a moral victory! After that the actual war began, which we won: the silent resistance, 'holdningskampen', the fight over symbols. In the recollection of those events some features are identified as being typically Norwegian – austerity, the sense for equality, a close relation to nature, individual inventiveness and a certain brusque humour."¹⁶⁰

This narrative was also strengthened by the multitude of resistance-novels and saboteur-memoirs like the stories of Max Manus and Gunnar Sønsteby, the most active and successful saboteurs during the war. Manus, the former volunteer in the Soviet-Finnish Winter War, helped organise a resistance movement, clandestine newspapers and the manufacture of weaponry. It is said that he and his comrades almost managed to assassinate Himmler and Goebbels on their

¹⁵⁷ Engstad, Også vi, p. 36.

¹⁵⁸ Eriksen, Anne, *Historie, minne og myte*, Oslo: Pax 1999, p. 101.

¹⁵⁹ Eriksen, *Minne*, p. 103.

visit to Oslo. He became a much wanted man by the Gestapo that eventually managed to capture him. On one of his many very narrow and spectacular escapes he was severely injured. After recovery he travelled via Russia, Turkey, Arabia and Cape town to the United States in order to re-join the fight against the Nazis. He helped to create a saboteur network and sank several German ships by limpet mines. Though some of his old comrades had wanted to wait with their accounts until the official historiography was published as a basis for their stories, he published shortly after the war two books that became very popular among young boys due to their compelling read and adventurous stories.¹⁶¹ During his work for the resistance, Manus was also affiliated for some time to the band of saboteurs under the command of Gunnar Sønsteby. Sønsteby, the most highly decorated citizen in Norwegian history – the only Norwegian ever awarded the War Cross with Three Swords – was the leader of the so-called Oslo-gjengen (Oslo gang or Oslo detachment) and had also written an account of his years.¹⁶² Both books acquired a wide circulation and great popularity and have been frequently re-published. Another myth-enhancing moment is also connected to the history of Gunnar Sønsteby. In 1945, one of the leading SOE-officers, W.J.M. Mackenzie is recorded as having said that Norway had one of the best resistance movements of all occupied countries, could serve as an example and that the Oslo-gang had been the best group of saboteurs in Europe.¹⁶³ It were quotations like this that together with the heroic narrations shaped the postwar self perception of the Norwegian population – notwithstanding the acknowledgement of the courageous deeds of those extraordinary men and women in the resistance.

The Specific Nature of the Norwegian Legal Purge

All European occupied countries went through a period of legal purges of the collaborators after the war had ended. The quality and scale of transitional justice varied to a great extent. This was very often also determined by the nature of the transition from war to peace and whether the country was liberated by force or whether it was a rather orderly and non-violent surrender. The latter was the case in both Scandinavian countries. The surrender of the German forces in north- and west-Germany on the 8th of May brought also an end to the war in Scandinavia where no battles had been fought and no allied troops were present. Right after the German surrender and

¹⁶⁰ Eriksen, Minne, p. 103.

¹⁶¹ Interview with Arnfinn Moland in Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum on 9 August 2006. The two books are *Det vil helst gå godt* (It Tends To Go Well) from 1945 and *Det blir alvor* (It Gets Serious) from 1946, the latter being a sequel of the first.

¹⁶² Sønsteby, Gunnar, Rapport fra 'Nr.24', Oslo: Orion ⁵2003. First published in 1960, the book came out in four more editions.

¹⁶³ For additional information on MacKenzie see Moland, Arnfinn (ed.), *I hemmelig tjeneste. Kompani Linge sett med britiske øyne*, Oslo: Orion 2001.

with the return of the lawful authorities, the legal purges began. They had a great deal of importance in shaping the basic narration. One of the reasons is that everywhere the purges were the most important medium of raising awareness on the crimes committed during the war.¹⁶⁴ After the years of controlled media and scarce information there was a distinct hunger for information that could be satisfied partly by the law-suits and the information gathered by the courts and published by the once again free press.¹⁶⁵ The other important role that war crime tribunals and the like play is that they establish legally and therefore officially legitimized boundaries of behaviour. It was here that the conduct of individuals during the German occupation was measured. Decency and indecency of behaviour was assessed and everybody could use the findings and the legal proceedings as his or her own scale. But a black and white picture is established that will not always find its reflection in reality. Legal purges need simplification. The nature of a due and fair trial needs clear-cut evidence and depends on rules of procedure previously laid down. In Norway the government-in-exile had made preparations and had already enacted provisional decrees on how to deal with the traitors in 1943. One of the rules laid down that came to be of utter importance for the special traits of the Norwegian transitional justice was the condemnation of even passive membership of the NS. In Denmark, being a member of the small DNSAP was never made a crime because the cooperation policy adopted by the Danish government in 1940, that was even continued by the administration even after the general-strike and the retreat of this government in 1943 never allowed the Danish Nazis to gain any significance and they thereby never managed to do much harm to the country. In Norway, on the other hand the puppet regime of Quisling tried to change the country and Nazify it from the top down. Here the fight was against an ideology embodied by the NS and against Norwegians.¹⁶⁶ When the hjemmestyrkene (the 40.000 armed and trained men that had gone into hiding during the occupation to prepare for the liberation) and the police troops coming in from Sweden took over the country on 8 May 1945 they had orders about who to arrest and how to deal with the people arrested. It was all NS members and functionaries. The German troops were not interfered with since they had officially surrendered to the Allies.

¹⁶⁴ Cohen, David, *Öffentliche Erinnerung und Kriegsverbrecherprozesse in Asien und Europa*, in: Cornelißen, Christoph, Klinkhammer, Lutz, Schwentker, Wolfgang (eds.), *Erinnerungskulturen. Deutschland, Italien und Japan seit 1945*, Frankfurt/ M.: Fischer 2003, pp. 51-66, p. 51.

¹⁶⁵ Sørensen, Øystein, *Forskningen om krigen i Norge. Tradisjonelle og nye perspektiver*, in: *Nytt Norsk Tidsskrift*, vol. 6, no. 1, 1989, pp. 40-58, p. 41.

¹⁶⁶ Kjeldbæk, Esben, *Frihedskampens plads i Danmarks historie*, in: *Frihedskampens plass i Norges historie*. Særtrykk av *Krigsinvaliden* no. 1, 1998, p. 45-59.

Shortly after the Stortinget was assembled, the provisions were made laws and the rettsoppgjøret began.¹⁶⁷

There has subsequently been some discussion on the legal basis of this purge and specifically on the legitimacy of a retroactive law.¹⁶⁸ But it seems that the interpretation laid down in the first month and later published by the most prominent scholar of law Johannes Andenæs was widely supported. It was seen as legitimised by the authorisation of the government to enact laws by the parliament in an emergency session during the fights in Norway and the already-existing laws on treason.¹⁶⁹ However, the fact that the work had been published as late as 1979 indicates that there was still need for justification, because doubts had been voiced on the legitimacy. As often, it was an attack of an 'outsider' on the reputation of the Norwegian war and the transitional justice that caused responses from the agents within Norway. In the foreword of his study Andenæs refers to the book by the Dane Thorkild Hansen on the law-suit on Knut Hamsun.¹⁷⁰ The Dane's mixture between fiction and documentary criticized the rettsoppgjøret. Andenæs felt that there was a need for a thorough description of the purge to prevent "the production of myths."¹⁷¹ The administration and the parliament gave their blessing to the procedure through a parliamentary commission which handed in their conclusion in 1962.¹⁷² Their positive assessment has since been the basis of any official judgement on the matter. One that was certainly not shared by the convicted and their families. The *Institutt for Norsk Okkupasjonshistorie* (INO) – a rather dubious collection of former condemned collaborators, initially thought as a social support to this group of people – developed into an institution that by its own examinations and publications tried to build up an alternative view on the war, in which the NS was a party that worked for the good of the country. As I will describe in a later chapter, at the end of the 1990s and especially after 2000 the former members of the NS and the volunteers to the SS somehow gained more attention and were retrospectively given opportunities to tell their story.

¹⁶⁷ 'Rettsoppgjøret' means literally 'reckoning in legal terms'. It is the word usually used for the whole complex network of the legal proceedings and the inquiries private firms or public agencies and organisations had on the conduct of their employees and members in the years 1945-1948 when most of it finished. The word is often connected to notions of revenge and cleansing.

¹⁶⁸ Not only the NS members and their families discussed this question, the debate was also of a legal nature. For a short account on the discussion see Dahl, Hans Fredrik, *Dealing with the Past in Scandinavia: Legal Purges and popular memories of Nazism and Second World War in Denmark and Norway*, Paper presented at the IISL Conference 'Legal Institutions and Collective Memories', Onati, Spain September 1999.

¹⁶⁹ Andenæs, Johannes, *Det vanskelige oppgjøret. Rettsoppgjøret etter okkupasjonen*, Oslo: Tanum,-Norli 1979.

¹⁷⁰ Hansen, Thorkild, *Prosessen mot Hamsun*, Oslo: Gyldendal 1978. The book was published in Denmark and Sweden the same year and in a second issue in Norway 1996.

¹⁷¹ Andenæs, *Det vanskelige oppgjøret*, p. 7.

¹⁷² *Om Landssviksoppgjøret, Innstilling fra et utvalg nedsatt for å skaffe tilveie materiale til en innberetning fra justisdepartementet til stortinget, Justis- og politidepartementet*. Gjøvik: Justis- og politidepartementet, 1962.

But it can be said that the whole legal side of the purge was comparably smooth in the sense that the basic rights and rules for a fair trial were followed and that there were no lynchings or incidents in which people took the law into their own hands apart from one exception which I will discuss later – the 'tyskertøser'. Examples from other countries show that it could have gone a different way as well. It is well known that in France there were a number of lynchings. The reason for this remarkable difference might lay in the fact that France was liberated after months of fighting whereas Norway had the luck of being liberated in the most ideal way –by unconditional surrender. The Norwegian government had via leaflets dropped by planes, radio broadcasts and the *hjemmestyrkene*, tried to prepare the population for the liberation and had also tried to prevent people taking the law into their own hands by stating in the leaflets that the perpetrators would be punished.¹⁷³

The landssvikloven – the law on treason – stated, as mentioned above, that membership in the NS was a criminal offence. This led to 92.805 charges, of which 46.085 resulted in a verdict. In 50% of these, membership was the only charge. In this way, the terms NS-medlem (NS member) and landssviksdømt (sentenced for treason) became synonymous.¹⁷⁴ A whole group of the population was singled out as criminals. This did not happen in any of the other occupied countries. One of the reasons for this was that the Norwegian occupation was due to the specific nature of Quisling's collaboration government unique. The population demanded such an extensive transitional justice. Most of the sentences were fines but 18.000 were sentenced to prison terms. Thirty-seven people were executed, twelve of them Germans.¹⁷⁵ The exclusion from society on the basis of membership in the NS was not confined to the courts; the purges had a civil side as well. All major unions, associations, and the major enterprises created committees where the members or employees were judged and if found guilty excluded or fired. The armed forces and the administration set up committees of inquiry. The military commission had the task of investigating the officers and deciding whether they had fought bravely or whether they had surrendered in a cowardly way to the enemy or even collaborated with the Germans. The report was withheld for more than thirty years. Since 1979 it has been public. Olav Riste, a very prominent historian wrote an introduction for the reader.¹⁷⁶ The conduct of state agencies, the ministries and the whole administration was also investigated. The report was

¹⁷³ One example I have seen at Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum was a small booklet that contained detailed information about the proces of liberation: Ved frigjøringen av Norge, NHM Bibliothek, NHM 948.181.59 Frigjøringen: feiring/ informasjon (div. småskrifter uttgitt våren 45).

¹⁷⁴ Eriksen, Minne, p. 107.

¹⁷⁵ Dage, Tor, Norway's liberation, Utenriksdepartementet, Ministry of foreign affairs, <http://odin.dep.no/odin/engelsk/norway/history/032005-990467/index-dok000-b-n-a.html>.

published and contained very detailed descriptions of the events during the occupation.¹⁷⁷ The pre-war politicians who had neglected the defence of the country and the Members of Stortinget that agreed on negotiations with the Germans were reprimanded, but the administration on the whole was acquitted of collaboration. The committee deemed a certain level of co-operation as necessary. It is the treatment of the NS that makes the Norwegian rettsoppgjøret unique with regard to all the other purges after the war. The extent of the stigma that meant became clear in a project in 2005 where the whole purge was made subject to a new analysis. The outcome was a series of books on the nature and the problems of the purge that shed a light on the effects on Norwegian society.¹⁷⁸ There is evidence that the transitional justice of the early postwar period has influenced the families and descendants of the defendants to an extent that a whole group of the population had and has problems integrating, similarly to the group of children of Norwegian mothers and German fathers.¹⁷⁹ The burden the exclusion of a collectively accused group from the national memory is, is hard to estimate, but it certainly also creates on behalf of the excluded the need for a (then inevitably anti-democratic) counter-narrative that searches for explanations and excuses.¹⁸⁰

The implications of this kind of transitional justice on the memory of the war are also important. Any kind of law-suit that identifies a perpetrator inevitably holds the risk that people afterwards understand themselves and others that have not been convicted as innocent. By identifying the 'bad guys' reciprocally the category of the 'good guy' is established. So there is a mechanism of getting rid of one's own guilt by identifying others as guilty. This observation could be made during the transitional justice in Germany after the Nuremberg trials and – in my opinion and certainly to a much lesser degree – also in Norway where the purge helped the population create a black-and-white picture of the war society that distinguished sharply between 'quislinger' and 'jøssinger'.¹⁸¹ The grey area in the conduct during the war could be suppressed, especially if there was a whole group of people that could be blamed for instead of scrutinizing the

¹⁷⁶ Komite til undersøkelse av militære myndigheters forhold før og under felttoget i Norge i 1940, oppnevnt ved kongelig resolusjon av 25. januar 1946, Rapport fra den militære undersøkelseskommisjon av 1946 avgitt mai 1950, Norges Offentlige Utredninger, NOU 1979: 47.

¹⁷⁷ Innstilling fra Undersøkelseskommisjonen av 1945 oppnevnt ved kongelige resolusjon av 6. August 1945, vols. I-III. Oslo, 1946-47.

¹⁷⁸ The project was amongst others led by Øystein Sørensen, Hans Fredrik Dahl, Berit Nøkleby. The publications of the series: *Å overkomme fortiden*, edited Dahl, Hans Fredrik include for example: Vaale, Lars-Erik, *Dommen til døden. Dødsstraffen i Norge 1945-50*. Oslo: Pax 2005; Dahl, Hans Fredrik, Sørensen, Øystein (eds.), *Et rettfærdig oppgjør? Rettsoppgjøret i Norge etter 1945*, Oslo: Pax 2004. More on the project in the chapter on the 60th anniversary of the liberation in Norway.

¹⁷⁹ More on this in the chapter on the so-called *tyskertøser*.

¹⁸⁰ Fjørtoft, Kjell, *Oppgjøret som ikke tok slutt*, Oslo: Gyldendal 1997 is such an example.

¹⁸¹ On this polarisation see: Eriksen, Anne, *Quislinger og Jøssinger - eller: De gode og de onde i nyere norsk historie*, *Dugnad. Tidsskrift for etnologi*, 1994, vol. 1, pp. 3-19.

passiveness of large parts of the population. But, as will become clear now, the law-suits also played an important role for the historiography.

The Canon Becomes Established

One can find an immense amount of books and treatises on Second World War in both Denmark and Norway. There are investigations on specific aspects, biographical and autobiographical works as well as many books dedicated to an overall picture. In both cases some works acquired a rather central role as semi-official presentations of the matter. I might call those books part of a canon. The Greek word for a measuring line or rule expresses probably best the status those works at times achieved. Their findings became almost a rule or a provision for the interpretation of past events. Following a definition borrowed from the world of music the canon describes a type of counterpoint employing the strictest form of imitation. All the voices of a canon have the same melody, beginning at different times. Those books were themselves mainly based on some multi-volume works that were published in the early postwar years. In Denmark, two authors became most influential,¹⁸² whereas in Norway, one should name three different dominant works.¹⁸³ These works gained a widespread circulation, supported by the universities. They constitute the basis or the code – the nationwide celebrations and acts of remembrance, teachers, local politicians, members of parliament and museums hand down this ‘canon’ and often even strengthen it. Within all elements of this history culture, the resistance fighters and the civilian disobedience of parts of the population are emphasised.

As mentioned before, the report of the civil committee of inquiry was also historiographical by nature, since it had been written by historians who examined the events not only in a legal context but also in a historical and moral one. For the purpose of their work and also for the law-suits, historical material was used as evidence and collected and evaluated. In this process it was often put in a different context than an archivist or historian would have done.¹⁸⁴ In this way, their reports and the verdicts became historiography and influenced the first historians who wrote about the war. They compiled historical analysis and source material and became the first in-depth study of the occupation history. The many-volume work included assessments of

¹⁸² Most prominent Taage Karstædt and Jørgen Hæstrup. Bryld, Warring, Besættelsestiden, p. 60, pp. 89-90.

¹⁸³ Steen, Sverre (ed.), Norges Krig, 3 volumes, Oslo 1950, Skodvin, Magne, Norsk historie 1939-1945. Krig og okkupasjon, Oslo 1991, first published in 1965 and the big eight-volume work Norge i Krig, Oslo 1984-1988 also edited by Magne Skodvin.

¹⁸⁴ Grimnes, Ole Kristian, Kollaborasjon og oppgjør, in: Ugelvik Larsen, Stein (ed.), I krigens kjølvann. Nye sider ved norsk krigshistorie og etterkrigstid, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget 1999, pp. 47-57, p. 53.

historians like Sverre Steen who had been part of the commission.¹⁸⁵ They produced and represented both historiography and primary sources and were of inestimable worth for historians to come. These reports and historical assessments became the cornerstone for the rapidly growing historiography on the war. Sverre Steen also wrote the first big compendia on the occupation.¹⁸⁶ Another one was Magne Skodvin's *Norsk historie 1939-1945*, first published in 1965.¹⁸⁷ It is important to bear in mind the fact that the historians that wrote the first accounts on the recent war did so literally as victors – not just because they shared the values of the resistance and the allies but simply because they had been part of the resistance themselves.¹⁸⁸ Skodvin had been in the military resistance as a student, Steen had been professor at Oslo University during the war and a propagator of the resistance, Wyller had been active in the illegal press and imprisoned in the Grini camp for three years and Kjeldstadli who wrote decisive work on the military resistance had been part of all kind of clandestine action.¹⁸⁹ The works of these scholars gained a widespread circulation, supported by the universities. Skodvin, a student of Steen, became the most important Norwegian historian on the war and his work is seen as the benchmark for historical research. Most of his influence came from his recruitment of younger historians, many of whom were supervised by him. One of his disciples is Ole Kristian Grimnes. At the end of the 1960s, Grimnes, together with other scholars, founded the Research Group on Contemporary History (Samtidshistorisk Forskningsgruppe), at the University of Oslo. This group consisted of some academics and students working on their master theses about the war history under the guidance of Grimnes. They published their own series called *Studier i norsk samtidshistorie. Norge og den 2. verdenskrigen*. Some of the titles were published in a very cheap paperback edition to gain more popularity. In a foreword to one of the volumes, the group describes itself as a young and new circle of researchers. Their aim is to stimulate interest in this special period of Norwegian history and to broaden knowledge of it.¹⁹⁰ This research group played a crucial role in the shaping of the Norwegian narrative on the war also due to their connection with other academic milieus like Norges Hjemmefrontmuseet, as will become visible later. By the end of the 1980s a harsh debate had developed on whether the group's influence on the historical research was actually rather a burden than an enrichment

¹⁸⁵ Steen, Steen, Riksrådsforhandlingene, utgitt i 1947 som bilag til Undersøkelseskomisjonens innstilling om disse forhandlingene. In Undersøkelseskomisjonen av 1945 oppnevnt ved kongelige resolusjon av 6. August 1945.

¹⁸⁶ Steen, Sverre (ed.), *Norges Krig*, 3 volumes, Oslo 1950.

¹⁸⁷ Skodvin, Magne, *Norsk historie 1939-1945. Krig og okkupasjon*, Oslo 1991, first published in 1965.

¹⁸⁸ Sørensen, *Forskningen om krigen*, p. 41.

¹⁸⁹ Kjeldstadli, Sverre, *Hjemmestyrkene. Hovedtrekk av den militære modstanden under okkupasjonen*, Oslo: Aschehoug 1959.

¹⁹⁰ Samtidshistorisk Forskningsgruppe, Forord, in: *Samtidshistorisk Forskningsgruppe* (ed.), *Motstandskamp, strategi og marinepolitikk*, Oslo, Bergen, Tromsø: Universitetsforlag 1972, p.7.

and whether a 'Skodvin-school' existed or still exists. A generation of younger historians around Øystein Sørensen and Nils Johan Ringdal claimed so in several articles and journal contributions. The first time this term was used was by Nils Johan Ringdal in an article in *Dagbladet* with the title *History and Moral*.¹⁹¹ Ringdal and Sørensen later elaborated on their claims in interviews where they focussed on two things: firstly, they claimed, had the Skodvin-school focussed exclusively on the resistance which brought an imbalance to the whole historiography and secondly the Skodvin-school had not been able to abstract their own values from their research and therefore had been biased in parts. The first historians, Sørensen and Ringdal, had still been open to all kinds of research fields and did not attempt to direct the research to a great extent, and felt the urge to gain knowledge. It was the second generation of historians around Magne Skodvin that restricted the focus.¹⁹² They met with opposition Skodvin's former students, those historians that felt accused of a lack of independence and victims of Skodvin's alleged influence. They, on the other hand, stressed Skodvin's openness in his guidance and dismissed all allegations.¹⁹³ The whole discussion was, inspired by a German debate in the latter half of the 1980s and was called a Norwegian 'Historikerstreit'. It seems clear, that certain names gained a big influence. Whether this constitutes a school or a monopoly has to be left open for now. Alone at the universities these historians might not have gained that much importance for the memory of the war but together with the two other instruments of memory-politics that is very different. I will start with Norges Hjemmefrontmuseet.

EXCURSUS: MUSEUM LANGUAGE

Since this thesis intends to use two museums and their respective exhibitions – old and new – as source material, some preliminary remarks have to be made on both the position of the museum as a site of representation of a past, as a places of cultural communication and as an agent and instrument in the process of the production of memory. The International Council of Museums once found a definition for a museum: "A museum is a non-profit making, permanent institution in the service of society and of its development, and open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits, for purposes of study, education and enjoyment, material evidence of people and their environment."¹⁹⁴ Museums, understood according to this definition, have a short history, a history as short as the nation-state. Together

¹⁹¹ Ringdal, Nils Johan, *Historie og moral*, in: *Dagbladet*, 11 November 1987.

¹⁹² Harket, Håkan, *Den nye historikerstriden*, in: *Dagbladet*, 12 December 1989.

¹⁹³ Eriksen, Knut Einar, Grimnes, Ole Kristian, Pharo, Helge, *Hva er Skodvinskolen*, *Aftenposten*, 3 January 1990.

with other early national institutions, they played a significant role in the building of the nation – culturally at least.

*"State financed educational institutions, among them museums, were of great importance in this work of construction. Museums played a part in defining the nature of the nation; it was a space in which national culture and history were constructed, expressing the difference between one nation and all the others, a distinction all the more necessary since their state structures were broadly similar."*¹⁹⁵

It will be argued in the following chapters that the Hjemmefrontmuseum and Frihedsmuseum are still fulfilling that objective since their initial exhibitions were established in a time of national recovery, when they had the function to re-establish national identity after the traumatic experience of the war. The exhibitions, as will be shown later, bear traces of the early exhibitions and can be interpreted as the heirs of the initial interpretations and narrations. The aim of these preliminary reflections is not to come up with a ready-made tool for the interpretation of exhibitions. What I am going to discuss on the following pages are rather considerations of a more general sort on what role the museum plays, how narratives are constructed and reflected in an exhibition. Museums in general are endowed with a very special authority. As I have mentioned before, they are expected to keep a scholarly standard, have a dedication to facts, to be representations of the state of the art of research and reflections of scientific sobriety – and many temporary exhibitions do in fact try to live up to such an ideal. Therefore, I call them 'authoritative agents'. This general assumption is above all based on the expectations of the visitors who attribute this authority to the museum. They often seem to forget that museum exhibitions are often an outcome of a long process of selection and simplification, less complete and more narrowed down than a given book on the subject. And yet they are much less a subject of critical scrutiny than the book. Which is astonishing in itself, since on the average more people visit a museum than take the time to read a book on that specific matter.¹⁹⁶ As I will describe later, it is the *raison d'être* of the museum to make the selection for the visitor.

However, on the side of the museum makers, this authority begins to be challenged. Hilde Hein states that: "Like most contemporary institutions, museums have descended from the heaven of authoritative certainty to inhabit the flatlands of doubt." They have started to integrate the multi-causality of historical event, the heterogeneity of historical research and interpretations and the

¹⁹⁴ ICOM (International Council of Museums, Development of the Museum Definition according to ICOM Statutes (1946-2001), http://icom.museum/hist_def_eng.html.

¹⁹⁵ Prösler, Martin, Museums and Globalization, in: Macdonal, Sharon, Fyfe, Gordon (eds.), *Theorizing Museums. Representing identity and diversity in a changing world*, Oxford: Blackwell 1996, pp. 21-44, p. 34.

¹⁹⁶ Hein; Hilde S., *The Museum in Transition. A Philosophical Perspective*, Washington, London: Smithsonian Institution Press 2000, p. 31.

gaps of historical knowledge visibly into the exhibitions. But as Klein fears, "doubt has led to cautious self-censorship and timid understatement."¹⁹⁷ Of course that does not yet apply in practice to the majority of museums and the two museums of this study found, as we will see, different strategies of coping with that paradigm. The question implicitly dealt with in this project is the one that curators of history museums all over the world are often faced with: Shall the modern history museum be a 'temple' or a 'forum', is there a need or is it desirable to transform the museums from 'shrines' and 'statements of truth' into arenas of discourses?¹⁹⁸ The example of the exhibition of the Enola Gay at the Smithsonian in Washington or the protest of veterans about the description of the strategic bombing of Germany in the Canadian War Museum has rendered the problems and the frontlines between two different ideas about the role of the museum visible. Should museums be understood as keepers of tradition or as facilitators, or even provocateurs, of discussion? There are a great number of hints that an exhibition might not be the ideal medium for provocation, simply because the audience will not respond correspondingly.

"The transformation of the museum from the reliquary to forum has forced curators to reassess their role as cultural custodians. Increasingly, curators must ask if museums retain the responsibility of validating and confirming tradition. Who has the authority to interpret history to the public - indeed, who 'owns' history? Is an exhibition always the best venue to present diverse interpretations of complex historical issues, such as the Enola Gay? How does an exhibit best present an interpretation that re-evaluates the sacred narrative of a culture in which the public feels a wide ownership?"¹⁹⁹

War museums and the two museums of this study can be included in this group since they also play, as Andrew Whitmarsch with reference to Noakes has pointed out, "a significant role in commemoration." Their displays confer legitimacy on specific interpretations of history, and attribute significance to particular events.²⁰⁰ In the two cases at hand, Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum and Frihedsmuseum, the museums are also explicitly memorials because they have direct commemorative installations like sculptures and signs and are hosts to commemorative rituals and because their exhibitions are the direct outcome of a deliberate effort by their makers to create commemorative spaces. Both museums are not alone in this. There are several museums in the world that were created as memorials and even feature this function in

¹⁹⁷ Both quotations Hein, *Museum in Transition*, p. 142.

¹⁹⁸ This question was asked already 1971 by Cameron, Duncan F. in *The Museum, a Temple or a Forum*, in: *Curator*, vol. 14, no. 1, 1971, pp. 11-24, here quoted from Ames, Michael M., *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes. The Anthropology of Museums*, Vancouver: UBC Press 1992, pp. 15-24.

¹⁹⁹ Henderson, Amy, Kaeppler, Adrienne L., Introduction, in: Henderson, Amy, Kaeppler, Adrienne L. (eds.), *Exhibiting Dilemmas. Issues of Representation at the Smithsonian*, Washington, London: Smithsonian Institution Press 1997, pp. 1-11, p. 2.

their names. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum has a mission statement that, for example, very clearly describes its national and commemorative character: "The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum is America's national institution for the documentation, study, and interpretation of Holocaust history, and serves as this country's memorial to the millions of people murdered during the Holocaust."²⁰¹ As will be seen later on, Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum and the Frihedsmuseum share this commemorative character and have, if not in the name, but in their mission statements similar defined tasks.

Museum exhibitions can assume very different forms and characters or can follow different strategies of communication. Numerous suggestions have been made to classify these different types.²⁰² Esben Kjeldbæk, the curator of the Frihedsmuseum, prefers, based on experience and observations of war museums, to speak about first, second and third generation museums. The first generation museum is made by contemporaries to the events exhibited and is very often personal and celebrates a victory. Often it is changed after a struggle between the founders and some reformers into a second generation museum where education and not celebration is the keyword, which is often explicitly stated in declaration of purpose or mission statement. The museums of that second generation have more clarity but fewer objects. According to Kjeldbæk, the second generation museums are unstable and often further transformed into the next generation which is characterized by a further push toward commercialisation.²⁰³ Certainly these are just ideal-types. The two museums in this study were actually specifically chosen or built for the original permanent exhibitions. These exhibitions display historical events within a broad chronological order that allows for some side- or sub-chapters but group the development according to larger topics. They developed, as we will see, from some quickly created 'shows' which were supposed to underline during those joyful liberation days the importance of the resistance to two proper museum institutions under the roof of the respective National Museum in Denmark and the Museum of the Armed Forces in Norway; each being staffed with historians and with help from archivists and librarians of the mother institutions. As I will show later, this development was not straight-forward and there were incidents where it could have taken another turn. But the wish to be professional was always present even if it was sometimes mixed with a certain arrogance by the veterans trading professionalism for assumed truth by virtue of

²⁰⁰ Whitmarsch, Andrew, "We will remember them". *Memory and Commemoration in War Museums.*, in: *Journal of Conservation and Museum Studies*, 2001, Issue 7, pp. 1-15, p.1.

²⁰¹ The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Mission Statement, <http://www.ushmm.org/museum/mission/>

²⁰² For a variety of suggestions please refer to Waidacher, *Museologie*, pp. 144-148 and for an in-depth example including four permanent exhibitions of major European museum Scholze, Jana, *Medium Ausstellung. Lektüren musealer Gestaltung in Oxford, Leipzig, Amsterdam und Berlin, Bielefeld*, transcript 2004.

²⁰³ Kjeldbæk, Esben, *Post-Modernism and the Three Generations of Museums*, in: *Nordisk Museologi*, no. 1-2, 2000, pp. 119-126, pp. 120-123.

participation in the struggle. It is therefore fair to measure the two museums with the same units as any other history museum or exhibition should be.

One of the preconditions for a museum to function but also one of its major problems is the fact that the makers of an exhibition share the same subconscious set of images and icons as the visitors. In the Western world, museums are in general, embedded in the societies that opened them. As institutions of social life they are for the most part well-integrated into the set of images and ideas governing their societies – that is, as long as that set does not change. It simply is not always important whether certain emotions that are evoked by the exhibition were intended by the creator or whether certain images have an effect that was not part of a master plan. The matrix on which they work is shared by both the creators and the visitors so that subconscious decisions in the process of the set-up could be as valid and powerful as some of the master-minded ones. I think it is important to keep such an interpretation of the constructed nature of an exhibition or a museum in mind when dealing with the two museums in the following chapter.

War museums mean photographic images. It was the photographic image that had the formative influence on the 20th century imagery memory. The icons of the Second World War became stereotypes, reprinted on billboards, postcards, stamps and medals, and reproduced in textbooks, plays, movies and even speeches.²⁰⁴ But the photographic picture also became the archetype of illustration in the 20th century. It was readily available even for the private users and it accompanied the rise of the mass media. Therefore it also acquired a central position in the museums. The photo clearly is an image, but other more 'touchable' or 'haptic' objects could also fulfil the function of a photographic image as an effigy or representation of a certain narrative. There are, however, specific problems with the interpretation and evaluation of photographs, because "[T]he temptations of realism, more exactly of taking an image for reality, are particularly seductive in the case of photographs and portraits."²⁰⁵ The notion that a camera does not lie still rules strong, especially since the newspapers and news programmes use them as a sign of authenticity. Even though their character is seemingly merely illustrative, they tend to be taken as truth. Maybe because they enable the viewer to partake in the event afterwards. It is this specific nature of the photographic images that, according to Horst Bredekamp, should be understood as "fact-creating, living agents" which reach into the public (read political) sphere. Since photos were for a long time products of mechanical and chemical processes they were perceived, true or not, as outside of the reach of manipulation. This was specifically true for

²⁰⁴ Flacke, *Erinnerungen*, p. 10.

²⁰⁵ Burke, Peter, *Eyewitnessing. The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001, p. 21.

black-and-white photos.²⁰⁶ Today the black-and-white photography of the past is still used, but only in an artistic way to emulate certain realism. The great documentary photographers have used it and their well-known images of war and crisis, poverty and injustice are present images of the visitors who again transfers that to the snapshots seen in today's museums and tend to assign them a meaning beyond the actual. A totally posed picture of young resistance fighters with guns in the Frihedsmuseum thus becomes the representation of resistance even if the group has never engaged in shootings or were just temporarily in possession of weapons. It is therefore justified to assume that photographs might not be evidence as such but as much as other sorts of media 'just' historical. Not only due to the possibilities of digital imaging, but rather due to other factors it should be recognized that the truthfulness of photographs is not greater than that of movies or monuments.²⁰⁷ But some pictures, like the flag-raising in Iwo Jima for the Americans, bear a meaning that, though not personally experienced, has "become so enmeshed" with a "national memory" that individuals would just seldom be able to see "beyond the 'official' story."²⁰⁸ An example of a picture that has, as already mentioned earlier, become a national icon, is the photo taken of the Norwegian King Håkon and the Crown Prince standing beneath a birch tree during their flight from the advancing German troops. The two Royals are standing erect and in a proud posture. The picture has become so well-known because it was identified with the steadfast refusal of the king to surrender and abdicate and became an effigy for the attitude of resistance that it was later extended to encompass all Norwegians. As mentioned earlier, the image is at the beginning of the Hjemmefrontmuseum's catalogue and is printed without a caption – it does not need one.

But not only the obvious documentary photographers, even those of snapshots, are likely to have been subject to a certain level of selection and construction by the makers of an exhibition. There are complex ways, of how images end up in the museum collections. The ideal would be an 'active collection' according to previously fixed criteria that are an outcome of a conscious strategy of the whole institution. 'Passive selection', on the other hand, the gathering and acquisition of objects by chance or random criteria will inevitably cause dominance of one or the other kind of material.²⁰⁹ There are numerous ways of finding criteria for the selection, simply looking for it in one's attic or calling friends is probably not one of them. In the case of the Hjemmefrontmuseum and the Frihedsmuseet the founding fathers not only brought a mass

²⁰⁶ Bredekamp, Bildakte, p. 29.

²⁰⁷ Bredekamp, Bildakte, p. 46.

²⁰⁸ Lubar, Steven, Exhibiting Memories, in: Henderson, Amy, Kaeppler, Adrienne L. (eds.), Exhibiting Dilemmas. Issues of Representation at the Smithsonian, Washington, London: Smithsonian Institution Press 1997, pp. 15-27, p. 19.

²⁰⁹ Waidacher, Friedrich, Museologie - knapp gefasst, Wien, Köln, Weimar: Böhlau, UTB 2005, p. 35.

of their own pictures but also asked their friends and comrades from the resistance to supply their photos. Not only does that mean that there will have been a preponderance of pictures of their own branches of resistance (the military one) but it seems logical to assume that they and their friends who supplied pictures might have made a personal. These images are again subdued to the selection process of the architects of the exhibition (old and new ones) who bring their very personal matrix into the game. The same matrix will again play a role when the images are put on display together with texts and the surrounding objects and architecture of the exhibition. Thus, what the visitor sees is just the end-product of a long line of selections and constructions. Of course, this is the very meaning of the museum and the core of its objectives. The exhibition must present history in a palatable way that is understood and can be consumed. It is the authoritative character of museums, where the selection process acquires a problematic nature. What is shown is easily taken to be the only true version.

Another one of the most important difficulties of the interpretation of a museum lies in the multidimensional and complex structure of the material when compared to a pure text. Pictures and objects each acquire a new meaning when brought together and original objects also create further emotional reactions. The entirety of the exhibition set represents certain interpretations as well. The structure of both exhibitions in the FM and the NHM, for example, combines a strictly chronological order with thematic focuses, connected with the architecture, but does not give the visitor any freedom of choice. Whether or not that is owed to the architectural limits of the buildings or not is not of concern though, important is what it creates within the visitor. The view on history or on that specific history that is mediated is that of development, development towards a goal. Such a narrative gives no way for a history that is composed of different, sometimes inconsistent developments, acts and decisions. A history of ruptures and personal decisions is not conceivable in such an exhibition.²¹⁰ But maybe the makers did not want that either, since both exhibitions lack names and personalities.

It has been suggested that to understand any exhibition it should be viewed as an independent synthesis of science and art.²¹¹ The difficulty is how to find out what different visitors get out of the same synthesis. Since the structure is so complex one should expect a very multifaceted reception from visitors too. "But museums cannot reach all publics in the same manner. There is

²¹⁰ Mordhorst, Camilla, Nielsen, Kitte Wagner, Formens semantik - en teori om den kulturhistoriske udstilling, in: Nordisk museologi, no. 1, 1997, pp. 3-18. Here this is shown at the example of the 1997 state of the exhibition Bilder und Zeugnisse der Deutschen Geschichte in the Deutsches Historisches Museum Berlin.

²¹¹ "In order to fulfil its aims, the exhibition has to be understood as an independent synthesis of science and art. [...] The development of a museum exhibition is an act of creation sui generis, But "[I]ndependently of the topic, the presentation of an exhibition is in all cases a specific artistic medium and therefore diametrically opposed to a scientific statement, Waidacher, Museologie, p. 142.

no guarantee that a message sent is identical to the message received.²¹² This is because a museum is a site where subjectivities and objectivities collide and "A museum is a cultural institution where cultural expectations and institutional, academic intentions interact, and the result is far from a one way street."²¹³ These processes are very complex and difficult to disentangle. This is why there is always the danger of falling too willingly into the pitfalls of assumed manipulation and over-interpretation. Too often museums and their exhibitions are seen as the direct mirror of their creators' political agenda or ideological motivations. Sharon Macdonald warned:

*"In many cases the analyst's 'reading' is not acknowledged as particular and is positioned as act of interpretation [...] but is presented as consonant with both the motives of the exhibitors and the messages picked up by the visitors. While this may on occasions be the case, the model does not allow for the investigation of whether there is indeed such a neat fit between production, text and consumption. It supposes both too clear-cut a conscious manipulation by those involved in creating exhibitions and too passive and unitary a public; and it ignores the often competing agendas involved in exhibition-making, the 'messiness' of the process itself, and the interpretive agency of visitors. It also provides no account of the dynamics by which museum exhibitions are formed - including the routes by which 'dominant interpretations' or unconscious associations might come to make themselves felt, or of the contexts in which they may be challenged."*²¹⁴

The danger of 'over-interpretation' is, as will be seen in the following section, one of the main dangers when dealing with exhibitions. 'Over-interpretations' do not necessarily stem from another or retrospect semiotic understanding of the exhibits' contexts and the exhibition's design or from insinuations of the existence of an evil master plan which is directed by a well-formulated political agenda – sometimes they come from the missing knowledge of the exact circumstances under which an exhibition was set up, the financial restraints and the lack of manpower and, very often, the technical problems that had to be overcome, that are of not course, visible to the visitor. Museum curators may also have at times ambitions, plans and hopes, which go beyond what the circumstances allow. Any criticism therefore has, if possible, to include an examination of the situation, the interests involved and the relation between the individual and the social.²¹⁵ But not only criticism based on a lack of knowledge about the difficulties and the processes behind the making of an exhibition might lead to rash criticism. I

²¹² Hein; Hilde S., *The Museum in Transition. A Philosophical Perspective*, Washington, London: Smithsonian Institution Press 2000, p. 31.

²¹³ Crane, Susan A., *Memory, Distortion, and History in the Museum*, in: *History & Theory*, no. 36, 1997, pp. 44-63, p. 46.

²¹⁴ Macdonald, Sharon, *Introduction*, in: Macdonald, Sharon, Fyfe, Gordon (eds.), *Theorizing Museums. Representing identity and diversity in a changing world*, Oxford: Blackwell: 1996, pp. 1-18, p. 5.

²¹⁵ Ames, Michael M., *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes. The Anthropology of Museums*, Vancouver: UBC Press 1992, p. 4.

would like to add another lengthy quotation of Esben Kjeldbæk who criticizes judgements of especially the first generation museums as being nationalistic and so forth because as he states:

"[...] these judgements are most often based on ideological analysis of the texts in the exhibition, the catalogue, or official statements of intent. Or analysis of the political, social and economic set-up behind the museum. Since very few museums actually state lies in their exhibitions, the post-modern critics focus their criticism on what is left out or more virtuously: what is "suppressed". But language and power structure alone can hardly describe a medium which, at the core, consists of authentic three-dimensional objects placed in a space. There may be all sorts of intent (some of it unconscious) behind a given exhibition. But an important part of its effect is, what you, the visitor, actually feel and experience there. And this is what much ideological criticism, being occupied with the lacks, fails to explain or even note."²¹⁶

What Kjeldbæk addresses here is an important observation about numerous exhibition analyses – the judgement from the hindsight without empathy for the period of the making, and the problems that there is no possibility to measure the reception of a given exhibition.²¹⁷ On the other side, one would have to refrain from interpretations and criticism at all if this would be thought until the end. Material, especially from the early stages of the set-up and different versions of the texts, if preserved, are valuable aids to get an understanding of the motives and the interpretations of the makers. If that data is supported by other instruments of memory culture, as it is in this project, the findings might enable one to make judgements on certain paradigms of historical images that existed and persisted over time. Exhibitions drafts are, in general, the attempt at limiting and of putting in order with the help of, more or less, explicit codes; as a result the exhibition itself is the translation of those codes into space. Besides the intended codes, unintended or random codes might emerge and in the following affect communication between the exhibition and the visitors. As institutions that are directed at a larger audience will allegedly have an intention that guides their communication.²¹⁸ If an exhibition is kept according to a historical image or one single interpretation, conclusions can be drawn, if not on the existence of conspiratory master-plans of the makers but on the memory cultures of a given country at a given time. If the visitors can not assimilate with the exhibition anymore and stop visiting, a museum would usually try to adapt and change the exhibition in order to attract visitors again, very often out of a financial need or incentive. There might be

²¹⁶ Kjeldbæk, Post-modernism, p. 120.

²¹⁷ Some attempts of visitor research though, bring up very interesting findings. Gordon Fyfe and Max Ross, for example, pointed out once more that local museums are not just important mediators of identity and locality but that the visitors' interpretations are also very much connected to their social background. Fyfe, Gordon, Ross, Max, Decoding the visitor's gaze: rethinking museum visiting, in: Macdonald, Sharon, Fyfe, Gordon (eds.), *Thorizing Museums. Representing identity and diversity in a changing world*, Oxford: Blackwell 1996, pp. 127-152.

reasons, though, that they do not react this way. Those reasons include a severe lack of money, which is not seldom the case, or, in the case of financial independence as part of a greater institution or the interest group, because the narrative of the exhibition is believed to be 'eternally true' or legitimized by propaganda aims. So, if a museum's story stays constant and the exhibition is not changed it could either mean that there is a financially supported interest in keeping it, no means to change it or simply no need to change since the story, whatever the single scholar or visitor might think is by and large still 'bought' and valid for a consistent number of visitors.

Coming back to the initial assumption that museums occupy a rather authoritative position in the history culture of a society and combining it with an understanding of the museum's need to simplify and select, the difficulties in the interpretation of museum exhibitions become obvious once more. Museums exercise a certain power by manipulating "both objects and memories to produce a historical narrative."²¹⁹ Alongside this narrative and by virtue of their role as memorials, museums guide their visitors. "Through their various display strategies, museum narratives offer visitors a collective identity to which their own memories of the museum will henceforth connect them."²²⁰ That does not mean that every museum is maliciously stretching its authority and undemocratically imposing false facts or notions, some reflect very well the difficulties in the interpretation of the events they treat, but they have a "power, which stems directly from their institutional need to invest objects with a coherent meaning, typically in the form of a story, which their visitors can assimilate and in so doing, ratify."²²¹

For the following considerations it is important to bear in mind, as will be described later in-depth, that the two museums that are going to be compared, have certain objectives and basic assumptions on which they were erected. Both were not just erected by the veterans of the resistance but also in order to show the very struggle. Norges Hjemmefrontmuseet stated in its statutes that its aim was to show the whole war history, but since the interpretation of that time was that the war was about resistance the focus was on that very activity. It is therefore not very surprising that the exhibition could be interpreted as giving unequal weight to different war experiences. In Copenhagen, the museum had no such objective and was solely devoted to the experience of resistance. Any critique of the exhibition will have to take into account that the museum was not meant to be filled with the multi-causal explanations and complexity of the war

²¹⁸ Scholze, Jana, *Medium Ausstellung. Lektüren musealer Gestaltung in Oxford, Leipzig, Amsterdam und Berlin*, Bielefeld: transcript 2004, p. 271.

²¹⁹ Sherman, Daniel J., *Objects of Memory: History and Narrative in French War Museums*, in: *French Historical Studies*, vol. 1, no. 19, 1995, pp. 49-74, p. 70.

²²⁰ Sherman, *Objects of Memory*, p. 71.

²²¹ Sherman, *Objects of Memory*, p. 71.

history neither was it meant to show the majority of the population or even discuss the question of how many people were engaged in the different activities described in its showcases. Interpretations of exhibitions by historians are a difficult reading, because it is so difficult to detach oneself from the critical aspects of one's own profession that often and hopefully is marked by an enhanced awareness of complex entanglements and multi-causality and dive into a world of simplification and narration that is more usually more simplified than one's own historical writing is. And yet, the makers of exhibitions or their curators are themselves often historians and therefore their work asks for at least partly the same mechanics of assessment – an assessment of the level of simplification and disregard to research and the bias of the narrative.

The question of how to tackle the dilemmas that were mentioned here is difficult and will hardly ever be answered without doubts. One way pursued in this work is to try to understand what the makers of the exhibition wanted the visitor to understand themselves – and this not solely through an interpretation of the exhibition but also out of other sources. The interpretation of the exhibition will of course always be enriched or obscured by the observers own mind set, but it can hardly be seen as an objective status of the presented. I have tried to find material with an origin of administrative nature or within personal communication or inside books that gives me an insight into the intentions of the makers of the two museums that will be compared in this study.

1.2. NORGES HJEMMEFRONTMUSEUM – VETERANS MAKING A MUSEUM

After having briefly discussed the features of a basic narrative, it is now time to examine how it was disseminated and further transmitted during the following years. I will show how it became remarkably steady. In order to do so, I will describe two agents of the memory of the war, which belong to the sphere of quasi-official, often state-sponsored public memory – the Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum (The museum of the Norwegian Resistance) and the Frigjøringsjubileer (the ceremonies to celebrate the liberation and the end of the war).

The Roots and the Founding Fathers

On Akerhus festning, the medieval fortress at the harbour in the heart of Oslo – a military compound for the Royal Guard – the visitor to Norway's capital can find a number of museums and memorials. One of them is Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, The Museum of the Norwegian Resistance. Located in an old warehouse it looks itself like an impregnable fortress. Yet it is one of the most important tourist attractions of the city. In 1966, a group of influential men founded the foundation 'Stiftelse Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum'. Those present represented not only the leadership of the Norwegian resistance in- and outside of wartime Norway, they were also at that time leading persons in postwar Norwegian public life. Some of them were judges or lawyers connected to the Supreme Court, others were businessmen, and some were still in the military. In a mission statement they defined the aims of the museum. The *formålsparagraf* stated that the museum's objective and aim was to "contribute to give a true and authentic picture of the years of occupation through the objects, pictures, print-material etc. that the museum collects, preserves and displays" and a little bit further down "to give today's youth and the generations to come a vivid impression of the tragedy that occupation and foreign rule is for a people, and thereby to contribute to the strengthening of the national unity and the defence of our national freedom."²²²

Already in the summer of 1945, the old *Hjemmefrontens Ledelse/ Hjemmestyrkenes Råd*, the leading figures in the resistance founded together with the state archives and Oslo University library, the *Hjemmefrontens Historieinstitutt* (the Resistance Movement's Historical Institute). Until its end in the autumn of 1948, it collected a huge quantity of further objects connected to the war history that were stored in the state archives. Parts of this fundament flowed into the

²²² Vedtekter for Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum vedtatt av konstituerende forsamling på Akershus 17. juni 1966 (Resolution on the founding of the Norwegian Resistance Museum at Akershus), cited in: Færoy, Frode, Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum i stiftelsens år. Oslo: Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum 1997, vedlegg 2, p. 106.

new museum but were shown before in the spontaneous exhibition, which was organised by the resistance movements in the summer of the liberation. This exhibition, called *Det illegale Norge* (Illegal Norway), was opened in October 1945.²²³ A similar exhibition was also arranged in Copenhagen by the Danish Resistance leadership Frihedsrådet. In Denmark it resulted, as will be described later, in a committee to build a proper museum. In Norway the same thoughts were voiced but nobody took the initiative.²²⁴ It took until the beginning of the 1960s, when some leading figures of the resistance movement revived the old idea. At around the same time the commander of Akershus fortress came up with the idea of installing a museum at the *Det dobbelte batteri – og bindingsverkhuset* the old bastion.²²⁵ Plans were under way to establish a restaurant there and he preferred a cultural institution. He contacted a friend, Arne Okkenhaug, whom he knew from the times when both were in the resistance. Okkenhaug then assembled some other veterans to initiate a museum on the war and the resistance movement around Christmas 1961.²²⁶



Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, 2003.

The central figure at the Hjemmefrontmuseum was Jens Christian Hauge, the former head of the Milorg – the military resistance. Hauge had had an astonishing career after the war, certainly due to his role in the liberation days. During the war, he had managed to establish himself as the de facto leader of the whole resistance movement within a year after he had started out as a district leader for the military branch. He became Minister of Defence and later Minister of

²²³ Færoy, Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, p. 12.

²²⁴ Færøy, Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, p. 12.

²²⁵ Borge, Ole, Høyesterettsadvokat Ole Borges redegjørelse. Pressekonferanse 25.mai 1983, NHM Arkiv, 195 Ddc – 0007, Orientering om NHM Tysk og norsk.

²²⁶ Letter from Mathiesen, C.F., Haugland, Finn; Bratsberg, Erik to Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum of January 10th 1966, NHM Arkiv 195 Ddc – 0007, 204.2 Hovedkomiteen.

Justice in the years up to 1955.²²⁷ He and several other veterans of the Hjemmefront suggested displaying the objects that had been collected for the earliest exhibition in a permanent show. So important men approached the Ministry of Defence to suggest the foundation of a new museum, and almost 15 years after the liberation it needed these influential voices. The Ministry approved of the plans but was very hesitant in spending money on them. In June 1962, a meeting was held in which decisions on the necessary steps for the establishment were made. The assembly was still a loose group of former resistance fighters (with Hauge and Tore Gjelsvik at the head), military and civil. The military resistance seemed to be represented stronger than the civil resistance. It seems that even then the idea of connecting the museum closely to the organisation of the museums of the Armed Forces already existed.²²⁸ The assembly voted for a committee of 16 members that should prepare the necessary steps. Not every veteran, however, embraced the idea of the museum immediately. When the plans became public, criticism was voiced. A very prominent member of the civil resistance spoke about the plans in an interview and stated that he favoured the establishment of a museum on the site of the former German prison camp Grini, where a lot of the Norwegian political prisoners had been incarcerated and where some had been shot. However, after Hauge had contacted him, he changed his mind and promised to support the Hjemmefrontmuseum.²²⁹

From the very beginning, leading figures of the hjemmefront were also involved in the actual work on the exhibition, and not only in administrative matters. Certainly the lack of money made it necessary for them to do most of the work themselves but the hjemmefront-men perceived the museum as 'their own museum' and therefore also voluntarily took an active part in the preparations. How much the museum was and is perceived as belonging to the veterans can be derived from the speech of Gunnar Sønsteby, one of the most important saboteurs and resistance fighters who at the 'Memorial for the Fallen Patriots' close to the museum's building on Akershus expressed his urge to pass on the war experiences to the younger generations and referred to "our museum close by" to be part of that transmission.²³⁰ By 1964 the committee that was meant to develop a script for the exhibition (dreiebokkomiteen) already met once a week.²³¹ The committee was assigned the task of finding people who could contribute with their expertise

²²⁷ Grimnes, Ole Christian, Hauge, Jens Christian, in: Dahl, Hans Fredrik et.al. (eds.), *Norsk krigslexikon 1940-45*, Oslo: Cappelen 1995, pp. 163-164. The full version is also available on the internet: <http://www.norgeslexi.com/krigslex/krigslex.html> .

²²⁸ Færøy, Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, p. 15.

²²⁹ The newspaper interview and correspondance about the topic can be found in NHM Arkiv, 195, Ddc 0001.204.1 Hovedkomiteen

²³⁰ Sønsteby, Gunnar, Tale ved retterstedet på Akershus 8.mai 1987 Gunnar Sønsteby, Supplied on request by NHM-Archives.

²³¹ Rapport fra møte i styret for Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum torsdag 13. februar 1964, NHM Arkiv, 195 Ddc - 0001, 204.1 Hovedkomiteen.

on the different subjects and then to develop propositions up to May 1965. The exhibition was also meant to be comprehensible for school-children of the age of 12.²³² People who had been at the centre of events were to be asked to write short essays on the topics that could serve as a basis for the exhibition. The plan was to open the museum on May 8th 1965 – the 20th anniversary of the liberation. But a report by museum's council on April 24th 1964 in the archives of Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum is very revealing. The document shows how much financial problems the museum had at that time, but the protocol also shows how much the veterans wanted to emphasize the range the actions taken against the Germans. Others were to put greater stress on the number of very well-prepared Norwegians of the hjemmestykker who were ready to fight during the liberation and consolidate this knowledge in the population. All wanted the contribution of the merchant fleet and their sailors and of women to be represented in the exhibition, and all agreed that the museum should incorporate all parts of the country and one member stressed that the museum had to reflect that the struggle for freedom was rooted in the general culture.²³³ Those are a lot of highbrow aims for a museum that had no secure finance and a very limited area for the exhibition.

The aims and wishes did not match with reality. Instead of 8 May 1965, 8 May 1970 was the day of the opening and even then, the exhibition was not entirely completed. A report of a second exhibition committee of 1973 shows that changes and supplements were even made nearly three years after the opening. The economical collaboration and German campaigns against the communist organisations were added later. Even after that, the committee stated that more had to be done but that the lack of money made it impossible to continue the work.²³⁴ I do not have any information that there actually ever has been any further revision of the exhibition or parts of it after that. A very exceptional source on the exhibition and the motives and men behind it, is a TV programme that was produced in 1971 and was called "*... - også vi når det blir krevet.*"²³⁵ In the 50-minute-long film all the veterans who were relevant for the NHM are interviewed in the exhibition. They talk about those parts of the war history on display that they had been involved in – Hauge and Haugland talk about the military resistance, Gjelsvik about the Hjemmefront and even the architect Torgersen explains parts of the exhibition. Besides its obvious importance for an understanding of the thinking behind the displays, the film also gives

²³² Oppdeling av arbeidet med 'Dreiboken', NHM Arkiv, 195 Ddc - 0001, 204.1 Hovedkomiteen.

²³³ Haugland, Knut M., Rapport fra Rådsmøte 24. april i Oslo Militære Samfund, copy, NHM, Arkiv, 195 Ddc - 0001, 204.1 Hovedkomiteen.

²³⁴ Gjelsvik, Tore, Holmboe, Håkon, Brunsvig, Paal, Hasselknipe, Oskar, Rapport fra utstillingskomiteen (UK II) ved Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, 27 February 1973, NHM 195 Ddc – 0001, 204.1 Styre- og rådsmøte 1973, 1974, 1975, 1076, folder 1973.

²³⁵ "*... - også vi når det blir krevet*", Ullstein, Ragnar, Thorseth, Lasse, NRK, 1971. Broadcasted on 17 May 1971.

an opportunity to see the exhibition at this early date. And as far as I could see, the changes made later seem to have been minimal.

The Exhibition

In the following section I will take the reader on a tour of the exhibition in order to give an impression of Hjemmefrontmuseet. It would be impossible to describe in-depth each and every one of the 48 different exhibits or *stations*, but some of them which relate to those problems described in the second larger part of the thesis will enjoy greater attention as will those parts that I deem important for the general feel that the exhibition creates.

The museum's building, the dobbelte batteriet – bindingsverket, is small. It has a ground floor with an entrance, a lobby and the first part of the exhibition, downstairs are the vaults with the second part of the exhibition and the administration and the library are in the attic. The space is limited and there are virtually no windows. The atmosphere is very dense and the building's structure encloses the visitor, a feeling that becomes even stronger once the visitor enters the dungeons.

There is no freedom of choice – thin bars, railings or chains barr the visitor from choosing another paths to the one designated by the exhibition. It is not apparent whether that is due to the need to guide the large numbers of visitors through the exhibition safely and comfortably or whether it is part of the narrative. This way the texts certainly give more meaning, make more sense and the sensation of a quasi-natural development evolves. This matches the other sensations evoked by the architecture. It is very dark and narrow and very likely that the architect of the exhibition Otto Torgersen used that fact in setting up the exhibition. Unlike the Frihedsmuseet, the exhibition architects could not influence the structure but it is liable to assume a conscious inclusion of the building's exterior and interior in the set-up plans. The first couple of meters are dedicated to an introduction into the situation of 1940 and a huge copy of a painting (a copy) of Edvard Munch showing a man sowing a field. A heading reads "We counted on peace – for all that" ("Vi bygde på fred – som i tross") which symbolises Norway's character as a peace-loving small country. The next room is dedicated to the events of 9 April 1940, the German attack and the following fights. The visitor is met with a sculpture of a big swastika made out of German guns pointing at the entrance. On one of the side arms there is the German ultimatum. The symbolism of this installation could hardly be more 'into the face' if it was not so hard to see. The swastika is just visible from one angle. The intention though was clearly to intimidate the visitor the same way as the Norwegians were intimidated those days.

Quisling's coup d'etat and the steadfast refusal of the king to abdicate are told on neighbouring showcases and introduce into the dichotomy of treason and resistance. The fights of the Norwegian army and the allied forces are told in models, with toy-soldiers depicting the battles. All places and scenes that had gained a mythological and important place in the master narrative are represented. The sinking of the German battle ship *Blücher*, the fights in Midtskogen, at the mountain fortress Hegra and the meeting of the Norwegian parliament in Elverum, where it authorised the government to rule without the Stortinget can be found here. The first ones are of importance for the prevailing understanding of the Norwegian war. Faced with a brutal and overwhelming army, Norwegian soldiers who at other places had surrendered in the face of that force – stories not told in the museum – were resisting courageously, inflicting defeat and loss to the German troops. The exhibition is split into the two stories of the fights in the southern part of the country and those in the far North where the Norwegian troops, with the temporary help of British, French and Free Polish troops re-conquered Narvik and, for a while, fought successfully at Bodø. The allied help, though it only lasted until the collapse of the allied front in France and ended with a complete withdrawal, is honoured with a column which is bearing a commemorative text and pennants of the allies.

The other central incident, the meeting at Elverum, is important for the prevailing interpretation on the legal basis of the Norwegian government in exile and the whole postwar transitional justice. Without the assumption that the members of parliament that were present at the meeting had authorized the government to rule in the name of the Norwegian parliament and pass binding decisions until the parliament would meet again, the legal basis of all contracts and bills made and passed in the next five years would falter. The Elverum mandate, as it was later called, has a prominent place in the exhibition. For the resistance and the government, the king's refusal to submit to the German demands at Elverum and the subsequent bombing of Elverum are focal points of the narrative that show the steadfastness of King and government. In the NHM they are displayed by the usual photo of King Håkon VII standing next to a tree and bomb-shells of bombs with which the Germans tried to kill the king and the government.

The initial phase of the occupation finishes with a description of the continuous efforts of the Norwegian merchant fleet and their contribution that is described via a world map depicting the places in which the fleet was operating with little Norwegian flags and the other Norwegian military units established in the free world. At home the situation seemed less clear and the confusion over who would or should rule grew. This confusion, which constitutes an often disputed episode of the war history, prevailed during the immediate phase after the German victory when a group of members of parliament together with the Storting's presidency under

pressure of German demands tried to persuade the king to abdicate to give way for a Riksråd (Council of State) that was meant to act on behalf of Norway with the Germans. The same politicians that earlier had invested the government with authority now tried to stage a *de facto* coup d'état. Until then the current affairs had been preliminarily handled by an Administasjonsråd (Administrative Council) appointed by the High Court, the only remaining lawful authority in occupied Norway. The Riksråd idea attracted wide parts of the Norwegian society that wished to cooperate within limits to keep the 'wheels turning'. The success of Hitler's campaign everywhere in Europe had given rise to a certain disillusion concerning a speedy defeat of Nazi Germany and an end to the occupation. The king's answer to the suggestion to abdicate was a blunt 'No' and new and harsher demands of the Germans under their new representative in Oslo, Terboven to include more NS followers into the Riksråd made the project come to a halt and eventually fail. The NHM concentrates in its description of this crucial, and for the minds and hearts of the Norwegians, important episode very strongly on the refusal of the king to abdicate and his determination to continue the struggle. The fickleness and the confusion of the politicians on Norwegian soil and the whole population is left out in favour of a story of heroism and steadfastness that is continued by displays of the first acts of resistance under growing German oppression, while the visitor approaches the end of the first part of the exhibition and reaches the staircases leading down to the vaults where he is told the beginning of the organised resistance movement and the illegal press. There was no time for complexity when the museum was built by the exquisite members of an elite that stood loyal to the king and the postwar governments.

But before coming downstairs, on the staircase, the visitor's gaze is met by pictures of the first three resistance men shot by the Germans. The pictures are replicated on metal poles symbolising the poles prisoners were tied to before execution by a firing squad. The central pole is slightly higher than the others, reminding us of the traditional image of Golgotha and the crucifixion – a notion that is enforced by the metal cross next to the poles. The notion of Golgotha, even if not intended by the creators of the museum suggests itself and is a powerful introduction to the chapters of the exhibition that the visitor is about to explore and which tell the story of suffering and sacrifice.



The memorial for the first three executed. (Courtesy NHM)

Downstairs a whole room is dedicated to the NS attempts to Nazify the country with the help of the German occupation forces and the Norwegian answer – the holdningskampen. This holdningskampen, the movement of civil disobedience which comprised various actions and campaigns against the German occupier but more importantly against his Norwegian minions was a truly successful and exemplary non-violent form of resistance. It involved from time to time large groups of the population and is today seen as the core of the Norwegian resistance. The NHM talks about the most important events and campaigns – the teacher's strike, the parents' protest, and the struggle for independence by the churches and the world of sports against the attempted Nazification. The story of the camps and the Gestapo actions is told here as well. The end of this room is turned into a prison cell where a dummy of a Norwegian prisoner is faced with one of a guard. The plate next to it reads: "In prisons and camps, starving and humiliated, thousands of Norwegians held their part of the front."²³⁶ The prison becomes an important battlefield and the prisoners become soldiers.²³⁷ Anne Eriksen described the front and battle motif as the central part of the narration of the war.²³⁸ The museum is no exception in this respect. How important this was for the hjemmefront men is clearly represented in a draft of the exhibition committee. The committee expressed its expectation that the tribute to the prisoners would be included in the exhibition at an early stage.²³⁹ A reason for this might also be that a lot

²³⁶ "I fengsler og fangeleirer, under sult og fornedrelse holdt tusener av nordmenn sin del av fronten"

²³⁷ The resistance is called home-front, the attitude against the NS as ice-front, the call for reconciliation silk-front and the armed forces outside of Norway and the government in London outside-front.

²³⁸ Eriksen, Vår kamp.

²³⁹ NHM-dreiboken, text draft, copy, NHM Arkiv, 195 Ddc 0008; 204.2 Inneholder korrespondanse, notater og dokumentasjonsmateriale, 1964-1978; Mappe Texter.

of the leading figures in the resistance and the postwar politics were once prisoners and plans for the reform of Norwegian society after the war were actually made up by prisoners behind bars. As in all other rooms, the exhibition works with strong images and symbols. There is real barbed wire in the room, a German helmet and a copy of the Norwegian basic law stabbed with a German side-arm.



Grunnloven stabbed, Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, 2004.

The weekday live under occupation – the experience of the overwhelming majority is told in a relatively small showcase the end of that room. This part of the exhibition, even though it represents an important experience that affected all Norwegians, is tiny and was not finished until 1971.²⁴⁰ The meagre size of this showcase becomes even more striking if one thinks about the whole wall upstairs that is dedicated to the two months of active combat after the attack and the fact that a much bigger part of the next room is dedicated to different acts of sabotage and resistance as well as the SOE missions. It becomes clear that the Hjemmefrontmuseum despite its mission statement is a museum whose objective is not and never was to show the history of Norway during the Second World War but to show the Norwegian resistance. Or it shows how much the war has always been identified with just the resistance. Nowhere in the exhibition does this become clearer than in this confrontation. One might claim that this part of the exhibition is one of the most important, since here the building up of the military strife against the occupation is described. After a sharp turn at the end of the corridor the visitor faces another one that leads

²⁴⁰ Modalsli, Jakob, Protokoll fra Rådsmøte 14 mai 1974, NHM Arkiv, 195 Ddc - 0001, 204.1 Styre- og rådsmøte 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, folder 1974.

back to the staircase. Here the resistance already becomes a developed and organized body and its wits and successes in spying on the German forces for the allies are described. The communist resistance and some of its actions are also placed here, though in a rather critical perspective, as being counter-productive to the whole organisation.

Going upstairs the visitor is told about the transformation of the Milorg from different small groups into the clandestine army, the *hjemmestyrkene*. The upward movement is thereby accompanied with the success story of Norwegian armed resistance. It is likely that that is not incidentally but made with the purpose of appealing to the subconscious. Here the visitor is back to a fully trained 'army' fighting a military fight as in the very beginning, though clandestinely now. He is coming upward and the light changes as well. The arms supply of the SOE and important sabotage acts are explained. Here, back up on the ground floor, the last year of the occupation and the liberation are the main theme. A stylised tree with several branches symbolises the unity of home-front and outside-front and of the Norwegian people. The very last part is dedicated to the allied help and the return of the king and the meeting of parliament. The last part of the exhibition is of special interest. It looks almost like there was not enough time to finish it properly.²⁴¹ The message of the last meters of the exhibition is somehow two-edged. After the visitor has met a 'tree' made out of concrete standing in a circle of polished metal that symbolizes the united branches of the Norwegian forces and the unification of the outer and inner front, he is guided through a corridor towards the exit in which the efforts of the *hjemmestyrkene* and the government to prevent the destruction of Norwegian property by the German scorched earth policy, the efforts to help the allies with strategic sabotage, the story of the liberation of Finmark and the last attempts of the NS and the Germans to hold the 'Fortress Norway' are told. At the end of that corridor the flags of the allies are displayed. They are among the few coloured images in the monotonously grey exhibition displayed on steel-plates. Next to the flags an aphorism is a display that was made up by none less than Jens Christian Hauge himself, the most important man in Norway in those days and the most important man in the setting up of the exhibition. The text reads: "In the skies above London - In the African desert - In the ruins of Stalingrad - And on the Normandy beaches - Norway was given back to us"

This part of the exhibition is certainly meant to signify the acknowledgement that it was not the Norwegian forces' or resistance' earnings that liberated Norway alone but the allied war effort. However, the visitor's gaze falls between the aphorism and the flags onto the last picture of the

²⁴¹ This notion was supported by the curator Arnfinn Moland in an interview on 10 August 2006 in the very exhibition.

exhibition: The later coloured picture of the Hjemmestyrkene marching into Akershus fortress. Stepping in front of that picture now the visitor is surrounded by the photos depicting the return of the Crown Prince and king and the victory-parade in Oslo.



The 'last' picture of the exhibition – Hjemmestyrkene take over Akershus festning, the later NHM is visible in the top right-hand corner

The visitors are guided through the whole exhibition. There is just one way, one sequence of events. Short-cuts are impossible due to barriers, displays and chains blocking the way (although today, probably due to fire safety regulations the chains are partly removed) and one has to pass every single showcase to get to the exit. There is a message for the visitor, a message that shows a development, almost inevitable and natural. The visitor is told that a small country needs a strong defence and strong allies to defend itself and that the Norwegian resistance was the direct continuation of the initial fights on the battlefields of April 1940.²⁴² The strengthening of the 'forsvarstanken' – the willingness to defend the country – is what the central message of the museum is.²⁴³

However, the message did not seem to have been complete in 1970. The minutes of several meetings of the board point towards a second planning committee for the exhibition. This *Udstillingskomiteen II* (UK II) drew up a report on further work on the exhibition in 1973. From this report the changes and amendments made after the opening become apparent. At least the part about Norwegian profiteers and economic collaboration and Gestapo actions against the

²⁴² Eriksen, *Det var noe annet*, p. 113.

²⁴³ This is also reflected by the fact that the museum was taken over completely by the ministry of the defence and incorporated into the organisation of the armed forces museums. The museum's director has a military rank. That was done in order to make sure that the *forsvarstanke* is always the main aim. Nafstad, Ida. Personal Communication with styrets medlemmer and Det kongelige Forsvarsdepartement Caspar Stephansen, 23 December 1976, copy, NHM Arkiv, 195 Ddc - 0001, 204.1 Styre- og rådsmøte 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, folder 1976.

communist resistance were supplemented later.²⁴⁴ The part about the daily life of Norwegians during the war was not finished before 1974. It seems that financial restraints and a lack of manpower were the decisive problems behind these delays.²⁴⁵ Of course those things are connected to prioritizations as well. Certain topics clearly enjoyed a higher priority or had because of the men represented on the board and the planning committees been treated earlier and more in-depth simply because the members were experts in it – sabotage and the military aspects of the resistance.

The Memorial Next to a Memorial

A lot of museums around the world have a double function as museums and memorials. The Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. is probably the most well-known. But also today new museums are built which have to serve both functions. Prominent among them are the Jewish Museum in Berlin by Daniel Libeskind with its Holocaust Tower and the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa with Memorial Hall which contains the headstone of the Unknown Soldier from the First World War, which is directly illuminated by the sun each Remembrance Day, 11 November, at 11 a.m.²⁴⁶ But it can also be less obvious than that. The memorial character of a museum can also be expressed through location and space and, of course, the text. Norges Hjemmefrontmuseet is not only a museum but also a memorial. This is clearly visible in the set-up of the exhibition and in its statutes. The entrance to the exhibition is to the right-hand side of a sculpture that displays leaves and barbed wire and cannot in its symbolism, be classified either as a monument of victory or martyrhood though it clearly bears all the signs of monumental architecture.

²⁴⁴ Gjelsvik, Tore, Håkon Holmboe, Paal Brunsvig, and Oskar Hasselknipe, Utstillingskomiteen (UK II), Rapport Fra Utstillingskomiteen (UK II) Ved Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, 1973, NHM Arkiv, 195 Ddc - 0001. 204.1 Styre- og rådsmøte 1973, 1974, 1975, 1076, folder 1973

²⁴⁵ Modalsli, Jakob, Forman i Rådet, Protokoll Fra Rådsmøte 14 Mai 1974, NHM Arkiv, 195 Ddc - 0001, 204.1 Styre- og rådsmøte 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, folder 1974, p. 2.

²⁴⁶ Jüdisches Museum Berlin, Architektur, Der Holocaust Turm, <http://www.juedisches-museum-berlin.de/site/DE/05-Rund-ums-Haus/03-Libeskind-Bau/07-Holocaust-Turm/holocaust-turm.php>; Canadian War Museum, Exhibitions and Galleries, Memorial Hall, http://www.warmuseum.ca/cwm/memorialhall_e.html.



The monument in the entrance hall of NHM, 2005.

The further symbolism of the exhibition underlines the character of a memorial. The display over the first three murdered resistance fighters especially fits into the category of memorial art within the exhibition. The part that tells their story is shaped like a monument. The crucifix and the standing steel-plates evoke associations of tombstones.

The last chapter of the exhibition is not by its architecture part of that scheme but the arrangement of photographic icons and text creates a commemorative atmosphere. The already quoted text expressing the gratitude to the allies combined with flags and followed by the pictures of the handing over of Akershus festning, the very same place the visitor is standing in, and the return of the king is suitable to create a feeling of a memorial. The pictures of the return of the king and the resistance coming out of hiding and taking over posts are lit indirectly and headed with another text that comes close to inscriptions normally found on memorials: "Five years of foreign rule and occupation are over. Never again." The "never again" is a typical call of monuments on the war.

But what can be found inside is further complemented outside. At the bottom of the rampart of the fortress in which the building is integrated, a monument can be found – the *Monument over the Fallen Norwegian Patriots*. This is the place where, as will be described later, the central commemorative rituals were performed on the anniversaries of the liberation. The Norwegians refer to it either as *Monument over falne patrioter* or *retterstedet* (the place of execution for Norwegian resistance fighters during the occupation). Every year the veterans gather together and lay wreaths at the memorial. The effects of both institutions reinforce each other and they fuse to an ensemble of greater emotional power. The *retterstedet* existed before the museum and even though the sources do not indicate that the choice of the location was influenced by

anything else than the fact that the building was free, the coincidence certainly helps both spaces with the reciprocal effects. As we will see later on, the intentionality of effects is sometimes secondary - the effects occur anyway.

A Centre of Research and Competence

From the very beginning the explicit aim to also make Norges Hjemmefrontmuseet a centre of research and competence existed. A first step in that direction was taken, when Magne Skodvin from the Department of History of Oslo University (Historisk institutt, HI) was elected to the board (styre) in 1966. Hauge had already earlier asked him to assist the script committee professionally.²⁴⁷ The aim was to gain or to set funds aside that could be used to employ professional historians and to give grants to younger researchers. Together Hauge and Skodvin made the NHM already long before before the opening of the exhibition a centre of research and a research resource. In order to bring the museum and its structure in contact with the academic environment the leading members of the board (Hauge, Skjønberg, Haugland and Gjelsvik –all of them leading members of the resistance) joined a seminar arranged by the Historisk institutt where they met researchers and scholars working on war history. Most of them later formed a working group that would acquire quite some influence in the Norwegian research on the war – the *Samtidshistorisk forskningsgruppe* (Research Group on Contemporary History).²⁴⁸ The second step included the creation of the position of a head of research, which in 1966/67 Olav Riste was appointed. Riste, with a PhD from Oxford, had at that time been employed by the Armed Forces History of War Department (Forsvarets krigshistoriske avdeling). Now his main assignment was to develop a research and collection plan that was to mastermind the structure of the two tasks: to collect and organise the collections and to organise the resources for research. With Berit Nøkleby (in charge of the war archives) and Ole Kristian Grimnes, he also got two collaborators that in the future were to become big names in Norwegian historical research. Together these scholars started an intensive work at the NHM. They were gradually complemented by several other scholars that were given grants by the museum. Riste was also strongly in favour of publishing the results of the research at the NHM to spread them to the public, which in his opinion was also calling for a more readable form and tone. The collection plan, developed by Riste and Skodvin, even though it brought structure to this major task,

²⁴⁷ Færøy, Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, p. 34.

²⁴⁸ Færøy, Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, p. 36. The Samtidshistorisk forskningsgruppe published several important works – mostly theses – and anthologies on the history of the occupation. The series Norge og Den Annen Verdenskrig – Studier I norsk samtidshistorie was quite extensive, I would like to mention here: Grimnes, Ole Kristian, Hjemmefrontens ledelse, Oslo et.al.: Universitetsforlaget 1977 and Kluge, Rolf, Hjemmefrontledelsen tar form - Kretsen dannes sommeren 1941, Oslo et.al.: Universitetsforlaget 1970.

contained a bias that was to be felt later on and in the exhibition. Due to certain assumptions on the nature and complexity of the military resistance the plan focussed especially on the rural areas and on the military forms of resistance.²⁴⁹ Øystein Sørensen claims that the two men's methodological approaches and their own restricted interest in resistance, in a very narrow sense, also influenced considerably the following research and the choice of topics of the scholars.²⁵⁰

The costs of the eventual set-up and the opening of the exhibition together with a changed sentiment on that issue among the board slowed this work down noticeably in the 1970s, but after more revenues came in through the sale of a memorial coin a new research plan was made. This time, the experienced 'triumvirate' Skodvin, Riste and Grimnes drew the plan up and in the following years intense efforts were made to collect more material from all around the country. The so-called Operation Hoover comprised a number of new paid positions and collected a huge amount of material, though eventually it was again biased toward the military resistance.²⁵¹ During this time employees or affiliated scholars also published extensively – both popular and scientific books on the resistance and the war.²⁵² Several other projects were financed and initiated thereafter by the NHM, among them the project on the history of the police under the occupation and the role of women. The head of research during this time was Generalløytnat Rolf Eriksen, himself a leading member of the Milorg and a later member of the Armed Forces Supreme Command.²⁵³

As can be seen from this brief outline on the research activity of the Hjemmefrontmuseum, the efforts to make this comparatively small museum, funded by a handful of veterans a real centre of research were considerable. The lack of resources was as everywhere a problem but the aim was always to produce and to publish research. It also became clear that this activity had been the quasi-monopoly of a fairly restricted group of scholars from the University of Oslo and the Armed Forces. How much power people like Grimnes had can be seen from an example concerning the access to archival material. In 1971 Hauge replied to a query of Ole Borge, a member of the museum's board, in a letter explaining the mechanisms of how students or scholars gain access. He explained that Grimnes as head of the Samtidshistorisk forskningsgruppe would not only place the students who had chosen a master's thesis in

²⁴⁹ Færøy, Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, p. 37.

²⁵⁰ Sørensen, Øystein, *Forskningen om krigen i Norge. Tradisjonelle og nye perspektiver*, in: *Nytt Norsk Tidsskrift*, vol. 6, no. 1, 1998, pp. 40-58, p. 45

²⁵¹ Færøy, Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, p. 37.

²⁵² Among these books: Gjelsvik, Tore, *Hjemmefronten. Den sivile motstanden under okkupasjonen 1940-1945*, Oslo: J.W. Cappelens 1977; Moland, Arnfinn and Kraglund, Ivar, *Hjemmefront*, Oslo: Aschehoug 1987 and Nøkleby, Berit, *Holdningskamp*, Oslo: Aschehoug 1986 both volumes 6 and 4 of Skodvin, Magne (ed.), *Norge i krig. fremmedåk og frihetskamp*.

occupation history in the different archives of the NHM, he would also have the authority to select from the Oslo students (researchers from other cities were to be chosen by Skodvin and others). From this it can be understood how Grimnes became the sole supervisor for topics connected with the war and the occupation at Norway's largest university.

Of course the access to the material of the NHM was not to be given totally freely as was and is the case with all archives worldwide. Researchers getting extensive access would have a security check run on them and foreign scholars were met with particular suspicion. It seems that they should not get more than just answers to specific questions, whereas students of the Armed Forces High school would be accepted on a wider basis.²⁵⁴ Especially – and naturally, given the origin of the material – the sources concerning the liquidations of collaborators and informers by the resistance were of a specially delicate nature. Documents that were made available to researchers with information on liquidations were first to be checked by the military for names first. If they contained names, these would consequently be defaced.²⁵⁵

It could be said that Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum acquired a unique position within the Norwegian academic landscape with regard to the history of the occupation. By acquiring the most archival material on the war the museum has become the main resource for research at a national level but also for questions concerning the history of the resistance at a local level. Several institutions like the National Pension Fond (Rikstrygdeverket) use the museums assistance and individuals contact the archive with inquiries about their relatives. Recently the inquiries do not solely concentrate on resistance but include all kinds of aspects connected to the history of the years from 1940 to 1945.²⁵⁶ The advantages of such a concentration are the same as with the bigger national archives: a broad collection allows faster access to different kinds of materials related to one's research – but it also continues the same problems imminent to the system: a monopolization of resources in one single institution.

Certainly the Norwegian academic landscape is relatively small when compared to other European countries, but just a quick glance at bibliographies on the history of the war and the occupation shows that a major part of the scholars working and publishing on those topics have for two decades been affiliated to the Hjemmefrontmuseum in one way or another. The NHM became "an institutional centre of gravity" for this kind of research.²⁵⁷ Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, though relatively small, when compared to similar museums around the

²⁵³ Færøy, Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, p. 72.

²⁵⁴ Haugland, Knut M. Personal Communication with Borge, Ole, 2 December 1971, NHM Arkiv, 195 Ddc - 0001. 204.1 Styre- og rådsmøte 1971, folder Styremøte.

²⁵⁵ Borge, Ole. Personal Communication with Haugland, Knut M., 29 November 1971, NHM Arkiv, 195 Ddc - 0001. 204.1 Styre og rådsmøte 1971, folder Styremøte

²⁵⁶ Færøy, Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, p. 79-80.

world, occupies a solid position in the landscape of memory on the war in Norway. In the 25 years leading up to 1995 it was visited by 2.5 million visitors. It is one of the main tourist attractions in Oslo and it is always included in the programme for visits by foreign dignitaries. The German president Friedrich von Weizsäcker visited it and so did others. A large group of visitors are schoolchildren. They make up 33% of the visitors.²⁵⁸ The Hjemmefrontmuseum cooperates with schools and the Ministry of Education and it supports the publication and distribution of school material. Pupils get questionnaires with which they can go through the exhibition and concentrate on special issues.²⁵⁹

The research sponsored and promoted via the museum and the monopoly on the archival sources around the occupation especially give it an important position. From 1971 until 1978 it took over the archive over the landssvikssakene – the files of the trials on treason – a historical source of great importance for the interpretation of collaboration.²⁶⁰ Some of the leading historians on the war history got grants from the museum or were paid for their research. Magne Skodvin, the doyen in that field of studies was member and vice-head of the board of governors.²⁶¹ The museum wanted to become a centre for studies and resources on the occupation. It achieved that role – a role that meant a lot of responsibility. Its peculiar nature and history as a museum that was founded by the very 'object' of its presentation – the resistance itself – certainly shows. The building itself as well as the exhibition that was created in the 1960s and 1970s, give great emphasis to the educational task of the museum, a museum that appeals to emotions through various forms of symbolism in the exhibition. In a classification on war museums, developed by Esben Kjeldbæk, the NHM represents a second generation museum, a museum that is erected too late to solely serve as the reminder of and the monument of the generation of contemporaries but has already incorporated new methods of presentation and education aimed at the younger generation.²⁶² The fact that the exhibition was nevertheless made by representatives of the war generation and on the basis of an exhibition shown right after the war gives it nonetheless the character of a first generation museum. The strong affiliation of the Hjemmefrontmuseum with the Armed Forces through personal and administrative ties from the very beginning, be it through the roof organisation of the Armed Forces Museums or the fact that the employees were, and often still are, recruited from the military and held military ranks, sets a narrow scope

²⁵⁷ Sørensen, *Forskningen*, p. 45.

²⁵⁸ Færøy, *Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum*, p. 95.

²⁵⁹ Færøy, *Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum*, p. 86.

²⁶⁰ Færøy, *Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum*, p. 58.

²⁶¹ Årsberetning for 1972 for Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, NHM Arkiv, 195 Ddc - 0001, 204.1 Styre- og rådsmøte 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, folder 1973.

²⁶² Kjeldbæk, Esben, *Post-Modernism and the Three Generations of Museums*, in: *Nordisk Museologi*, 2000, vol. 1-2, pp. 119-126.

for the educational tasks of the exhibition and the research work. This affiliation might seem puzzling from the outside but can be explained through the museum's founding history and the founding father's own connection to the Armed Forces and their deliberate wish to use the museum as a means to secure or to enhance the Norwegian population's resolution to defend the country. The day-to-day-business was mostly secured by the strong administrative affiliation with the Armed Forces Museum and as can be seen from the archival material, the board always saw this as a cornerstone of the preservation of the museum's work. With the incorporation into the organisation of the Armed Forces Museum this goal was finally achieved in 1995.²⁶³ Such a strong affiliation with a governmental department structurally might include the methodological risk of a concentration on certain aspects of the war history. A teleological structure of providing arguments for the superstructure – a self-fulfilling prophecy. As could be seen, Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum was at times prone to such a development.

Museums are living organisms, they change over time and may after periods of indifference to their exhibitions re-gain popularity or become obsolete. In dictatorial regimes their lifespan is directly linked to the lifespan of the regime or to the time the regime regards them as useful tools of communication or influencing control. In democratic societies they are either the outcome of a political process in the field of cultural policy, which in turn is the outcome of a political struggle over party programmes and elections, or in some cases the expression of an influential opposition or minority group challenging the elected party or majority group and its narrative. Parties and groups that are democratically legitimized may of course use museums as deliberate attempts to perpetuate their rule by establishing or strengthening their version of history. As expressions and products of discourse, museums as, mentioned above, might lose their authority with changing political paradigms. The NHM has not become obsolete and nor has it been considerably changed since its opening in 1970. Neither has its message. Of course, at first glance this just means that the message of a struggle against brutal oppression and for freedom is still valid in Norway today. That this message is still expressed in the very same words and with the very same symbols as in 1970 is amazing. An analysis of the anniversaries of the liberation will hopefully give the possibility of crosschecking these findings.

As could be seen on the previous pages, a certain set of names turns up – men that were influential in the creation and keeping of the museum and the memory of the war as a whole. A great deal of these names will turn up again on the following pages when I turn to the

²⁶³ Færøy, Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, p. 90. The day of the transfer was 8 May 1995 on the 50th anniversary of the liberation.

description and analysis of another memory agent – anniversaries. At the end of this chapter on the Norwegian basic narrative, some of the names will then get special attention. On the other hand, the memory of these men is still kept alive through the museum by the stories told or also by the books and materials sold in the NHM shop. The memoirs of Gunnar Sønsteby and Jens Christian Hauge, for example, are sold beside Hauge's booklets and are in a prominent position in the museum shop.

1.3. RITUALS – THE FRIGJØRINGSJUBILEER

The transmission of traditions to the younger generations is like a consecrative act by which the candidates become full members of a (national) society. The rituals are accompanied by education on the nature of the traditions and the values the society deems important to preserve. Through the rituals – and commemorative acts always involve rituals – the values a society holds become visible.²⁶⁴ An analysis of the commemorations can therefore serve as an observation point of the position the war holds in the Norwegian memory landscape and the connotations and values attached to this specific memory. The physical focal point of a commemorative event is very often a memorial, sometimes unveiled on the very day of commemoration. Since these memorials will be used later in the commemorative events, the celebrations in turn create new traditions.²⁶⁵ These memorials are often connected to places of sacrifice and martyrdom; they are sometimes tombstones or remind us of tombstones via the inscription that refers directly to the dead. Since there is nothing stronger than the mystical presence of the victims or martyrs of a national cause, the rituals connected to these places are themselves immune to relativation and change. "One does not criticise those who gave their lives. As long as the victims are at the centre of the celebrations, the rituals are tied to the finite, the ultimate."²⁶⁶ And therefore they are hard to change. The concentration of rituals and monuments on those who gave their life is therefore a strong conserving element that is also supported by the rituals performed and the speeches held. As will be become visible in the following, the speeches held very often warned against forgetting or relativisation and defended the notion that there is a true narrative that needs to be conserved, because that is what the dead are admonished of. The following description of the commemorations in Norway and later in Denmark bears obvious traces of these mechanisms of conversation. Commemorations are usually set on certain recurring days – in fact the very nature of a ritual lies in that recurrence as well as in the fact that it is set apart or above the mundane by its limitation to special days. Such days are by definition *lieux de mémoire* of the society that celebrates them and expresses its image of what is transient and what is considered eternal.

Days of remembrance belong to the set of symbols through which a state portrays itself publicly.²⁶⁷ Anniversaries seem to have a special meaning wherever we look. They are essential

²⁶⁴ Eriksen, Det var noe annet, p. 120.

²⁶⁵ Eriksen, Det var noe annet, p. 120-121.

²⁶⁶ Eriksen, Det var noe annet, p. 125.

²⁶⁷ Kölsch, Julia, Politik und Gedächtnis. Zur Soziologie funktionaler Kultivierung von Erinnerung, Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag 2000, p. 211.

to the strengthening of group identities and they are a "central component of the collective memory."²⁶⁸ Through the connected rituals the celebrations become creating agents of tradition themselves. Very often new memorials are unveiled at those occasions.²⁶⁹ Narratives of origin that are linked to the dates and the ritualised celebrations link the past to the present and at the same time uncouple that very day as a holy day/holiday from the weekday.²⁷⁰ Anniversaries are according to Paul Connerton even means to control the collective memory.²⁷¹ Anniversaries that fall on the 10th, the 25th or the 50th etc. jubilee of the commemorated event especially seem to attract a lot of efforts and discussion around the celebrations. The same is certainly true when the event that is celebrated is of such eminent importance in the recent history of a country, like the liberation after five years of occupation. In Norway and his southern neighbour Denmark, the celebrations around the liberation days (Frigjøringsjubileer in Norwegian and Befrielsesjubilær in Danish) are part of the annual calendar of national events. In Norway, it is in Norway not a public holiday, what might also be explained by the temporal proximity to the 17th of May, Norway's national holiday and the international Labour Day on the 1st of May. The 17th of May is a reminder of the end of the union with Denmark and was already introduced as a holiday in 1820 and is the central day for festivities as well as for commemorative acts in Norwegian culture. On this day the monuments or graves of important Norwegians are decorated, and speeches are made.²⁷² But the day of the liberation from German occupation has of course also been celebrated with more or less intensity throughout the postwar period. It has retained a very stable character and proved relatively immune against changes. An explanation for this might be the fact, that central events are tied to commemoration ceremonies over the fallen or the victims or even held at the respective memorials. The connection to the dead and those 'who gave their lives' is a protection against putting the event into perspective since one cannot ignore the dead. The ceremonies have a religious character.²⁷³ Days of remembrance are in fact not limited to the very day and very commemorative event, even though the rituals and arrangements of these days, often lasting not longer than 30 minutes, are at the core of the set-up. The actual events are 'prepared' and 'introduced' by series of special reports and

²⁶⁸ Binder, Beate, Jahrestag, in: Pethes, Nicolas/ Ruchatz, Jens (ed.), *Gedächtnis und Erinnerung. Ein interdisziplinäres Lexikon*, Reinbeck bei Hamburg: Rowohlt 2001, pp. 290-291, p. 290.

²⁶⁹ Eriksen, *Det var noe annet*, p. 121.

²⁷⁰ Binder, *Jahrestag*, p. 290.

²⁷¹ Connerton, Paul, *How societies remember*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1989.

²⁷² Kverndokk, Kyrre, 'De kjempet de falt de gav oss alt' – om den rituelle bruken av norske krigsminnesmerker, Hovedoppgave i folkloristik, Universitetet i Oslo 2000, p. 48. It is a degree thesis of the University of Oslo at the Institute for Cultural Sciences. The title refers to the epigraph on the monument for the fallen Norwegian patriots (retterstedet på Akershus). I used the internet version since it is easier to access. The pages vary from the printed version because there are no photos in it.
<http://www.hf.uio/iks/ariadne/Folkloristikk/hovedoppgaver/kverndokk/Hovedoppgava.pdf>.

²⁷³ Eriksen, *Det var noe annet*, p.25.

documentaries and the media tends to go over them in the days after the event, often discussing whether the celebrations have been successful or dignified. They are also often accompanied by special editions of books and memoirs of 'those who witnessed' and the re-runs of TV programmes or movies. At times Museums and libraries stage special exhibitions or offer lectures and other supplementary information. All these additional features of history culture and fringe events add to the reception and the effectiveness of the commemorations – they are in fact part of the commemorations themselves. Therefore they cannot be separated from it.

In this chapter I will try to discuss the character of the celebrations and the commemorative rites conducted on this day in Norway and show how they are used to perpetuate the basic narrative of the Norwegian resistance. The celebrations in Norway are conducted in every city or single village and even within the professional associations etc. Due to the limited possibilities of the thesis, I will restrict myself to the capital Oslo. The examination will focus on the official celebrations and ceremonies conducted by the Parliament, the King and the Government and on the other arrangements in the city, such as wreath-laying and two-minutes-silence. A systematic description of every single year is of course impossible – I will mainly focus on a hopefully representative sample of anniversaries. A later chapter will discuss the celebrations in Copenhagen in the same way.

The Early Celebrations

Straight after the war, 17 May 1945 became a big festival of joy all over the country. After the occupation, during which the display of the Norwegian flag was forbidden for the average Norwegian, because it was seen as a sign of civil resistance to the Germans and the new-order of the NS, people everywhere made the country a dream of blue, white and red. With a Royal Resolution on 12 October 1945, the moment of the frigjøring was defined as the 9 May at 00:00 a.m. making the 9th the first peace day and the 8th the day of the surrender parallel to the 'Victory-day' in the rest of Europe.

It was a warm, never-ending summer that allowed for festivities and out-door parties and parades. And there were more than enough chances to celebrate, the return of the Crown Prince as head and representative of the Norwegian armed forces, the return of the King and the royal family and then, on June the 9th 1945, the parade of the Norwegian forces, the Hjemmestyrkene and the army and the detachments of the police trained in Sweden. 15,000 men (and a very small number of women) came to Oslo and paraded on Karl-Johans-gate to the palace where they were greeted by King Håkon VII.

The following year there seemed to have been just a few official arrangements but the population of Oslo spontaneously turned the day into a festival. The people started celebrating on the evening of the 7th. The next day a two minutes silence was observed.²⁷⁴ It seems that the sentiment was expressed to perpetuate the celebrations which typically often had the character of the 17th of May celebrations – processions with flags for the children. The Norwegian parliament had held a to minutes silence in 1946 to "remember all who have sacrificed their lives for the fatherland"²⁷⁵ – on the 9th of April, the day of the German attack; neither on the meeting on the 7th nor on the 9th of May (there was no meeting on the 8th) can reference to the war or the liberation be found in the protocol. In the following year there was no meeting neither on the 9th of April nor on the 7th or 8th of May and no reference to the holidays was made on the next regular meeting on 10th of May. In 1948, the picture of the parliament is again different. The German attack was not an issue even though there was a session – but on the 8th of May, the first item on the agenda was a short speech by the president of the Stortinget. The protocol shows that the members of parliament stood up to listen to the speech that remembered the "thousands of fellow citizen who sacrificed their lives on land or at sea, in prison or in concentration camps, so that our people could again experience peace and freedom"²⁷⁶

The first more extensive celebrations were found in 1955 on the 10th anniversary, and since then every five years the celebrations have been bigger. Central have always been the two minutes of silence.²⁷⁷ In 1955 we can also observe for the first time by means of archival material, a feature that will re-occur in all later celebrations. I was not able to find a lot of material, but fragments and letters concerning the celebrations are kept in the archive of Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum. It becomes obvious that the veterans of the resistance were asked to assist the government in the preparation for the celebrations and that this request was met with pleasure and satisfaction.²⁷⁸

Wreath-laying was performed at the *Monument for the Fallen Norwegian Patriots* that was erected in 1949 at the retterstedet. The veterans have gathered on a yearly basis to lay wreaths ever since the erection of the monument. A new moment in 1955 though was an official reception on the evening of the seventh. The event was called Milorg-fest and was a ceremonious dinner in the presence of members of the government of the times of the liberation, the then supreme commander of the Norwegian Armed Forces and the police-corps in Sweden, the allied supreme commander Andrew Thorne and the colonel that lead the Norwegian division

²⁷⁴ Kverndokk, 'De kjempet', p. 3-4.

²⁷⁵ "minnes alle som har ofret sitt liv for fedrelandet", Stortingsforhandlinger (Storting's proceedings word protocol) April, 9th 1946.

²⁷⁶ Stortingsforhandlinger 8 May 1948.

²⁷⁷ Kverndokk, 'De kjempet', p. 39.

of the SOE John S. Wilson. Jens Christian Hauge, as former head of the Milorg spoke. In his speech, that had numerous humorous comments, Hauge referred to the largely peaceful liberation of Norway as a "miracle" and acknowledged that it was given to the Norwegians as a "gift", although they had worked hard to be prepared to receive it. He mentioned that after a time of praise, criticism was also poured out over the resistance and asked the veterans to endure the latter with the same calm as the first.²⁷⁹ Representatives of the Soviet Union were not invited.

On the eighth, the day of solemn ceremonies, veterans celebrated the liberation with a repetition of the victory parade of June 1945 and around 1,500 of them marched towards the castle, again in their 'battle-dress', the knickerbockers and pullovers. Parliament commemorated the event at noon with a special reception and ceremony in the chamber. Two minutes of silence and a speech of the Stortingspresident were at the centre of that ceremony. He reflected on the last ten years that had passed and that had seen a time of renewal and recovery. Surely, he said, agreement was not everywhere and on every matter but as far as foreign- and security policy is concerned the people were united because of the high price of the past experiences. The king, who was present, was hailed for his steadfast position during the war.²⁸⁰ A joint press release of the presidency of the parliament and the government states that the administration assumed that most organisations wished to celebrate in their own circles and that therefore the public events were limited to a few and would be rather modest. However, they stressed that a reminder of the duties that the war experience had laid on every Norwegian should find due attention. Therefore, just before May, a proposition was made in parliament to raise the invalidity pension.²⁸¹ As we will see later, this did not remain the only 'gift' on the occasion of an anniversary. The press release also stated that the schools would all celebrate on the seventh because the eighth was a Sunday. All public institutions were ordered to fly the national flag on both Saturday and Sunday.

1965 – A Big Celebration

Also in 1965 a committee was appointed by the government to prepare for the celebrations at the state level. This time the committee had to plan two different anniversaries of a differing nature – the 20th anniversary of the liberation and the 25th anniversary of the German attack and

²⁷⁸ Berg, Paal. Personal Communication with Regeringens Utvalg for feiringen av 10-årsdagen av frigjøringen, 26 March 1955, NHM Arkiv, 195 Dda 0011 Høytider.

²⁷⁹ Hauge, Jens Christian, *Milorgfesten 7. mai 1955*, in: Hauge, Jens Christian, *Manuskripter*, Oslo: Tiden 1988, p. 29-33.

²⁸⁰ Protocol of session on the 7 May 1955, Stortinget. *Stortingsforhandlinger: Stortingstidende 1955*.

²⁸¹ Pressemelding, 15 April 1955, NHM Arkiv, 195 Dda 0011 Høytider

the Norwegian military defeat. The veterans at Norges Hjemmefrontmuseet felt under-represented and managed to get two veterans into the committee, to "take care of our view on such a celebration."²⁸² The committee called '9. april/8. mai-utvalget' was affiliated to the Statsministerens kontor, the office of the prime minister and headed by minister of state Olaf Solumsmoen.²⁸³ That year the celebrations were to be really big. On the one hand they followed well-established lines, especially as I will show with regard to the ceremonial parts, but on the other hand now a lot of public celebrations took place with an active participation of the population. The programme for the festivities earmarked a special show in the National Theatre for invited guests on the 7th, two minutes silence at 12 o'clock on the 8th and a parade of veterans through the city centre to the sports and festival ground in Bislet where military parades and a show was performed and both the king and the prime minister spoke. The municipality of Oslo arranged for another celebration in the evening on the square in front of the town hall. The 8th was again declared a day to fly the flag (flagdag).²⁸⁴ The municipalities across the country were to organise gatherings and speeches as well and the schools were called upon to arrange special celebrations.²⁸⁵ For the sailors on the ships the celebrations would be arranged by the seamen's churches.²⁸⁶

The main event was, as mentioned before, when the king and the Crown Prince greeted a parade and 25,000 people gathered in the sports grounds of Bislett.²⁸⁷ The official programme of the event, which I found in Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, shows on the front-page the well-known photo of the handing over of Akershus fortress.²⁸⁸ The picture became the icon for the liberation, since it transports the basic message. The young freedom-fighter in short pants and with an armband as the only sign of uniformation is facing the German commander of the fortress that salutes in the military style and thereby acknowledges the military value of the Norwegian resistance. The name of the young fighter was Terje Rollem, and his face became famous. The picture was later mass-produced and was or still is hanging in a number of Norwegian

²⁸² Haugland, Knut M., Rapport fra Rådsmøte 23. april 1965 i Oslo Militære Samfund, NHM Arkiv, 195 Ddc - 0001, 204.1 Hovedkomiteen.

²⁸³ Haugland, Knut. Personal Communication with Statssekretær Olaf Solumsmoen, 24 March 1965, NHM Arkiv, 195 Dda 0011 Høytider.

²⁸⁴ Statsministerens kontor - '9. april/8. mai-utvalget', Markeringen av 25-årsdagen for 9. april og 20-årsdagen for 8. mai. Foreløpig, uforbindtlig programmeversikt, Stortingets arkiv, Minnemøtet i stortingssalen den 8. mai 1965 - 20-årsdagen for frigjøringen i 1945.

²⁸⁵ Sivertsen, Helge, Kyrkje- og undervisningsdepartementet, Personal Communication with Headmasters and boards, 10 March 1965, NHM Arkiv, 195 Dda 0011 Høytider.

²⁸⁶ Statsministerens kontor - '9. april/8. mai-utvalget', Markeringen, p. 3.

²⁸⁷ Fredsjubileet feiret med alvor og glede, Aftenposten, 10 May 1965.

²⁸⁸ NHM Arkiv, Dda 0012, 032 Mindehøytidelighet 1965.

households.²⁸⁹ The scene was also chosen for the special edition of stamps issued for the anniversary in 1995 and a postcard which is sold in the NHM.



The handing over of Akershus festning, post-card NHM

The picture on the reverse of the programme shows a parade of children after the liberation with a banner praising the king – the other icon of Norwegian occupation history. During the show all different branches of the Armed Forces were represented by troop detachments and Jens Christian Hauge was the host of the event.

Education was also not forgotten, in the city centre of Oslo there were exhibitions in the shop windows.²⁹⁰ The Hjemmefrontmuseum had lent out items for an exhibition called *Glimt fra okkupasjonstiden* (Glimpse on the Occupation). Via a 'press release' by the Hjemmefrontmuseum, we can get a very good picture of the topics and the location of the shops and their exhibitions. It is noticeable that in 1965 the military aspect of resistance but also of the whole war is still very strong and that out of the twenty-two shops and enterprises five deal with either the persons of General Ruge (supreme commander in the fights in 1940), the King Håkon VII or the Crown Prince (in his role as supreme commander in 1945) or simply represent salutes to them. Drop-zones, the military units of the utefront, the gutter på skauen (the clandestine resistance groups), the Milorg district 13 and other strictly military topics make up more than fifty percent of the exhibitions whereas the civil disobedience part of the hjemmefront and the week-day life is just represented by some radios used to listen illegally to the BBC, the churches and food rationing. Astonishingly enough the Nasjonal Samling and the Norwegian SS-Volunteers get alongside the German terror and the Gestapo, are also given attention.²⁹¹ In 1965,

²⁸⁹ Bruland, *Norwegen*, p. 463.

²⁹⁰ Statsministerens kontor - '9. april/8. mai-utvalget', *Markeringen*, p. 4.

²⁹¹ Haugland, Knut. Personal Communication with several Norwegian newspapers, 6 May 1965, NHM Arkiv, 195 Dda 0011 Høyttider.

the Hjemmefrontmuseum, that had supplied most of the material was in the process of collecting; and as has become clear in the chapters on its foundation and on the research performed there these years are characterized by a strong emphasis on the military aspects of the resistance. Either this just reflected a common image of the years from 1940 to 1945 which then was also reflected in the window exhibitions, or the exhibition is a reflection of the abundance of this sort of material on the side of the museum. Since there is no material on the ways the exhibitions came into being, it will hardly be possible to find out.

As in the last anniversary years the Stortinget arranged a commemoration ceremony in the chamber with the king as guest of honour that was to be timed with the two minutes of silence.²⁹² Present were also the members of the supreme court and the government as well as the leaders of the hjemmefront. An analysis of speeches is a good means of understanding a ritual. The speech gives meaning to the ritual and it gets meaning through the ritual.²⁹³ The speech of the Stotingspresident Nils Langhelle contains most of the elements of the basic narrative. After he said that the war was won outside of Norway he expressed his gratitude to the allies and then the Norwegian contribution to the war effort is mentioned. He then talked about the different forms of resistance and repeats the motif of the unity by claiming that all the Norwegian people joined the struggle for freedom. The central figure for the unity was the king which he mentions afterwards. The initials 'H 7' became the symbols for resistance. During the war the king really became the 'people's-king', he said referring to the Danish origin of Håkon VII. Afterwards he paid respect to the sailors, the prisoners and to the dead. He also referred to the United Nations as a result of the war and admonished the gathering to show loyalty to their ideals.²⁹⁴

The same day the dead were also mourned with wreath-laying at the monument for the fallen patriots (Retterstedet) on Akershus-fortress. Here the speaker, Arntzen, reminded the assembly that the war had given rise to the best in man and that these characteristics would still be needed to defend the country and to rebuild it.²⁹⁵ Also on that day the newspaper Aftenposten informed the public that the surplus of a memorial coin issued the previous year on the occasion of the anniversary of the constitution would partly go to the Hjemmefrontmuseum and the Association of Invalids (more than the same amount went to Bergen for the reconstruction of the Hansa-quarter Bryggen though).²⁹⁶ The newspaper also had 10 pages of reports on the events around

²⁹² Programme ved minnemøtet i Stortingssalen 8.mai 1965, Stortingets arkiv, Minnemøtet i stortingssalen den 8. mai 1965 - 20-årsdagen for frigjøringen i 1945.

²⁹³ Kverndokk, 'De kjempet', p. 75.

²⁹⁴ Stotingspresidentens minnetale i formiddag, Aftenposten, 8 May 1965.

²⁹⁵ Aftenposten, 8 May 1965.

²⁹⁶ Inntekten av minnemynnten til fordeling, Aftenposten, 8 May 1965.

the liberation with interviews with the main persons in the Hjemmefront like Gunnar Sønsteby and Jens Christian Hauge. In the same issue of *Aftenposten* it was mentioned that the church bells around the whole country had rung at 12 a.m. on May 8th and that the people gathered outside the Stortinget stood at attention. The day before there had already been a gathering in the university's assembly hall where the Milorg commemorated their dead.²⁹⁷

That the wounds of the war were far from healing showed a peculiar advert with an appeal signed by the most prominent resistance figures like Jens Christian Hauge, Francis Bull, Leo Eitinger and others. The appeal stated that the disabled veterans were receiving pensions but that numerous people who fought for the allies or at home in the resistance were still not registered. Help was needed to find them and everybody was called to sign bonds for the veteran's fond.²⁹⁸ The same veterans also stood behind an invitation for a festive dinner in presence of the King and Queen for some hundred well-chosen veterans and widows the same evening.²⁹⁹

25 Years of Freedom – 1970

The next big commemorative event was the 25th anniversary of the liberation. In 1970 a committee was once again appointed to coordinate the celebrations. The celebrations that year were on a large scale and were also connected to the unveiling of the national monument for the victims of war and the opening of Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum on May 7th by the Crown Prince.³⁰⁰ The 25th anniversary was a chance to look back and to reflect on postwar politics. The media coverage was wider and the commentaries were pensive and somewhat connected to the current political agenda. Gratitude to the allies and international help was the main theme.³⁰¹

The government entrusted the coordination of the celebrations to a committee under the prime minister's office. All the members of the committee could not be identified but Dag Bergrav, a man that from there onwards was to play a decisive role in the preparations of the future anniversaries, was made secretary of the committee.³⁰² Bergrav was himself a veteran of the struggle for liberation and had been imprisoned at Akershus Landsfengsel by the Gestapo.³⁰³ The committee was appointed on 17 October 1969 with another resistance leader, Conrad

²⁹⁷ Hjemmestyrkene ble den fjerde forsvarsgren, *Aftenposten*, 8 May 1965.

²⁹⁸ '8. mai-gaven 1965'. Appell til alle norske borgere, *Aftenposten*, 8 May 1965.

²⁹⁹ The list and the programme was consulted in NHM Arkiv, Dda 0012, 032 Mindehøytidelighet 1965.

³⁰⁰ Kverndokk, 'De kjempet', p. 40.

³⁰¹ One example is the speech of prime minister Einar Gerhardsen. Gerhardsen, Einar, Nye generasjoner må få kjenne våre erfaringer, *Aftenposten*, 8 May 1970, p. 19.

³⁰² That can be seen from the letterhead found in a folder in the parliamentary archives in Oslo where the committee is called komitéens sekretær of a Komitéen til forberedelse av 25-års jubileet for frigjøringen. Stortingets Arkiv, Minnemøtet i Stortinget den 8. mai 1970.

³⁰³ Luihn, Hans, Nærkontakt med krigshistorien. Om Dag Berggravs bok 'Vi hadde andre drømmer', in: *Krigsinvaliden*, no. 4, 1993, pp. 27-28.

Bonnevie-Svendsen, as chairman. I was unable to find the final recommendation but some of its contents can be gathered from the protocols of the parliament and a little can be found in a file on the celebrations within the Stortinget's hall. It seems that on December 22nd of the same year the committee had handed in a proposal that suggested that at the core of the celebrations should stand the expression of gratitude towards the allies for the liberation. The committee also expressed its belief that this acknowledgement would be best taken care of not with a memorial but with the creation of a memorial fund that was to support young people of other countries who wanted to get to know Norway and promote mutual understanding. The fund of five million NOK was meant to distribute scholarships. To give the gratefulness a concrete expression a memorial plaque mentioning the fund was to be put up in a central location in the capital, Oslo. The Department of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Education approved and the draft was made a proposition.³⁰⁴

On April 29 1970, the presidency of the parliament followed the proposition and granted the government's wish to discuss the proposition in a confidential hearing in order to be able to announce the fund as a surprise at the same anniversary ceremony. On Thursday 6 May 1970 – a mere two days before the anniversary – the bill was discussed in a parliamentary hearing with the public locked out. The short discussion basically spun around two remarks made by the representatives, one on the secrecy of the hearing, the other on the nature of the fund and the geographical origin of the youth eligible for the scholarship. One representative, albeit agreeing with the proposal and willing to support it in the vote, expressed his misgiving against the fact that the fund would give access to young people of the former enemies including Germany. Although he was not objecting that approach, he felt it would neither fit the theme of the celebrations nor the intention of the committee to make this anniversary an acknowledgement of the allies. The second reservation was expressed about the way the bill was treated, claiming that the procedure of secrecy should be kept reserved for matters of a more urgent nature. Both criticisms were replied to by members of the presidency which defended the initial proposal as well as the procedure and the bill was then passed unanimously.³⁰⁵ The story shows two things, first that the character of the celebrations was added another, new feature – the moment of fostering understanding with other countries and that the insight that the allied war effort had freed the country was gaining wider influence than before, to an extent that it was made the centre of the celebrations. The committee had seemingly given both features emphasis. The

³⁰⁴ Stortingstidende, St.prp. nr. 135 (1969-70), Om oppretning av eit minnefond i høve 25-årsjubileet for frigjeringa 8. mai 1945 (Tilråding frå Kyrkje- og undervisningsdepartementet 23. april 1970).

³⁰⁵ All this in: Stortingstidende, 1970, 6. mai. – Opprettelse av et minnefond i anledn. 25-års jub. For feiringen av frigjøringen 8. mai 1945, pp. 2634-2637.

second interesting moment is the way the celebrations were used to hand out 'Christmas presents', as one of the representatives described it, and that for the sake of public relations parliamentary procedures were used and interpreted in a way that it at least called the disapproval of members of the house. The wish to give the anniversary a special meaning and to stage the 'coup' on the very day of the celebrations had made the committees proposal an affair of state.

Also the usual division of 7 May as the day of joy and the 8th as the day of solemnity was in 1970 somehow blurred. Already the 7th was a day full of ceremonies that were of a commemorative and serious character. The veterans and the state paid tribute to the resistance fighters and laid wreaths on the *retterstedet*, the monument on the place of the German execution squad. This time high-ranking officers of the allies were also invited and they paid their tributes with salutations.³⁰⁶ In the immediate vicinity of the *retterstedet* one of the bigger events connected to the anniversary in 1970 took place – the opening of Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum. Though the timing was, as I have shown, rather incidental – the founding fathers had to delay the opening several times – certain importance was attributed to the event. At the opening the Crown Prince was present. He stood in for the King who was ill on that day.³⁰⁷ The unveiling of monuments or the opening of exhibitions is in western history cultures often connected to anniversaries. The events gain strength and importance through the solemn inauguration ceremonies and the monument or museum in its turn is also attached a higher meaning. These reciprocal processes of making sense and giving a meaning were also very much present on the 25th anniversary of the end of the war in Norway. The Hjemmefrontmuseum was and is as much a monument as it is an educational institution and its opening on May 7th, however incidental, bestowed it with a higher meaning. It is therefore not surprising that the founding fathers, after they had to delay the opening several times in the previous years did not care about the fact that there were still some things to be done in the exhibition when they found that they had the chance to use that date for the opening. The details of the exhibition had to be completed after May 1970. But the opening was a success, due to the connection with the event, and the museum and its opening got a lot of media coverage.³⁰⁸ The ceremony and the speeches were held outside, following the wish of two of the leading figures in the museum's erection, Tore Gjelsvik and Jens Christian Hauge. The audience was facing the museum building that was towering above them on the ramparts of the castle. This place was chosen even though the committee at the prime minister's office had favoured a ceremony in the

³⁰⁶ En frigjøringsdag i alvor, savn og høytid, *Aftenposten*, 8 May 1970.

³⁰⁷ Museum over et folks motstand, *Aftenposten*, 8 May 1970.

³⁰⁸ *Færøy*, Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, p. 55.

museum.³⁰⁹ This made the participation of the public and the press coverage also easier. Somehow the thought comes up that the location was also very fitting since this way the speeches were also held in right next to 'retterstedet', which made the connotations of the museums as a memorial again obvious.

The list of those invited to the opening comprised all branches of Norwegian resistance against German occupation including the sailors who sailed for the allies. All in all, 300 to 400 people including representatives of the allied liberation forces and the SOE, were present. Jens Christian Hauge said in his opening speech that the Hjemmefrontmuseum's exhibition showed the impressions of the 'five dark years' as the war generation sees it and that it therefore could not be of eternal and timeless truth but just an image as honest and unvarnished as this generation could draw it.³¹⁰ He added that besides the efforts made inside but also outside Norway, by allied soldiers and Norwegians, there were events in Norway that would not be suitable for glorification.³¹¹ Late in the afternoon of that day, the rescue of prisoners from Germany with the 'White Buses' were commemorated with a festivity on the square in front of Oslo University. Johannes Andenæs as dean of the university spoke about the incarceration of Oslo's students and their rescue from the camps with the very buses from Sweden.³¹² As in the previous years, there was a festive gala in the evening in the National Theatre. The Prime Minister Einar Gerhardsen spoke and once again the salute to the allies who freed Norway was central to the speech.³¹³

On May 8th, the Storting again arranged a commemoration ceremony. The king's bad state of health again did not allow his presence and the current king Harald, as Crown Prince, was the guest of honour. The programme was down to the smallest detail, the same as in 1965. The same guests (Hjemmefrontens ledelse and the London government), the same songs, the same schedule and the same minimal military parade in front of the parliament.³¹⁴ The speech of the Stortingspresident Bernt Ingvaldsen shows persistence as well. After creating continuity from two other important days of Norwegian history – the day the proclamation of the basic law in 1814 and the independence in 1905 – on to May 1945, he repeated one of the central elements of the master narrative: the Norwegian contribution to the war. He referred to the alliance that fought Hitler and of which Norway had been a part of. The importance of being on the side of the victorious allies for the Norwegian postwar governments cannot be underestimated. This

³⁰⁹ Færøy, Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, p. 53.

³¹⁰ Færøy, Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, p. 53.

³¹¹ Odd Bergfald, "Hjemmefrontmuseet: En beretning om dengang," Aftenposten, 8 May 1970.

³¹² De var så unge alle som døde, Aftenposten, 8 May 1970, p. 19 and Hvite busser - en utfordring, Aftenposten, 8 May 1970.

³¹³ speech of Einar Gerhardsen, "Nye generasjoner må få kjenne våre erfaringer," Aftenposten, 8 May 1970.

motif is so central that it already appeared in the beginning of the speech. It is followed by the expression of gratitude to the allies and further themes of the narrative: the fact that Norway was unprepared to face the mighty enemy but that the people immediately took up the fight. One important factor for this was, according to Ingvaldsen, the steadfast attitude of Håkon VII. The resistance is afterwards described as a national uprising that proved how deeply the rooted the desire for freedom is within the Norwegian people – in all parts of the country and all layers of society. The last part of the speech consisted of an appeal for reconciliation and the announcement of the creation of the aforementioned programme to bring foreign youth to Norway. There was an interesting, and at the same time, confusing bit in the speech. Towards the end, Ingvaldsen said that "[I]n Norway, we have fortunately forgotten *that* part of the past that *should* be forgotten" (emphasises by Ingvaldsen).³¹⁵ Maybe it becomes a bit clearer after looking at the next chapters.

As visible from this short account, the 25th anniversary of the liberation was celebrated in Norway with great intensity and numerous festivities and events. The opening of Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum and the unveiling of the National Memory stand out as special events. The speeches and the speakers did not change to a great extent in comparison to the previous years and to the interpretation of the immediate postwar years. Central topics were the expression of gratefulness to the allies, the sailors and those who gave their lives and the re-invocation of the spirit of unity, combined with the appeals for a strong defence. One group of veterans should be mentioned specifically: the sailors who sailed in allied service during the war. They were honoured in particular in Oslo by wreath-laying in the monument on the island Bygdøy by the Prince Harald³¹⁶ and in the western coastal town of Bergen where the whole celebrations were concentrated around their contribution.³¹⁷

The 1970 celebrations represent a first opening of the narrative. Intensified international cooperation widened the theme of the celebrations toward an acknowledgement of the allies that was stronger than in the previous years. Also 1970 seems to have been in the minds of those involved to be important enough for larger celebrations. They did not however, overestimate the population's interest in celebrating the liberation. When in 1975 the *Krigsinvalidforbundet*, the organisation of the invalids, the organisation of the former prisoners and veterans from the *Milorg-district* No. 13 inquired whether the NHM could call for a meeting to discuss possible

³¹⁴ the programme and the correspondence in: Stortingets arkiv, Minnemøtet i Stortinget den 8. mai 1970.

³¹⁵ Speech by Bernt Ingvaldsen, in: Stortingets arkiv, Minnemøtet i Stortinget den 8. mai 1970, p. 3.

³¹⁶ En frigjøringsdag i alvor, savn og høytid, Aftenposten, 8 May 1970.

³¹⁷ Dere kjempet og falt - og dere gav oss alt, Aftenposten, 9 May 1970.

involvement in celebrations. The board of directors decided that it would contribute to a common effort to decorate the graves of resistance fighters with flowers but would otherwise abstain from any participation in celebrations partly due to a lack of funds and partly because the 30th anniversary was not considered to be of any importance.³¹⁸ Astonishingly that had changed ten years later.

1985 – 40 Years of Peace

The 40th anniversary of an event does not represent a 'classic' date for big festivities. And yet it is a date of importance. A reason might be that it constitutes a first caesura in the lapse of time after an event before the above-described 'floating gap' of 80 years of a generational change occurs.³¹⁹ In the Federal Republic of Germany, the 40th anniversary of its existence was celebrated with the great involvement of the government and the state authorities. The government used the opportunity to emphasize the democratic character of the new Germany in front of the world and to teach these values to its own citizens. Another reason might have been the fact that it was feared that the founding fathers of the republic might soon enough vanish or not be able to join in the celebrations.³²⁰ The latter reason might have been on the mind of the government in Norway when it again appointed a committee for the preparation of the celebrations. The head of the committee was again the veteran Dag Berggrav. The additional members of the committee were taken from the associations of war sailors, the Krigsinvalidforbundet (Association of the Invalid), the Committee of Veteran associations, the office of the commander of Akershus, and the Ministry for Ecclesiastical Affairs and Education. Again, as on earlier occasions, some parts of the committee records are kept in the NHM. From these and the newspapers, I could establish that the celebrations again very much followed established lines – but also that some new issues were taken up.

The joy of liberation was, as in previous years, the decisive theme on the 7th of May with a concert and gala in Stavanger.³²¹ British soldiers who had been among the first ones to enter Norway with the liberation soldiers had been invited to the gala.³²² The next day was made an

³¹⁸ Referat Fra Styremøtet i Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum 25/9 1974, NHM-Archive, 195 Ddc - 0001, 204.1 Styre- og rådsmøte 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, folder 1974, p. 2.

³¹⁹ Neidhardt, Roland, Zur Einführung: Die Last der zweiten Generation, in: Wojak, Andreas (ed.), Schatten der Vergangenheit. Deutsche und Juden heute, Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Mohn 1985, pp. 11-14.

³²⁰ Similarly the Jewish Community in Berlin thought that the so-called Kristallnacht would be commemorated for the last time on its 40th anniversary in 1983, Nachama, Andreas, speech held at 2. Ravensbrücker Sommeruniversität "Europäische Gedächtniskulturen" 20.-25. August 2006 on 20 August 2006

³²¹ Fredsfestens sanger, Aftenposten, 7 May 1985.

³²² Liv Brandvold, Red Devils minnes våre 'knottbiler'. Britiske krigsveteraner i Stavanger, Aftenposten, 8 May 1985.

official flag day, the public institutions flew the flag and asked the citizen to do the same.³²³ In Lillehammer, veterans of the resistance, the 'guys from the forests' (*gutter på skauen*), paraded in their old 'costumes', the knickerbockers pants.³²⁴ The 40th anniversary was again the occasion for the unveiling of another monument. This time the monument over the clandestine press and those who were killed while producing or distributing the illegal newspapers was inaugurated in the presence of King Olav. It was accompanied with a special exhibition on the topic in the library of Oslo University.³²⁵

Another exhibition was also opened on the 8th of May – the museum of the Armed Forces (Forsvarsmuseet) had, with the support of the Hjemmefrontmuseum set up a special exhibition on the five years of the occupation. In *Da freden kom med friheten* (When peace came along with freedom) fifty dummies were dressed in the original clothes of the days of liberation, the soldiers and even the prisoners and the flags of Norway and the allies that were hanging on Oslo's main street Karl-Johans-gate in those days were put up in order to create the atmosphere of the weeks of joy of 1945. In addition, the car, that had carried the Crown Prince through the streets after his arrival was on display. That open car, a convertible, takes a central iconographic position in the Norwegian memory, since it is known to everybody from the pictures of the prince riding in it and being saluted by the population as the first representative of the legal government and the commander-in-chief. The picture of two young girls handing him flowers is particularly well-known in Norway and repeatedly printed in reports on the war and the liberation. This picture was also on the special stamps issued by the Norwegian postal services on the occasion of the event, which were also available with a special postmark in the Hjemmefrontmuseum on May 8th.³²⁶

It seemed to have been on the one hand an anniversary with a lot of military ornamentation but also the anniversary of the smaller groups – veterans or victims of smaller or less famous groups than the *gutter på skauen*. On the 8th, for example, the Oslo police also held a commemorative gathering for the members of the police force that died in the resistance.³²⁷ For the first time the role of women was openly described. The association of women volunteers (Kvinnens Frivillige Beredskap) held a conference and announced that women were active in all branches of the

³²³ La flagget gå til topps i dag!, Aftenposten, 8 May 1985.

³²⁴ Elisabeth Sandsborg, Vi ble rikere på felleskap. Kongen under 40 års markeringen på Lillehammer, Aftenposten, 8 May 1985.

³²⁵ Natasza P. Sandbu, "De onde kreftene slå til igjen," Aftenposten, 8 May 1985.

³²⁶ Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum's Filatelitjeneste. Motivbrevhus 8. mai 1985 på Hjemmefrontmuseet - eget promotionkort utgis, NHM Arkiv, 195 Dda 0012, 032 8.Mai 1985 Vennefest Minnehøytid.

³²⁷ Politiet hedrer falne i krigen, Aftenposten, 8 May 1985.

resistance, even the military one, and on all levels.³²⁸ The Storting held again its usual commemorative meeting. Ten leading veterans were invited and the Stortingspresident Hysing-Dahl made a speech in which he referred to the re-opening of the parliament after the five years of dictatorial rule and expressed his conviction that this act constitutes the most important event of the postwar era. The re-installation of the rule of the people (Norw.: folkestyre) was of such an importance that he wished the very day, June 14th, to be made a day of commemorations. He commemorated the dead and afterwards the Storting actually passed a bill. It decided to support the restoration of a ship that during the occupation was used to maintain contact with the free world via the Shetlands. On the 8th the Minister of Defence Anders Christian Sjøstad also laid wreath at the monument of the fallen patriots and Aftenposten reported a large crowd of visitors.³²⁹ Unusually a lot of visitors were also reported from the ceremonies on Vestre Gravlund at the graves of some of the freedom fighters who are buried there. Here for the first time schoolchildren were involved but again a general as representative of the military gave the speech.³³⁰

One element of the celebrations that affected the veterans economically was another increase in the veteran's pension and the deletion of the word 'organized resistance' from the eligibility rules for the pension. From now on those eligible for compensation and pension would not have to prove that they had been part of an organised resistance group anymore. The largest group affected by this change was the big group of krigsseiler – the sailors for the allies.³³¹ It is true that the sailors for the Allies had been mentioned and honoured before but there has often been a certain dissatisfaction on the side of the sailors with not only the way their suffering and victims had been acknowledged but also with the financial compensation for the traumatized, invalid and the widowed wives. This year the traditional wreath-laying at the monument for the sailors on Bygdøy was performed by a student in the presence of the Crown Prince and again Aftenposten reported a considerable public interest.³³²

The 40th anniversary seems to have shown more or less the same features as the preceding ones. Although not a 'big anniversary', the celebrations were as considerable as has been the administrative effort made to prepare them. The veterans seem to have been involved more, maybe as a result of the fear that this might be the last common celebration. The political agenda

³²⁸ Kvinneinsatz i krig og for fred trekkes frem, Aftenposten, 8 May 1985. Already on the day before there was an article on the same matter: Liv Hegna, "Kvinner deltok på alle fronter," Aftenposten, 7 May 1985, p. 20.

³²⁹ Fred og frihet har sin pris, Aftenposten, 8 May 1985.

³³⁰ Hyldest til våre allierte, Aftenposten, 8 May 1985.

³³¹ Flere vil få forhøyet krigspensjonen, Aftenposten, 7 May 1985.

³³² Vemod og takknemlighet, Aftenposten, 9 May 1985.

of the celebrations did not change either and was still very much determined by the fears of the Cold War. It was expressed in a typical way in the leading article in *Aftenposten* on May 8th. The author(s) evoked again the unity of the war years and condemned political partisan struggles. He or they also reminded the reader that after the war all the great men (NB!) from the resistance agreed on the importance of a strong partnership with the allies to safeguard the security of Norway, that this very security was not taken care of by the pre-war politicians and that the freedom of action of the nation was still in danger and security an illusion.³³³ The involvement of features from the field of the military, like parades and military persons, was on the other hand complemented with the involvement of schoolchildren. At the same time more hitherto marginalized groups were included in the ceremonies as well as the coverage. This celebration was the last big one before the end of the Cold War. Later in the discussion we will see whether the end of the Cold War made a difference.

One feature that could also be observed in Denmark was a new interest in day-to-day history. Following the international trends in social history, Norwegian scholars as well as the public got increasingly interested in the history of the week-day life. As example might serve here as the publication of a book on that matter that was published in time for the anniversary: *Slik greidde vi oss. Daglegliv under krigen 1940-45* – a book in which several people told about the way they had coped with the daily troubles of the occupation.³³⁴ A reason for the growing interest in these kind of reports might of course also lie in the fact that those who had been in their adult life during the event (here the occupation) were starting to pass away 40 years later and that people felt the need to start to save their testimonies.

The Half-Centenary Anniversary – The Last Celebrations

With a Royal Resolution of November 8th 1991 a committee was once again established to prepare the celebrations on the occasion of the anniversary of the liberation – the 50th this time. It was afterwards referred to in the media as the 'Frigjøringskomiteen'.³³⁵ Dag Bergrav was appointed as chairman of the committee whose preparations began four years before the actual event. He was certainly very qualified for the job as the man who had already in 1970 and in 1985 contributed to the celebrations in his function as the secretary of the committee and as former resistance fighter. At the time of the appointment he was Departementsråd at the Statsministerens kontor, and therefore was a leading figure in the governmental administration.

³³³ Da freden brøt løs, *Aftenposten*, 8 May 1985.

³³⁴ Ustvedt, Yngvar, Læg Reid, Erling, *Slik greidde vi oss. Daglegliv under krigen 1940-45*, Oslo: Samlaget 1985.

³³⁵ Komiteen til forberedelse av 50års jubileet for frigjøringen (Frigjøringskomiteen). Delinstillingen til regjeringen. Om reising av et frihetsmonument og et forsvarsmonument, Statsministerens kontor. 5 November 1992.

The task assigned to the Frigjøringskomiteen was to put forward proposals to the government on the programme for the celebrations and to coordinate the nationwide arrangements.³³⁶ These arrangements became extremely extensive, since this anniversary was seen as the last one in which the generation of the veterans would be present.³³⁷ It was the "last hurra" for the veterans.³³⁸

It was therefore not just a collection of ceremonies but since it should manifest the heritage and the testament of the resistance, it was also accompanied by extensive wave of publications and media coverage, including TV and radio programmes on the war in the days before and after the celebrations. One example of a TV programme was the extensive series on the sailors of the Norwegian merchant fleet 'Evig heder' (Eternal Reverence) of the Norwegian state channel NRK. A quick look at the TV programme for early May 1995 shows that there were documentaries or movies about the war on air everyday and on almost every channel. The media coverage in the biggest Norwegian newspaper, Aftenposten was extensive and published under the official logo – a flower. But most striking is the increase in publications on the book market. A great deal of the publications even bears an 'official' character. One example of this is the book *I frigjøringsens spor*.³³⁹ It starts with two prefaces, one by the king and the other by the chief of staff and contains a collection of essays on different parts of the war history. Another example is the publication *Fritt Norge*, which was published by Forsvarets Forum, Krigsinvalidforbundet – an organisation connected to the Ministry of Defence and the veterans' organisations.³⁴⁰ This brochure in A4 format and costly printed colours had a print run of one million issues and was distributed to schools and homes. Again the King contributed with an article and the leader of the military resistance and senior politician Jens Christian Hauge wrote for the brochure too. A similar publication was the book *Bøker om Norges frihetskrig 1940-45* that was published by the Frigjøringskomiteen³⁴¹ The book is an extensive bibliography on the war with an introduction to every aspect or chapter by one of the leading historians or former resistance fighters on that matter. Also Jens Christian Hauge published his memoirs on the liberation days and the war experiences. Already in 1994 his book *Frigjøringen* was published

³³⁶ Komiteen til forberedelse av 50Års jubileet for frigjøringen (Frigjøringskomiteen), Delinstillingen til regjeringen. Om reising av et frihetsmonument og et forsvarsmonument avgitt 5. november 1992, Statsministerens kontor.

³³⁷ Eriksen, Det var noe annet, p. 120.

³³⁸ Øystein Sørensen in an interview with the author at Oslo University on 8 August 2005.

³³⁹ Skogan, John Kristen (ed.), *I frigjøringsens spor*. Artikler i anledning frigjøringsjubileet 1995, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget 1995.

³⁴⁰ Stordahl, Tor Eigil, Berg, Pål A., Eikli, Erling (eds.), *Fritt Norge*, Oslo: Forsvarets Forum, Krigsinvalidforbundet og krigsveteranorganisasjonene 1995.

³⁴¹ Luihn, Hans (ed.), *Bøker om Norges frihetskrig 1940-45*. En bibliografi, Utgitt av komiteén for forberedelse av 50 årsdagen for frigjøringen 8. mai 1995 – Frigjøringskomiteén, Oslo: Grøndahl Dreyer/ Frigjøringskomiteén, 1995.

for the fourth time and in the anniversary year it was followed by *Rapport om mitt arbeid under okkupasjonen* his account of his work during the war years that he wrote in 1948 but was hitherto never published.³⁴²

The veterans on their side dedicated a lot of attention to the publications and celebrations. The veteran organisation's journal *Krigsinvaliden* already in 1993 and 1994 published articles on the celebrations and the programme as well as the people involved in the preparations.³⁴³ The Frigjøringskomiteen of course not only coordinated some publications but also coordinated the celebrations and their ceremonies. It handed in at least two reports on its work, progress and the proposals. One is dated November 1992³⁴⁴ the other seems to be a final draft of 1994.³⁴⁵ In both documents the wish to have celebrations all over the country and to stress an educational moment in the celebrations is noticeable. Schools and public libraries were asked to make special arrangements or to make small exhibitions on the war and the resistance in the area or in general. The expression of gratitude to the allies was meant to stand in the centre of the celebrations. In order to achieve those goals the celebrations were to begin in 1994 because the most northern region of Finmark had already been liberated by the Soviet forces in the fall of 1944. The celebrations in May were to be stretched over a couple of days in order to give the speakers and important guests the possibility to attend a number of them.

Another central topic of the committees work was the erection of two monuments. One was planned for Narvik, the city that fought a fierce battle together with the allies already in 1940 and was later scorched by the retreating German forces. This monument was to be called *Frihedsmonument* (Monument for liberty). The other was planned for the fortress of Oscarsborg in the Oslo fjord and was to be called *Forsvarsmonument* (Monument of Defence) and was meant to symbolise the will of the Norwegian people to defend the country. The cannons of Oscarsborg on 9 April 1940 had sunk the German battleship *Blücher* and thereby delayed the German occupation of Oslo and made it possible for the King to flee. The later monument was never realised due to the protests of the local population who opposed it for different reasons, aesthetic reasons for the most part.³⁴⁶ The monument in Narvik however, was unveiled on May

³⁴² Hauge, Jens Christian, *Frigjøringen*, Oslo: Gyldendal 1994 and Hauge, Jens Christian, *Rapport om mitt arbeid under okkupasjonen*, Oslo: Gyldendal 1995.

³⁴³ Luihn, Hans, *Frigjøringsjubileet 8. mai 1995 - 50 år etter seieren*, in: *Krigsinvaliden*, no. 4, 1993, pp. 11-13 and *50-årsjubileet for frigjøringen 1945. Det nasjonale oppleget for feiringen*, in: *Krigsinvaliden*, no. 4, 1994, pp. 6-8.

³⁴⁴ Frigjøringskomiteen, *Delinstillingen*.

³⁴⁵ I have a draft dated March 25th 1994. Komiteen til forberedelse av 50-års jubileet for frigjøringen (Frigjøringskomiteen), *Om feiringen av 50-års jubileet for frigjøringen 8.mai 1995. Innstilling til regjeringen*, avgitt 1994, Utkast 25.03.94, copy in: Stortingets kontor, saksnr. 94/811, *Frigjøringsjubileet 1995*.

³⁴⁶ Frigjøringskomiteen, *Innstillingen*, p.7.

7th.³⁴⁷ The biggest event was of course the celebrations in Oslo on the very liberation day. Again the Stortinget had a commemoration ceremony, but this time the programme was slightly different. It started earlier due to the following parade of veterans in front of the king and the Storting and the traditional ceremony on Akershus fortress later on that day.³⁴⁸ The two speeches of the Stortingspresident Kirsti Kolle Grøndahl and King Harald VII would deserve some attention at this point but they are treated in-depth in the following chapters. They differed in parts from the hitherto cultivated repetition of the motifs of the master narrative, because reconciliation stood at their centres. They did not exclude completely the traditional themes of struggle and unity but toned it down and called for a reconciliation with those who stood on the 'other side'. The speech of the member of the hjemmefront Ole Borge on May 7th at the Monument for the fallen Norwegian Patriots, an event traditionally celebrated by the veterans was on the contrary much more traditional in the sense that he focused strongly on the Norwegian ability to defend the country. I could find this theme in almost all of the speeches where veterans talked. 'Never again an April 9th!' continued to be the central lesson that was given within the speeches – never again a Norway that is attacked unprepared.³⁴⁹

The public got the chance to pay tribute to the war generation when 3.000 paraded and the Norwegian air force contributed with a 'parade' of air planes in the sky over Oslo at the moment the veterans reached the royal family in front of the parliament. Thousands of Norwegians applauded in the streets and even more went on peace marches organised by the Norwegian Hiking Association while schools around the country flew the flag.³⁵⁰ It was to become Norway's biggest parade ever with details and music corps send by the Armed forces of the US, Great Britain, France, Canada and Poland.³⁵¹ If one wants to believe the subjective reports from participants the public took a great interest, something which impressed the veterans.³⁵² There was a mark on the happy character, however, when a group of gays and lesbians who intended to join the march were shoved aside. They later asked the organisers for an apology.³⁵³

In the evening a show with speeches and music was broadcasted on TV. In the tradition of the festive galas in the preceding years, artists and orchestras presented a mixture of pensive and light acts connected to the war and the liberation.³⁵⁴ The TV and radio coverage of the event reached a record-breaking scale: NRK, P 1 and P 2 covered most of the festivities live for TV

³⁴⁷ Sandberg, Lotte, Himmelstrebende frihetsmonument, *Aftenposten*, 8 May 1995.

³⁴⁸ Kjøreplan for seremonien under minnemøtet i Stortinget 8.mai 1995, in: Stortingets kontor, saksnr. 94/811, Frigjøringsjubileet 1995.

³⁴⁹ See also on this matter the analysis of Kyrre Kverndokk, 'De kjempet', p. 82-83.

³⁵⁰ Fuglehaug, Wenche, Veteraner paraderte på Karl Johan, *Aftenposten*, 8 May 1995.

³⁵¹ Christiansen, Frode, Fra krig til frigjøring, in: *Dagbladet*, 8 May 1995, pp. 36-37.

³⁵² Kluge, Lars, Fikk endelig festet, *Aftenposten*, 9 May 1995.

³⁵³ Jan Gunnar Furuly, "Ber homofile om unnskyldning," *Aftenposten*, 8 May 1995.

and radio, they were present in the parliament and NRK had 17 cameras along the main street to cover the parade. P 1 started the morning with radio reports from several schools around the country hoisting the flag and singing the anthem. TV 2 on the other hand was live from the international celebrations in London.³⁵⁵ NRK also broadcasted a critical programme on the fate of the sailors and their decades-long struggle for recognition and compensation.³⁵⁶ And yet also at the 50th anniversary this group of veterans, who had contributed the most to the allied war effort, was still less prominent in the celebrations than the *gutter på skauen*.

All over the country, hundreds of small exhibitions were made and the story of the local resistance was told.³⁵⁷ It seems that the local authorities and the municipalities had followed the appeal of the committee to make educational efforts at a local level. This way the relatively new interest in day-to-day history found its way into the celebrations in 1995. In Oslo on a more central level that was felt in a charming new fashion. The Norwegian Folk Museum (Norsk Folkemuseum) made an exhibition that 'creates' its own exhibits about the time of the occupation. In 'Vi bestod hverdagsprøven'. Minner fra krigsårene og fredsvåren ('We stood the trial of weekday-life. Memories of the years of war and the spring of freedom) the public was invited to bring objects of the war years to the museum where they were put up with some text. The objects logically were of rather a mundane nature: tin pots for the substitute coffee, clothes that had been changed into other things old photographs and school books and newspapers or pots for the Ersatz-soup that came with the care-packages from Sweden.³⁵⁸

This time for the first time a female member of the Royal Family played an official role in the festivities: Queen Sonja took part in some of the celebrations and immediately enriched the commemorations with a new aspect. During her speech in Trondheim on the 7th, she expressed her dissatisfaction that the role of women and within the resistance had not been acknowledged during the celebrations ten years earlier and in the vast literature on the war. She also expressed her gratitude to that year's planning committee for having considered women to a higher degree.³⁵⁹ The event in Trondheim certainly was not among the core arrangements but the fact that a member of the royal family had embraced that topic gave it the stamp of official recognition and therefore the Queen's speech was important for that issue's public recognition, that had been denied by society as a whole and by the historians until the 1970s, and often still remains unacknowledged. The rise of gender studies will hopefully help to fill this gap. In the

³⁵⁴ Utler, Knut, Avsluttet feiringen med stil, Aftenposten, 9 May 1995.

³⁵⁵ Christiansen, Frode, Fra krig til frigjøring, in: Dagbladet, 8 May 1995.

³⁵⁶ "'Evig heder...'. NRK Fjernsynets serie om norske sjøfolk i krig og fred," Krigsinvaliden 1: 84 (1995).

³⁵⁷ "Utstillinger," Krigsinvaliden 2: 14-17 (1995).

³⁵⁸ Norsk Folkemuseum, Vi bestod hverdagsprøven. Minner fra krigsårene og fredsvåren, pamphlet, NHM Arkiv, 195 Dda 0014, 32.5 50 årsjubileet.

historiography on the war in Norway, for a long time women were not treated as a factor in the resistance, or in society on an equal footing with men. Anne Eriksen claims that on the contrary, the traditional gender roles were in fact strengthened. Whereas men "went into the hills" (på skauen), i.e. into hiding, and fought, women are portrayed as mere supporters of their male counterparts, who were more or less completely occupied with gathering food and mending the clothes. This feature of the description of the role of women during the occupation was intensely researched by the German historian Claudia Lenz. In one of her books³⁶⁰ and in several articles,³⁶¹ she analysed the fiction and movies about the occupation with respect to the role that is ascribed to women. She claims that women were mainly described as passive objects either of the men's protection or as betraying 'tyskertøser'. The third possible role assigned to women was the one of the good mother serving as a symbol for the nation, but that role was rather rare. However there were some exceptions.

In 1985, in the foreword to his book *Også vi når det blir krevet*, which was already mentioned earlier, Paul Engstad mentioned the female contribution to the resistance not just at home in the family but also in the illegality.³⁶² In a thin brochure, written by the Milorg-leader Jens Christian Hauge about the history of the organisation, obtainable in the Hjemmefrontmuseum, a picture is printed that shows a woman wearing a uniform and a beret. The holster for her pistol is clearly visible. The caption reads "Women were behind it, but women stood also in the first lines."³⁶³ But it is also the only reference to women and unlike the male Milorg-heroes this woman does not have a name, she is not 'entitled' to have a personality. On the other hand, in one of her articles, Claudia Lenz gives the example of Sigrud Baalsrud, one of the few members of a fighting unit of the Milorg who was hiding with the men in the woods. On the photo that shows the unit in hiding she is wearing a summer dress instead of a battle dress like the men. Lenz interprets that as a sub-conscious symbol of the fact that she was the exception of the rule in a male world. Baalsrud did not take part in the parade of the Milorg in front of the castle after the

³⁵⁹ Skjalg Fremo, "Dronningen hedret kvinnene," Aftenposten, 8 May 1995.

³⁶⁰ It is the published doctoral thesis. Lenz, Claudia. *Haushaltspflicht und Widerstand. Erzählungen norwegischer Frauen über die deutsche Besatzung 1940-1945 im Lichte nationaler Vergangenheitskonstruktionen*, Tübingen: edition diskord 2003.

³⁶¹ Lenz, Claudia, *Flintenweiber - Patriotische Mütter! Geschlechtergrenzgänge in den Repräsentationen des Widerstandes am Beispiel der deutschen Besatzung Norwegens 1940-45*, in: *Geschlechtergeschichte des Politischen. Entwürfe von Geschlecht und Gemeinschaft im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*. Edited by Gabriele Boukrif et al. Hamburg: Lit 2002 and Lenz, Claudia, *Die Jungs in den Wäldern und der Getreue des Königs? Zwei Versionen der Basisnarration der norwegischen "Nation im Widerstand" nach 1945*, in: *Männlichkeiten - Gemeinschaften - Nationen. Historische Studien zur Geschlechterordnung des Nationalen*. Edited by Claudia Lenz. Opladen: Leske & Budrich 2003.

³⁶² Engstad, Også vi, p. 5, Ikke minst må vi huske på kvinnens innsats både i illegal virksomhet og i strevet med å holde familiene samen,

³⁶³ "Det sto kvinner bak, men det sto også kvinner i første linje, Hauge, Jens Christian. *Milorg under okkupasjonen 1940-1945*, Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, p. 10.

return of the king and she was given the Deltagermedalje (the medal given to all that took part in the resistance) as late as 1995.³⁶⁴

So it was the year of the 50th anniversary of the liberation that represented a watershed in many ways and also for that part of memory. For the first time women were given a significant attention within the official celebrations. 1995 was also the year in which the first work on the women in the resistance was published by Elisabeth Sveri and Grethe Varnø. The publishers were no members of grass-root movements or scholars themselves, but they were members of the Kvinner Frivillige Beredskap – an organisation of female military volunteers for the army reserve.³⁶⁵ Sveri also wrote the brochure on women in the resistance for Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum.³⁶⁶ In both publications, the women are described as a part of all resistance activity – couriers, fighters, smugglers, printers and distributors of illegal newspapers and as organisers of resistance. Sigrid Steinnes (Løkse) was a member of the Hjemmefrontens Ledelse, the only woman. In 1989 she gave the speech at the monument for the fallen patriots at Akershus fortress and was the first one that ever mentioned women at this occasion. She remembered all those who took part in the struggle, men and women and expressed her gratitude to the mothers who kept the family and provided food and clothing in those troubled times. In her speech she touched upon a contribution of women to the resistance which at that time did not receive the attention it deserved. The definition of the term 'resistance' has for years been a narrow one. Resistance was defined as something active, something military. In the last decade, the term has been revised and a wider notion has gathered support. Resistance now encompasses more acts of different kind and the military part is less stressed. Consequently more acts of women that hitherto have been described as normal 'duty' has been incorporated. Because of a general change in attitudes, women are probably the group that gained the place in historiography they deserved – even if it had taken a while – most easily. Around 20.000 people took part in the celebrations in total, which seems to be a small number compared to earlier years – and compared to the overall sum of more than 16 million NOK.³⁶⁷

³⁶⁴ Lenz, Flintenweiber, pp. 202-205.

³⁶⁵ Sveri, Elisabeth, Værnø, Grethe (eds.), Kvinnernes innsats under annen verdenskrig, Oslo: Kvinner frivillige beredskap 1995.

³⁶⁶ Sveri, Elisabeth, Kvinner i norsk motstandsbevegelse 1940-1945, Oslo: Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum 1991.

³⁶⁷ Statsministerens kontor (N), Komiteen til forberedelse av 50års jubileet for frigjøringen (Frigjøringskomiteen), Om feiringen av 50-års jubileet for frigjøringen 8. mai 1995. Innstilling til regjeringen, avgitt 24. juni 1994, NHM Arkiv, 195 Dda 0014, 32.5 50 årsjubileet, the figures are from attachment 'Budsjett for frigjøringsjubileet', p. 16.

Norway – Back to 'Normal' on the 60th?

The half-centenary anniversary of the end of the war was everywhere generally seen as the last great celebration of the postwar era. The veterans kept on disappearing and the even the postwar world order was vanishing. And yet, ten years later, some contemporaries of the occupation years are still alive and so is the memory. In 2005, there were still celebrations in Oslo on the 7th and 8th of May, as there were in Denmark on the 4th and 5th. The veterans gathered at the monument for the fallen patriots in front of the Hjemmefrontmuseum again and Jørgen Kosmo, the president of the parliament, gave a short speech. Few had made it to the celebration and fewer came as the audience.



The celebrations in 2005

On the evening of the 8th they were also received by the very same Kosmo in the Storting for a reception.³⁶⁸ As will be seen later, the Danish celebrations were richer in size and the debates that flared up stronger, but Norway had, albeit on a much lower scale than at the previous anniversaries, some events and considerable media coverage.

And yet, the overall picture was that of more quiet celebrations. The main reason – and the official one – was that it was at the same time the 100th anniversary of the peaceful dissolution of the union with Sweden. There was already an abundance of series of special exhibitions, lectures and TV programmes, culminating in festivities with the presence of both the Norwegian and the Swedish royal families when the May events drew to a close. Both years, 1905 and 1945 have significance in modern Norway, both created or re-created Norway as an independent nation and both became decisive for the future of the country. The number 100 is one of the 'big five' of the anniversaries and it is the first one that entirely falls into what Jan and Aleida

³⁶⁸ Bentzrød, Sveinung Berg, Hyldet som mer enn krigsveteraner, Aftenposten/ web issue, 9 May 2005, <http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/article1035039.ece>.

Assmann call the sphere of the cultural memory. This is probably why it concentrated more on the celebration of independence. For this occasion the government had, in a fashion that was maybe more up-to-date founded a company that was supposed to arrange the celebrations all over the country. The company was allocated financial support and private enterprises contributed as well.³⁶⁹ A series of exhibitions, ceremonies and festivals were staged between the official opening on 5 January until the end on 27 November. Of course the annual ritual of speeches and wreath-laying at the memorial for the fallen patriots in front of the Hjemmefrontmuseum was performed. The guard of honour was present and a handful of veterans and their families attended the speech that was given by the former leader of a Milorg district Wilhelm Molberg Nilssen. In his short speech Nilssen repeated the basic themes and altogether the celebration at the Monument was rather small with a subjectively-speaking low media attendance. There was, however, a conference held in Oslo, that will be discussed later in the second part of this thesis. It dealt with the problems of the transitional justice and will be dealt with in depth in the chapter on collaboration.

Norway Celebrates Itself

To sum it up, the frigjøringsjubileer displayed a great stability in their central topics and their performances. Only in the last years some changes in focus and an incorporation of more groups of veterans and victims can be observed. Still, since at least the bigger events are deemed important for the communication of the basic narrative, especially by the veterans, they are well prepared on a central level. They are also well-rehearsed, following in the central rites and in large parts of the rhetoric long-established forms. Anne Eriksen therefore concludes that the anniversaries were not communications of historical knowledge but rather communications of a "mythical message" and that the "main mythical values" were presented and "acted out" by the settings of the ceremonies and the participants.³⁷⁰ It is conspicuous that with time passing by the need to re-invoke the central themes of the basic narrative was acknowledged by the main agents and the anniversaries gradually developed from mere commemorations into a combination of commemorations and educational projects. The message had to be adapted to the time and made digestible for the generations that had not experienced the occupation and the war. The universal character of the message had to be put into new contexts to prove its validity. Gradually new groups were incorporated and the history of the Norwegian war was made subject to a more intensive scrutiny, amounting to the speeches of the king and the president of

³⁶⁹ All information from the company's webpage: <http://www.hundrearsmarkeringen.no>.

³⁷⁰ Eriksen, "...Norge er atter fritt!", p. 12.

the parliament on the 50th anniversary. The message of the celebrations was not changed considerably, just adapted to the present situation. The speeches contained very brief repetitions of the events in very broad fashion but concentrated rather on the lesson the history could teach. This lesson was often seen to be a strong military potential of deterrence and strong allies – the North Atlantic Treaty. The rituals performed seemed to have always been following the same rhythm that was once established. This is most plainly visible with the celebrations in the Stortinget where the organisers stuck to the exact same sequence of events and rituals with the exact schedule. The songs sang and the music performed differed just slightly and the tone of the speeches varied but the ceremony stayed the same. It seemed to have proven so right, that a very similar ceremony and schedule was also chosen for the celebrations of the 75th anniversary of the peaceful dissolution with Sweden.³⁷¹

Major trends in historiography were if they were not deemed threatening to the tradition incorporated and as in the case of day-to-day history even embraced. Dark sides of the war history were usually not admitted to the narrative or if unavoidable carefully reinterpreted. More about this later in the last part of the project when I will describe some of the challenges in depth. Important to note is the very strong dependency of the Norwegian narrative on the perception from the outside – not only the self perception of Norwegians with regard to their conduct during the war is important but also the representation of the country in the world seems to be of utmost importance in the construction of the narratives on the conduct of Norwegians during the war. Both appear to be intertwined to a great degree and to depend on each other. Of course such could be said about almost every country at first glance but it seems to me that the first addressee for the construction of a narrative on a traumatic event normally is the peer, the people, and in a second round of explanations the outside world. In Norway, on the other hand, the struggle to be accepted as an allied and the fight against a collaboration regime inside the own territory and against the occupant were one and the same struggle – and therefore the two layers are entangled. It will be interesting now whether the slightly different Danish trajectory yielded different results in the relation between inside and outside perceptions.

It is striking how much more professional the celebrations became every time. The documents show, that at some point the rituals and the involvement of the Armed Forces and others were so well rehearsed that not much explanation was needed anymore. Same procedure every year. The committees had their pool of manpower to draw from and the veterans and others involved had no need to change what had proven so well. One of the reasons was probably the continuity of the actors.

³⁷¹ Protocol of session on the 7 June 1979, Stortinget, Stortingsforhandlinger 1979-80, b. 7c, Tidende S.

1.4. PEOPLE AND PROTAGONISTS

As could be seen from the previous chapters, a set of certain names comes up wherever one looks for the mechanisms and persons behind the production of memory on the war and the history-politics in Norway. It would be absurd to assume a conscious master-plan to take over and define the memory production, but certainly some figures gained by virtue of their position during and after the war a special influence in defining the picture of the occupation in the public mind. Very often these men – and most of them were men – for very logical reasons took a special interest in the evolving narratives, since the narratives were about them or about their struggle. The following lines are a short attempt to characterize them since they have already turned up several times already and will turn up again further down in the last part of the project. Definitely one of the most influential persons of the immediate postwar period in general and with respect to history-politics in Norway was Jens Christian Hauge. The lawyer and Social Democrat Hauge was a member of the resistance's leadership *Hjemmefrontens ledelse* and after 1943 the commander of the Milorg, its military wing. It seems that his role was far more influential than that, since he had liaisons with both, the government and army in exile, the civilian resistance and the domestic military resistance, welding them and reorganising them. He is seen by some as the actual leader of the resistance.³⁷² In the liberation government he served as Prime Minister Einar Gerhardsen's secretary. Later he served from November 1945 to 1952 as Minister of Defence, playing an important role in the integration of Norway into the NATO. In 1955 he was for a short while Minister of Justice. After his political career he once again dedicated himself to his job as a lawyer at the high court but never stopped to play an important public role as respected contact for all kinds of questions of interest to the public and he certainly played an enormous role with regard to the narrative on the war. As a leading figure behind the erection of Hjemmefrontmuseet, he was also able to play a role in the historiography of the war and he was also the resistance's contact to the government and to the committees dealing with the celebrations. The protocols of the meetings at the board of the museum indicate that he was involved in practically everything, possessing a position of an overall controller. Besides his own initiative in the foundation of the museum, he might have acquired this position also because of his general informal position amongst the veterans – they will all have respected him very much since he had been their leader in hard times. Hauge's book on the resistance and the liberation was republished over and over again and acquired the status of a semi-official

³⁷² Grimnes, Ole Kristian, Hauge, Jens Christian, in: Norsk krigslexikon/ web issue, <http://www.norgeslexi.com/krigslex/h/h3.html#hauge-jens>.

version of the events.³⁷³ His report on his own work during the occupation which he had written in 1948 during a longer stay in hospital was published in 1995 just in time for the 50th anniversary.³⁷⁴ Of course there is another factor that makes Hauge so interesting in 1995 – he is one of the few surviving members of the resistance, and certainly the most highly profiled veteran. How much Hauge on the other hand might have been conscious about his own aims when it came to presenting the veterans cause can be derived from an article in Dagbladet from May 1995. The very often critical – sometimes bordering on the 'gutter' press – newspaper reported on 8 May 1995 that Hauge had not cooperated with the NRK but made himself available for the channel TV 2 because NRK would not bend to his ideas on a show and interview.³⁷⁵ When Jens Christian Hauge died in October 2006 the newspapers were full of obituaries paying tribute to the "extraordinary power" to the whole resistance movement and the "era" that was now over.³⁷⁶ They showed how much more Hauge was for Norway than just the supreme commander of the resistance but also politician, minister and founder of modern industrial Norway. They also stretched his importance for the reorganisation of the Norwegian foreign and security policy.

Other important figures from the ranks of the resistance, albeit less influential than Hauge were, Ole Borge, Tor Skjønsberg, Tore Gjelsvik and Gunnar Sønsteby and Knut Haugland. Men like Paal Berg, Lars L'Abbée-Lund, Pål Brunsvig or Erik Bratsberg who certainly have been important figures of the resistance and had, as members of the board of the Hjemmefrontmuseum, a decisive influence during the initial phase of the founding and setting-up of the museum later ceased to exert influence or passed away. Knut Haugland though has to be mentioned here. Haugland was probably one of the most prominent members of the military resistance in Norway. He was part of the sabotage of the heavy water plant in Rjukan by a group of SOE-trained resistance fighters who with this sabotage act slowed the German efforts to gain access to nuclear bombs. He was also the radio operator on the Kon-Tiki-raft of Thor Heyerdahl in 1947 and became a "movie-star" when he featured in the documentary. The connection with Heyerdahl was made during the war, when they met through mutual intelligence connections. He was a real 'dare-devil' and still quite young after the war. With a leave of absence from his post as Major at the office of the commander in chief for the air force he joined the board of Hjemmefrontmuseet in 1962. Later he was also part of the *dreieboken-committee* and thereby

³⁷³ Hauge, Frigjøringen.

³⁷⁴ Hauge, Jens Christian, Rapport om mitt arbeid under okkupasjonen, Oslo: Gyldendal 1995.

³⁷⁵ Markus Markusson, "sett & hørt - Milorg-sjefen har ordet," Dagbladet, 8 May 1995, p. 37.

³⁷⁶ En usedvanlig kraft, Aftenposten/ web issue, 30 October 2006,

<http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/article1513828.ece>; and Hegtun, Halvor, Hakon, Hakon Lie: En epoke er over, Aftenposten/ web issue, 30 October 2006, <http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/article1514663.ece>

became one of the main people behind the set-up. Eventually he became the Hjemmefrontmuseum's curator until 1983. His influence was strong though Arnfinn Moland described Hauge as the actual driving force behind the museum.³⁷⁷ Haugland also later became the first curator of the Kon-Tiki-museum in Oslo. All of these men, Hauge, Haugland and the former curator of the NHM Reidar Torp have worked in the intelligence milieu in postwar Norway. Certainly that makes them vulnerable to allegations of manipulation and excessive and negative influence.

Knut Sønsteby – who has been referred to as the world's most important saboteur – is the last of the well-known and active veteran's still alive. He is still a frequent visitor to Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, calling on the museum regularly for coffees, chats and politics. He is also a frequent discussant in the media. Sønsteby published the story of his time in the resistance under the title *Rapport fra 'Nr. 24* and the book was reprinted several times.³⁷⁸ As we will see later in the chapter on the liquidations of the resistance movement, he is still an energetic and disputatious public figure.

Not only as part of the resistance but also because of their profession as historians some people became protagonists of history-politics. First and foremost of these is, of course, Magne Skodvin. Skodvin became involved in illegal activities as student and later got connected to the Hjemmefrontens Ledelse. His role in the set-up of the exhibition as well as for the structure of research has already been described. After the war, Skodvin had worked within the environment around Sverre Steen where he also wrote his PhD thesis on the first weeks of the occupation and the struggle between the Germans and the Norwegian authorities about the occupation administration.³⁷⁹ His determining influence on the development of Norwegian historiography was matched with his public appearance. He was a regular participant in debates about the war with innumerable articles and interviews. As a skilled radio host for the Norwegian national broadcasting services NRK, a job he held in the late 1940s and early 1950s, he was maybe the first historian with a developed sense for media appearance and the importance of media. When Skodvin died in 2004, his former disciple Guri Hjeltnes called him a "doyen" (nestor) not only for his students but for the whole field of occupation history.³⁸⁰ There are voices which, as mentioned earlier, claim the existence of a 'Skodvin-school' of research. Certainly, Skodvin was influential enough to direct the research towards an emphasis on the resistance simply by virtue of his academic merits and 'weight'. The role he had played as consulting expert for the

³⁷⁷ Interview with Arnfinn Moland and Ivar Kraglund in Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, 2 February 2005.

³⁷⁸ Sønsteby, Gunnar, *Rapport Fra 'Nr.24'*, Oslo: Orion ⁵2003.

³⁷⁹ Skodvin, Magne, *Striden om okkupasjonsstyret i Norge. Fram til 25. september 1940*, Oslo: Det norske samlaget 1956.

development of the Norwegian research on the war should not be underestimated – however it was not a dictatorial one. Gudleif Forr of Dagbladet described Skodvin in his obituary as a modest and liberal person with less sense for theory but more for empirie and an always open door for his students – also those who held revisionist opinions. But Forr also makes a mention of his position in the research and as founder of institutions like the Hjemmefrontmuseum. A generation of graduate students who now are lecturers and teachers got their introduction to the history of the occupation by this "research politician."³⁸¹

It would be wrong to understand the role of these people in a conspiratory way but it is noteworthy that the most important players creating the long-lasting narratives knew each other from the times of the occupation and were, besides some personal animosities, used to a trusting relationship. That this position the veterans acquired in the memory-landscape was powerful and had to be used with care and responsibility, however, is out of the question. Andreas Hompland wrote in Dagbladet in May 1995:

*"On May 8th [1945, C.M.] the boys from the hills came down and took care of the new peace. Afterwards they became the authorized veterans and administered the ownership of memories and myths of the war-effort. [...] They somehow also got the ownership rights of the war and a monopoly of the interpretation and on what lessons should be drawn. The authorised veteran's milieu has been authoritarian, right-wing and sometimes even reactionary. They have voiced suspicion on all who have deviated from the 'right' line in defence and foreign policy."*³⁸²

And ten years later he writes: "Freedom was given to Norway as a present. That does neither reduce the commitment of those who fought nor excuse those who betrayed, but all revisions that adjust the black-and-white picture of the war are perceived as menacing for the normative narration on the war. That seems to be the fate of the veterans."³⁸³

³⁸⁰ Hjeltnes, Guri, Folkeopplysere fra fjorden, in: Morgenbladet, 6 February 2004.

³⁸¹ Forr, Gudleiv, Historie og historier, Dagbladet, 28 January 2004.

³⁸² Andreas Hompland, "Den siste krigen," Dagbladet, 6 May 1995.

³⁸³ Andreas Hompland, "8. mai i gave," Dagbladet, 8 May 2005.

1.5. SUCCESSFUL POLITICS OF REMEMBRANCE

At the end of this chapter on the development of the Norwegian narrative of the war, it is time for a small preliminary conclusion. As could be seen from the previous pages, the Norwegian population and their elected representatives did their best to reconstruct the heavily damaged self perception after the traumatic defeat and an occupation that had divided the country by stressing the memory of those who resisted and to some extent of those who became victims. This added to a pacification of the societies, was a prerequisite for a new beginning in Europe and also in Norway. Moreover it could also be observed that such a peculiar structure of the officially propagated narrative or a memory shared by the majority of the population was not immune to challenges and subject to adjustments over time. Several scholars have suggested different classifications of phases in which the narrative developed. A "time of pain" (smertetiden) which was marked by a great intensity of media reports on the events to satisfy the deep-felt need to understand what had happened, was replaced by a period of relative calmness in the 1950s, which were, however, a time of intense pioneer work in historical research.³⁸⁴ The characteristic of the 1960s was again a "search for a uniform interpretation of history."³⁸⁵ Focal points of this search were the debate in parliament on a concluding statement on the legal purge and about the role of Vidkun Quisling vis-à-vis the Germans and the Norwegians.³⁸⁶ The 1970s on the other hand brought greater openness to hitherto withheld topics, which will be shown in the last part of this thesis when the role and the perception of the NS-barn and tyskerbarn will be discussed. In this period the transitional justice also came under slight scrutiny when the public became aware that some members of the parliament were condemned traitors. The publication of some books on the role of one of Norway's greatest writers Knut Hamsun also triggered discussion about his stance with regard to the Nazis – German and Norwegian ones.³⁸⁷ Television played a great role in the next round of debates in the 1980s, which could be described as a time of attempts to historicise the war as well as a time of revisionism.³⁸⁸ As the programme *Holocaust* triggered a totally new preoccupation with the topic of the European genocide, the 1981 NRK-series *I solkorsets tegn* (In the Age of the Sun-Cross (a yellow cross on a round red background was the NS' sign)) in which for the first time, Norwegian Nazis were

³⁸⁴ Larsen, Innledning, p. 22.

³⁸⁵ Maerz, Landesverrat, p.48.

³⁸⁶ The latter debate was very much triggered by a exculpating biography of Quisling written by Ralp Hewin (Quisling. Prophet without Honour, London: W. H. Allen 1965, Norw. Quisling, profet uten ære, Oslo: Institutt for samtidshistorie 1966). The debate led to the publication of the above-quoted Norway and the Second World War which was also meant to strengthen the resistance view of the war in the eyes of the world that was felt as being jeopardized by Hewin's book. Maerz, Landesverrat, p. 49.

³⁸⁷ Hansen, Thorkild. Prosessen mot Hamsun, Oslo: Gyldendal 1978. More on Hamsun later.

also interviewed sparked off a renewed discourse on the narrative which led, at the end of this decade to a Norwegian version of the German 'Historikerstreit' with most senior scholars as well as young researchers raising their voices.³⁸⁹ The question of a monopolised research and a Skodvin-school of research started and for the first time historiography was also called to account for its research motives and methods, a trend that continued with ever increasing momentum through the 1990s and well into our new millennium. In the last years with a development of a global memory culture on the genocide of the Jews the questions of collaboration or turning a blind eye to the persecution of Jews became a priority topic. The growing international involvement of Norway has contributed to a stronger emphasis on the allied nation's importance for Norway's freedom and in turn on Norway's role as an allied nation.

The celebrations and the Hjemmefrontmuseum reacted differently to these challenges which I will describe later in more depth. As seen the celebrations started incorporating ever more groups of victims and heroes and integrated slowly but surely more complex interpretations of the trajectory but managed essentially to stay uniform. Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum represents clearly its origin in the 1960s and its founders continued a story that was shared by most Norwegians and that is still very appealing and touching, telling the story of courage and suffering. Despite a certain trend toward a preservation of old and loved traditions, it fostered and supported important research on the war and the occupation, albeit with the focus on the resistance. That a certain set of persons stood behind both institutions, the celebrations and the museum and also large parts of the research made this development clearly prone to certain usages and history politics. Their success is represented in the preservation of the narrative to a great extent as it developed after the war. Besides the many different indications that for some years a narrative on the war that was politically desired and promoted, prevailed, the picture is, of course, more complex and neither all of the actors nor all paradigms prevailed or stayed the same. The veterans were through the whole time agents of memory politics. They had been there once, they had *lived* it and their presence at the rituals and their testimonies, either in interviews and books or in the form of the Hjemmefrontmuseet and the speeches delivered on the anniversaries, tied the audience to the past that was celebrated and bridged the time gap. "As long as they are present, the rite cannot become abstract, cannot become 'just history'".³⁹⁰

³⁸⁸ Maerz, Landesverrat, p. 57.

³⁸⁹ Grimnes, Ole Kristian, Historieskrivingen om okkupasjonen. Det nasjonale konsens-syndromets gjennomslagskraft, in: Nytt Norsk Tidsskrift, no. 2, 1990, p. 108-121, p. 113-115.

³⁹⁰ Eriksen, "...Norge er atter fritt!", p. 9.

After this extensive description of the development of a basic narrative in the early postwar period in Norway, its consolidation over the first decades and its adaptations in the last two decades, it is now time to turn to Denmark and analyse whether and if how the same processes happened to Norway's southern neighbour. I will apply the same method and focus on the same agents of memory production.

2. DENMARK – IN PEACE BUT OCCUPIED

The following chapter will now attempt to describe the Danish agents of memory production that are comparable to the Norwegian case. It will hopefully become clear that besides striking resemblances in the way the agents are made up, the different trajectory of the country during the war also created different developments of memory production and the master narrative. The latter will be, as in the chapter on Norway, described first.

Denmark's history during the war is somewhat different from the Norwegian example. The main difference is the early surrender after just two hours of active combat in the morning of 9 April 1940.³⁹¹ The government declared at the outbreak of the war in September 1939 the country's neutrality and continued its pre-war policy of non-involvement. But in the early hours of 9 April 1940 Denmark was attacked from the direction of the Danish-German border at the same time as Norway, but with a significant difference: Denmark surrendered within hours. The Danish capital was occupied within less than an hour by a relatively small number of soldiers, meeting resistance only by the Royal Guard at the castle, and the German envoy von Renthe-Fink presented the Danish government a note that 'assured' the Danes of the German 'good intentions' and which contained thirteen demands. The Germans claimed that they had come to protect Danish neutrality against an alleged British aggression and that they did not intend to occupy the country. At the same time, German airplanes flew very low over the larger Danish towns, threatened to bomb them and dropped leaflets with the official German explanation and an appeal to surrender. The government was fully aware what the outcome of a military confrontation with the mighty enemy would be but had to decide to which conditions to surrender and when, in order to show the outside world Danish prowess. It was decided to surrender and until the order had reached all Danish army units around eight a.m., sixteen Danish soldiers had lost their lives. The occupation was already a fact when the Danes went to work that day. This 'short war' was subsequently a source for bitterness for a lot of Danes. Bo Lidegaard calls the first chapter in his book on the period "Ydmygelsen" (humiliation), probably expressing the feelings of the majority of the population at that time.³⁹² The Germans, however, did not demand acknowledgement of the occupation as a fact but rather wanted to come to an agreement with the Danes that would allow for a status with a low profile in military in

³⁹¹ The following remarks are based on Helstrup, Søren, *Besættelsen 9. april 1940*, in: Kirchhoff, Hans, Lauridsen, John T., Trommer, Aage (eds.), *Gads leksikon om dansk besættelsesrid 1940-1945*, København: Gads 2002, pp. 42-47.

³⁹² Lidegaard, Bo, *Kampen for normaliteten 1940-45*, in: Lidegaard, Bo, *Overleveren 1914-1945*, København: Gyldendal Leksikon/ Danmarks Nationalleksikon 2003. p. 389.

involvement. The Danes were seen as 'racially valuable' and a total occupation with massive troops as undesirable. The agreement reached with the Danes was that the two countries were not officially at war but the contacts would continue through the foreign ministries and the embassy in Copenhagen to where a special envoy would be assigned. This state of non-belligerence was of course an illusion and every decision taken by the Danish government would have to be arranged with the Germans. The bigger and older democratic parties in the parliament realized that the de-facto occupation of the country needed united efforts and joined in a coalition government. In the following years, this government of Social Democrats, Conservatives, Liberals and Radical Liberals manoeuvred through increasing German demands and rising Danish discontentment. It managed to keep the jurisdiction under Danish control and tried to keep the country safe. It administered Danish life despite the presence of German troops in the country and was again confirmed by free elections in the spring of 1943. These elections were the only free and democratic elections held in German-occupied Europe; however, the Communist Party was not admitted as it had already been forbidden in 1941 when the Danish state, under German pressure, joined the Antikomintern-pact. The elections could be interpreted as a popular vote for the policy of the government, as a protest against Nazism (the Danish Nazi party, in absolute terms, lost votes from the electorate that was not part of the German minority), but also as a criticism of the cooperation with the Germans since they confirmed the support for the democratic parties but boosted the Conservatives who were the only ones in the coalition government who ever criticised the concessions.³⁹³ But in 1943 a series of strikes and riots originating in smaller towns provoked angry German reactions and hard demands, of which the introduction of the death penalty and the handing over of provocateurs to the Germans were the worst. These demands and the general switch in public opinion – the people showed widespread sympathy with the insurgents forced the government to step back. This abdication was done very reluctantly and cooperation with the Germans continued through the heads of the departments. The political responsibility at least was given up. The resistance celebrated this break-up of the official cooperation as a major success. The Germans also arrested on that day the Danish soldiers and took over the barracks. The fleet had its heroic chapter on that day because the staff managed to either sink the majority of vessels so as not to let the Germans make use of them or to sail them into Swedish territorial waters. The Danish forces had several casualties on that day. The Germans, now officially in control of the country started introducing their military administration and with the arrest of the Danish police force in 1944 the reign of

³⁹³ On the Conservative Party see: Birkelund, Peter, Samarbejde eller brud? Det Konservative Folkepartiets store dilemma, in: Lund, Joachim (ed.), Partier under pres – demokratiet under besættelsen, København: Gyldendal 2003, pp. 95-129.

terror by German-backed groups of criminals began. It was also in that last year that sabotage got in full swing. It should be stressed, however, that contrary to common interpretation, the cooperation with the Germans did not end that day. The administrative heads of the ministries, the 'departementschefer' continued to fully cooperate with the Wehrmacht and the German administration in agreement with their former superiors and political leaders. Relations with the Germans were officially conducted via the Foreign Ministry and the German Embassy in Copenhagen, where the ambassador had become a 'Reichsbevollmächtigter' (a Reichsplenipotentiary). The notion of the two countries as legally independent and equal partners was of course just fiction. The German army had enough soldiers in the country to pose a serious threat, and Germany was the ruling power in Europe. The Germans never intended keeping their hands off the country's wealth and administration—and proceeded to follow through with their intentions. Though always through the Reichsbevollmächtigten, and always in the elegant language of diplomacy, the Germans made demands right from the start. The government in Copenhagen tried to evade the worst of them by means of bargaining but had to give in more and more. It managed to keep the Germans away from the direct administration and the democratic system as a whole and even saved the judiciary from German intervention. And yet, considerable concessions were made: the Prime Minister Vilhelm Buhl and other leading politicians were forced to resign, and were replaced by others who were readier to give in; Buhl's successor, Erik Scavenius, also signed the Antikomintern treaty in Berlin; the parliament passed legislation forbidding the Danish Communist Party. The government did not intervene when the Germans started recruiting Danish Volunteers to the Waffen-SS but encouraged Danish entrepreneurs to do business with them.

All these concessions by the government put a constant strain on the coalition and more than once Scavenius had to deliver an ultimatum to his colleagues to push through his rather soft course in the face of the Germans.³⁹⁴ The wish to keep the ongoing fiction and theoretical independence seems to have outweighed the embarrassing concessions. The policy was not brought down by the resistance of politicians but solely by the growing discontent of the population with the evermore rising demands of the Germans that exceeded the scope covered by the fiction of negotiations.

The policy of the first three years proved for Denmark a useful tool. The country came out of the war in 1945 as the one that suffered the least destruction—the smallest number of casualties in proportion to the population and with the highest BNP in Europe. The moral price was of course

³⁹⁴ In-depth analyses on the conduct of the different political parties can be found in Lund, Joachim (ed.), *Partier under pres – demokratiet under besættelsen*, København: Gyldendal 2003.

higher. The Allies did not, until summer 1943, count Denmark as being an occupied country but rather as a collaborating enemy country, and it was definitely the merit of the active resistance that, in the end, enabled the country to be considered an ally and become a founding member of the United Nations. When the Frihedsrådet (Freedom council), as the united representation of the Danish Resistance, sought recognition of Denmark as an ally, the Soviet government refused and would only acknowledge the council as 'the fighting Denmark'. There were other voices though. The ousted member of the government Christmas Møller, who had fled the country and joined the 'Free Danish Forces' in Copenhagen, started a series of BBC-transmitted speeches in which he held the government in Copenhagen responsible for collaborating with the Germans and the persecution of the opposition and the resistance. He specifically criticised a speech by Prime Minister Vilhelm Buhl, who had on the Danish Radio called on his fellow Danes to inform the authorities of any suspicious movements and alleged saboteur activity. Møller clearly considered this instigation to treason.

The following chapter deals with the way the first postwar months came to play a decisive role in the formulation of the interpretation of the occupation. I will try to identify the factors and agents that were effective from very early on.

2.1. THE POSTWAR COMPROMISE – A BASIC NARRATIVE

The last year of the occupation with its reign of terror and despair made some individuals on both sides, within the old parties and the resistance movement, understand that only a joint effort could restore society after the liberation. A joint effort to rebuild what was destroyed but also to heal wounds and to reconcile. Underlying was also another insight – none of the two parties could hope for unanimous support in postwar Denmark. The old political parties still had their organizations and their faithful supporters, but the resistance movement was not only popular; it also gathered lots of young people. And yet, neither the disappointment with the parties in the parliament nor the fears for a communist takeover were enough to give one of the two the upper hand. Cooperation was also badly needed on the side of the Parliament, since the collaboration with the Germans had de-legitimized the old politicians who were now seeking recognition through a connection with the resistance. They had to come up with a legitimization of their conduct over the years, or as some said, had to explain and communicate what they had done to protect the population and why. The main claim of the parliamentary parties was that they had acted as a shield for the Danes and the resistance. Under their protection from German martial law and secret service the active resistance could develop until the time was ripe to openly oppose the occupier. As in France with De Gaulle and Pétain, this shield and sword theory was to distribute equally the merit for the resistance between the resistance and the old regime.³⁹⁵ The celebrations of the Danish national day, the *grundlovsdagen*, in 1945 were also put into service of the idea of national community and the unity of parliament and resistance. Historically these celebrations had been organized alongside parties, that year however the festivities were organized together as a sign of gathering around common values.³⁹⁶ The resistance on the other hand had a vital interest to stress the moment of unity itself since it was the means to claim to speak for the whole country which lent its words a greater weight – in front of the population and the politicians but also in front of the allies.³⁹⁷ Last but not least, and certainly not least important was that there were also parts of the resistance that had a great interest in preserving the pre-war system of government. It was the part of the resistance that was, loosely or tightly, connected to the parliamentary parties. In the end all parts entered the liberation-government because they "had more to lose by not doing so."³⁹⁸ So in 1944, first

³⁹⁵ For France see Lagrou, *Victims of Genocide*, p. 195.

³⁹⁶ Warring, Anette, Warring, Anette, *Historie, magt og identitet. Grundlovsfejring gennem 150 år*, Århus: Aarhus Universitetsforlag 2004, p. 112.

³⁹⁷ Nielsen, Lars, *50-års jubilæet for besættelsen*, Diss. (speciale), Københavns Universitet, 2000, p. 15.

³⁹⁸ Nationalmuseet, exhibition *Spærretid, "Indæmningen – Containment"*, 2005.

contacts were established between the Frihedsrådet and politicians of the 'old parties' and slowly but in the end successfully a compromise on the transition period and the necessary legal purge was found. A liberation-government that was to take over until a new parliament could be elected was chosen. Of course people like the representative of the cooperation with the Germans Scavenius were not appropriate for the position of prime minister; he was the embodiment of the samarbejd. Vilhelm Buhl, the man who had been statsminister in the first year and who was dismissed by request of the Germans was suitable. His anti-sabotage-speech calling on the Danes to inform the police about suspected sabotage-activity could be overlooked when it served the necessary compromise.

The new government took over on the very day of the liberation and served until the first free elections in October. That seems to be a considerably short period of time and yet it was a very crucial one since it was the time when far-reaching decisions were taken and therefore the compromise reached in the liberation summer had also far-reaching consequences for the creation of a historical consciousness of the war time. The creation of the liberation government was seen as the natural consequence of the unity and cohesion of the occupation.³⁹⁹

Clearly not all the frihedskæmper were equally happy with the compromise reached between the Frihedsrådet and the parties. The newly appointed Prime Minister Vilhelm Buhl, who in his speech had called for betraying the partisans, was particularly considered a traitor and unfit for this post in the liberation government. Some of the younger fighters may have felt betrayed now by the Frihedsråd.⁴⁰⁰ But, it was here in the historical compromise to form the liberation government that the "myth of the Danish people at war"⁴⁰¹ was created – the compromise between the establishment and the rebellious youth laid down the perception of the war for the generations to come. Danes had been united, that was the message and that they had resisted:

"Possibly the most historically significant results of the reconciliation were that it forced Danish politicians to abandon any defence of their policy during the occupation, paying tribute to the resistance instead. As a result the picture of the occupation period passed down to posterity was one in which the resistance had been in the right."⁴⁰²

This had of course effects on the population which now strongly identified itself with the resistance. According to a survey in June 1948, around 300.000 people claimed to have been

³⁹⁹ Nielsen, 50-års jubilæet for besættelsen, p. 15.

⁴⁰⁰ Røjel, Jørgen, Da freden brød ud. Modbevægelse og retsopgør, København: Samleren 1995, p. 18.

⁴⁰¹ Kirchhoff, Hans, Den store myte om det danske folk i kamp. Om besættelsen i dansk kollektiverindring, in: Dethlefsen, Henrik/ Lundbak, Henrik (ed.), Fra mellemkrigstid til efterkrigstid. Festskrift til hans Kirchhoff og Henrik S. Nissen på 65-årsdagen oktober 1998, København: Museum Tusulanums Forlag, Københavns Universitet 1998, pp. 395-423.

⁴⁰² Nationalmuseet, exhibition Spærretid, "Indæmningen – Containment", 2005.

part of a resistance group and in the age group of 17-65 year-olds 17% declared their active resistance, a number which even with a very broad understanding of the term 'resistance' was far from plausible. But this narrative of a united Danish people in the resistance fulfilled an "import function for the mental hygiene" of the people.⁴⁰³

Back to Normal – the First Free Elections and the 'Modbevægelsen'

In October the Danes were called again to the polls in the first free postwar elections. It was a crucial moment for both the resistance movement and the politicians of the old parties. The resistance and especially the communists were hoping for a landslide victory, given the fact that they had suffered so much and fought so bravely. The old parties had to fear the consequences of the possibly necessary, but very unpopular, cooperation with the Germans. But as in Norway, the voters did not change the basic composition of the party system. Even worse, those who had acted and agitated were not rewarded at all and lost the elections. Maybe the fear of the middle-class and the peasantry of those young rebels or maybe the fear of communism brought a victory for the old parties. Reasons are legion – the better organisation of the established parties, the above mentioned fears, the internal discord among the resistance organisations. The politicians also tried to limit the influence of the resistance by focussing on negative sides of the movement and by stretching the youth and the anti-authoritarian character of the movement. Hartmut Frisch, a social-democrat, for example, publicly called the liquidations of the resistance murder and pointed to the 'irresponsible leadership' of the resistance. The anti-resistance propaganda was so harsh that the communist publisher Børge Outze called it with reference to the Danish term for the resistance-movement 'modstandsbevægelse' a 'modbevægelse' (countermovement).⁴⁰⁴ But the people were also tired of war and suffering and wanted to get back to normality. The old parties seemed to guarantee the fulfilment of that longing best. The resistance groups had all had great expectations of the 'new Denmark' after the liberation and had to face disillusion, there was no new beginning and the mostly young fighters did not get a greater share of the political responsibility. One reason, however, was that after the war was over the different groups that had earlier cooperated reasonably well now fell out with each other. The resistance did not manage to form a united political power but organisationally fell apart. Only the communists and the group Holger Danske formed parties for the first elections – and they were not of major influence in the times to come. Most fighters and also the leaders

⁴⁰³ Kirchhoff, Hans, Når selvrespekten skal rettes op, Information, 15 October 2003.

⁴⁰⁴ Høymark, Peter W., Modstandsbevægelse og modbevægelse. En undersøgelse af forholdet mellem partier og modstandsbevægelse i befrielsesommeren 1945 med specielt henblik på partiernes politik over for modstandsbevægelsen, Årsskrift for Frihedsmuseets Venner, København 1985.

like Frode Jacobsen of the Frihedsråd chose the existing parties to continue political work. The fame and significance in public life of those who did not vanished. The politicians on the other side gained acceptance as part of this resistance. It does seem paradoxical but: The resistance was the only paradigm that was worth hailing. The politicians claimed their share and at the same time portrayed themselves as the only responsible resistance group.

Opgøret – Indulgence for the Politicians

The liberation government was a compromise between the collaborating politicians and the resistance movement – a compromise that was also needed for the following purge. During all the years and especially during the last year people were killed and tortured by the German occupant as well as its Danish accomplices. Both the German war criminals and the treacherous Danes deserved punishment. The question was where to draw the line, what to make punishable. The prerequisites were different from the neighbour in the North. Unlike the Norwegians the Danes never had a government in exile that could amend laws and regulations on this matter – moreover the government had persecuted Danish patriots in the first three years itself. The Frihedsrådet had given the legal purge only some general thought and broadly demanded an 'opgøret'. But they certainly expected this purge to be wide-ranging. In illegal pamphlets a purge of the politicians who handed the country over to the Germans was also suggested. But it did not define the ways this had to be done. One of the reasons might have been that the parts of the resistance sympathetic with the old parties had curbed the communist and conservative claims for revenge. The only thing the resistance was united in was the call for special courts to deal with the crimes committed under the occupation- but they did not get it. The outcome of the power struggle on the reckoning with the politicians was deployment of a parliamentary board of inquiry that after years of examination not surprisingly found none of their peers guilty; its fourteen volume material supplement though was for a while the best or only source of historical research.⁴⁰⁵ Thus not only the politicians were officially and authoritatively acquitted, but this was also consolidated through the sources that were available for research.

Some other cases seemed indisputable though: informers to the Gestapo, torturers and ideological collaborators had to be punished. Especially those who had committed crimes in the time of terror were punishable with the existing laws and with the laws on landssvik that were amended in 1945 retroactively. The person put in charge of this was Busch-Jensen who was made Minister of Justice. Busch-Jensen was one of the resistance ministers; he had been a

⁴⁰⁵ Kirchhoff, Hans, "Historieskrivning og myter. Konsensus og konflikt i synet på besættelsestidens historie. Forsøg på et rids af forskningsdiskussionen, in: Danmarks besættelse og befrielse - 40 år efter. Historie & Samtidsorientering , 1985, vol. 1, pp. 42-66, p. 43.

member of the social democratic resistance movement 'Ringen'. His position was a consequence of the compromise; he had a clean record and yet was probably not expected to go down too harsh on the politicians. As a matter of fact they were all cleared. This and the fact that the prime minister, who had asked the public for cooperation with the police in the persecution of freedom-fighters, became prime minister again in 1945 made parts of the resistance movement suspicious with regard to the re-introduction of the democratic rule and the effectiveness of the reckoning with the traitors.

Another problem with the Danish retsoppgjøret was, as in Norway, that it was not continuous over time, nor did it affect all other parts of society in the same way. The first people that were sentenced got a much harsher verdict than those condemned at the end of the 1940s. As in Norway the economic collaboration was not, or just in a few cases, prosecuted. The reason for this was of course, that for the first three years the government had actually encouraged the cooperation with the Germans in all economic fields. The main difference to the Norwegian rettsoppgjøret was that no one was sentenced because of his membership to a political party. As mentioned above, DNSAP never gained power and therefore never played a decisive role in the Danish trajectory. Their members were prosecuted on the basis of other crimes. A considerable number of them had volunteered for the SS or joined the terror-groups like the Schalburgkorps. Probably the largest single group that came under the suspicion of organized collaboration were the members of the German minority in southern Jutland.⁴⁰⁶ The large extent of the collaboration with the Germans during the attack as well as afterwards sent shock-waves through Danish society and put a heavy strain on the relationship between the majority and the minority populations.

The first Generation of Historians – the Basic Consensus Narrative Established

But what was or is in essence the dominant narrative of the Danish war? It is a story of resistance – or rather a story of *résistancialisme*. Jørgen Hæstrup, the grand seigneur of Danish research on war history collaborated in 1963 on a little booklet for the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In this book the first three years of the occupation, the period of the cooperation policy, is called the background.⁴⁰⁷ The booklet's publisher and the title *From Occupied to Ally*.

⁴⁰⁶ For an in-depth description of that topic and further literature: Lammers, Karl Christian, Den danske modstandsbevægelse og det tyske mindretal i Sønderjylland, in: Nationale mindretal i det dansk-tyske grænseland 1933-1945. Edited by Robert Bohn, Uwe Danker, and Jørgen Kühl. Aabenraa: Institut for grænseregionsforskning, Institut für schleswig-holsteinische Zeit- und Regionalgeschichte 2001.

⁴⁰⁷ Hæstrup, Jørgen, *From Occupied to Ally. Danish Resistance Movement 1940-45*, København: Press and Information Department of the Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1963, series Panorama Denmark. The booklet was republished by the Frihedsmuseets Venners Forlags Fond (Friends of the Frihedsmuseet) in 2000 and is sold at the museum's book-shop.

Danish Resistance Movement 1940-45 already reveals its outlook and purpose. The book is a piece of propaganda, probably produced for the Ministry to be given away as 'essential' information on Denmark and Danish history. In 1963, in one of the peak times of the Cold War, the book was also meant to show the Danish determination as member of the NATO. The cover page shows a stylized a bomber plane that drops parachutists and containers with material – not only a part of the history of the Danish resistance but also a clear allusion to the cooperation with the SOE. The pamphlet is meant to say: We have not forgotten and are steadfast allies. But this little booklet is not a part of a master-minded plan to fool the partners; it is a reflection of how decisive parts of the Danish population interpreted the war history in those days and not to a small degree still do. Referring to the invitation Denmark received in 1945 to the conference of the United Nations, Hæstrup writes: "The invitation was an implied confirmation that in the five years of occupation Denmark had transformed from her status of occupied territory to Allied nation."⁴⁰⁸ As I will show the trauma of having – forcefully – cooperated with the Germans sat so deep that this status as ally and as victor of the war that was militarily lost so quickly, is invoked over and over again. Denmark here shares more than Norway a feature of other occupied countries.

The first weeks and months after the liberation were a time of information overflow. After the time of censorship the population was starved of news and stories as had been the case in Norway. The newspapers and the weeklies saw dream editions and very quickly accounts of saboteurs and resistance fighters were published as short stories and novels. The historians had to catch up. One of the first editions on sources on the occupation was *Besættelsens fakta*, a rich collection of the main sources and documents published by the association of lawyers.⁴⁰⁹ Another one was the report of the parliamentary inquiry that analogous to a the similar one in Norway was set up after the liberation.⁴¹⁰ The very extensive supplement grew until its publication, and afterwards to 23 volumes in total. Building on these sources, the party-organizations had sensed that after the war there might arise a need for a legitimate narrative and had already started prepare to their own narrative and historiography during the war. For the Social Democrats it was Hartmut Frisch who had gathered material and started editing it right after the war, the Conservatives were well served with Vilhelm La Cour a right-conservative

⁴⁰⁸ Hæstrup, *From Occupied to Ally*, p. 40.

⁴⁰⁹ Alkiel, Nils (ed.), *Besættelsestidens Fakta. Dokumentarisk Haandbog med Henblik paa Lovene af 1945 om landsskadelig Virksomhed*, 2 vols, København: Sagførerraadet, J.H. Schultz Forlag, 1945.

⁴¹⁰ *Betænkning til Folketinget afgivet af den af Tinget under 15. juni 1945 nedsatte Kommission i Henhold til grundlovens §45. I-XV*, 23 vols supplement, København 1945-58.

historian who had joined the resistance and had to flee to Sweden.⁴¹¹ Aage Friis finally compiled an anthology with contributions from members of the cooperating government and published it in five volumes from 1946 to 1948.⁴¹² Certainly one of the best and most influential books written back then was the one by Frisch. Frisch, who later became Minister of Education, was himself a historian and classical philologist and as Hans Kirchhoff later claimed "therefore also trained to manipulate his sources."⁴¹³ From the start the politicians had worked untiringly towards the break. And even if their actions to stop sabotage and the strikes in August 1943, that led to the break up of the cooperation government, belied this claim, this narrative set the precedent for the parties' historical representations and efforts to present them as part of the resistance. Official Denmark has since then always followed this interpretation – as did the majority of Danes that either never joined the struggle or even opposed the resistance. But not only the politicians and the lay population were impressed by the early research, these anthologies had the same importance for the first historians to write independently on the war history as had Steen's *Norges krig* in Norway. Undoubtedly they had a great influence in a climate where reliable information on the country during the occupation was scarce and where a population was looking for orientation. Once the differing parts of the populations had 'their history' officially written the dissemination of the narrative could follow.

The most important historian of the first two decades after the war was Jørgen Hæstrup. Hæstrup's oeuvre is extensive and he wrote very influential books on the topic and eventually became a benchmark for all his successors. His approach focused on the military acts of resistance and the contact with the British intelligence, which is not surprisingly taking into account the fact that he was part of this very branch of the resistance and forced underground in 1944. But by researching them he illuminated almost every aspect of the history of the occupation.⁴¹⁴ His follow up on his thesis project on the SOE in Denmark even had a legal epilogue. In *Hemmelig alliance* Hæstrup also described the so-called skew dissemination of weapons when the officer groups of the clandestine resistance army received more weapons than the leftist or bourgeois groups.⁴¹⁵ On the basis of his findings, the editor of the communist newspaper *Land og Folk* Martin Nielsen called Generalløjtnant Viggo Hjalp a traitor and was

⁴¹¹ Frisch, Hartvig. 1945-1948. Danmark besat og befriet. Vol. I-III. København. And La Cour, Vilhelm. Danmark under besættelsen. I-III. 46-47. København:Westermann.

⁴¹² Friis, Aage, Danmark under verdenskrig og besættelse, vols. I-V, Odense 1946-1948 the first two volumes were edited by P. Munch..

⁴¹³ Kirchhoff, Hans, Når selvrespekten skal rettes op, Information, 15 October 2003.

⁴¹⁴ Especially important was his thesis *Kontakt med England 1940-43*, København: Thaning og Appels, 1954, that was very well received among the comrades from the resistance due to the importance it assigned the resistance in the course of the occupation. Also important: Hæstrup, Jørgen, *Den 4. våbenart*, Odense: Odense Universitetsforlag 1977, Odense University studies in history and social sciences, vol. 34.

⁴¹⁵ Hæstrup, Jørgen, *Hemmelig Alliance*, 2 vols., København: Trajan 1968.

consequently sued by Hjalff. The affair was even discussed in parliament and Hjalff was, in the end, forced to resign.⁴¹⁶ Hæstrup's *Til landets bedste...* of 1966, where he examined the conduct of the ministers of state after the resignation of the government in 1943, should be viewed in the light of the consensus approach. The ministers appear almost as a supplement to the resistance.⁴¹⁷ As a strong supporter of the resistance he was working with the notion of the resistance being the direct forerunner of Denmark's NATO-involvement. In the last sentences of the above-mentioned little booklet for the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs he writes that the reorientation of Danish foreign policy that occurred in the immediate postwar years was "arising out of an occupation which was seen as a proof that the traditional policy of neutrality failed to provide security, and reinforced by a resistance struggle that was an affirmation of the national will to share in the duties of international responsibility."⁴¹⁸

This kind of historical research and writing that focussed on the resistance and the unity of the Danish people faced with the German oppressor, and which at least for a long time did not take an interest in the 'other side', the Danish and the German Nazis, the Wehrmacht, the collaborators and the cooperation of the politicians was for a long time called *konsensussyn* (consensual view of the war). It dominated the works of the early historians as well as of their disciples and also seems to have dominated a research institution – the DNH. The victorious freedom-fighters had, with Hæstrup, found 'their' historian. Hæstrup had started his work on his own account and motivated just by scholarly conviction but later another element was introduced – the Udgiverselskab for Danmarks Nyeste Historie (DNH). The DNH was founded in 1960 by Royal order and equipped with a large budget. It was the Minister of Education Jørgen Jørgensen who asked Hæstrup to become the chairman. There seems to have been the idea on the part of the politicians, that the 'enemy of the war years', the resistance, was now sufficiently researched and that now there should be a more 'balanced' research.⁴¹⁹ This could be seen as a direct political result of the previous Hjalff-Affair since the General could be interpreted as belonging to the side of the politicians. Now the 'tables would be turned'.

Hæstrup, who until then had done his research in his leisure time, became the head of research. The aim was to support historical research in the field of war history under generous interpretation of the strict archival regulations. The DNH supported during his existence numerous works on the occupation history, but probably the most interesting feature was the

⁴¹⁶ More on the Hjalff-affair in Bryld, Warring, *Besættelsestiden*, pp. 193-196.

⁴¹⁷ Hæstrup, Jørgen, *Til landets bedste... Hovedtræk af departementschefstyrets virke 1943-1945*, København: Udgiverselskab for Danmarks Nyeste Historie 1966.

⁴¹⁸ Hæstrup, *From Occupied to Ally*, p. 40.

⁴¹⁹ Bryld, Claus, *Er vi selv historie? Kampen om samfundets legitime erindring*, paper presented at Det 24. Nordiske Historikermøde Århus 9.-14. August 2001. <http://aarhus2001.hum.au.dk/rundborde/bryldpdf.pdf>, p. 5.

generous access to archives that was granted by the authorities to every scholar connected to the DNH. This most definitely helped them to find and describe hitherto unknown findings but also provoked distrust. Suspicion was raised, however, that the DNH which was founded under influence of the government and the ruling parties was meant and could be (mis-)used as a tool to produce historiography that supported their point of view – i.e. a justification of the cooperation-policy.⁴²⁰ All in all, the DNH certainly has favoured historical research that was based on the consensus view of Danish war history, but has also funded critical conflict-oriented research. An example of the consensus view would be Henrik Nissen's *1940 – Studier i forhandlingspolitikken og samarbejdspolitikken* but an example of the conflict view would be the work of Kirchhoff on the August-uprising which will be examined later.⁴²¹ An assessment of its role or even an accusation of biased research is therefore hard to make. Certainly those scholars that were connected to the DNH were granted privileged access to some archives which does raise the fundamental question on the freedom of research. It would be safe to assume that the political parties involved in the creation of the DNH had hoped for more but could not always get what they desired. Comparisons to the role of the Samtidshistoriske Forskningsgruppe under Skodvin in Norway are not far-fetched.

So much about the early research, but it seems that novels and rather entertaining genres also had their share in shaping the picture of the Danish war against the German occupation. An abundance of resistance fighter-novels came out after the war of which some made it to long-lasting best-sellers. Knud Sønderby's *Den usynlige hær* (The Invisible Army) is an example of such a resistance novel.⁴²² Written right after the war, it was made a movie the same year and told the story of a group of saboteurs. Books like Sønderby's and the stream of resistance memoirs also published by the weekly magazine helped shape a view of the war that was focussing on the military resistance of a few as representation of the many.⁴²³ Another Danish self-image was that of being a small but cunning people that defied the German occupation not just with sabotage but also with humour. This popular theme was expressed in a vast amount of books and booklets gathering the jokes of the occupation – kidding the Germans wherever and whenever possible. The title of one of these booklets is representative of this kind of literature: *Vi fuppede tyskerne... Mange smaa sande beviser paa dansk opfindsomhed og humør under*

⁴²⁰ See for an in-depth study of the history behind the foundation of the DNH: Brunbech, Peter, Udgiverselskab for Danmarks Nyeste Histories besættelsesprojekt. En casestudie i forholdet mellem politik og videnskab, Diss. Aarhus Universitet, 2002, and Politiske og videnskabelige mål – bagom stiftelsen af Udgiverselskabet for Danmarks Nyeste Historie, in: Den jyske Historiker, 2002, vol. 97.

⁴²¹ Nissen, Henrik S., 1940. Studier i forhandlingspolitikken og samarbejdspolitikken, København Udgiverselskab for danmarks nyeste historie, Gyldendal 1973., Kirchhoff, Hans, Augustopprøret 1943, København: Udgiverselskab for danmarks nyeste historie, Gyldendal 1979.

⁴²² Sønderby, Knud. *Den usynlige hær*, København: Thaning og Appel 1945.

besættelsen (We pulled the German's legs – loads of little but true evidences of Danish resourcefulness and humour during the occupation).⁴²⁴

Definitely one of the main catchwords of the Danish basic narrative is the famous quote of Field Marshal Montgomery of the Danish resistance being "second to none." This quote, which was originally taken from a conversation Montgomery had had with general Gørtz of the Danish forces in Mai 1945, after the liberation, when he had called the Danish sabotage activity in that way, praising the Danish will to resist and fight for the allied cause. The slogan, however, was spread quickly, being balm for the soul. When Montgomery left Denmark a week after his 'invasion' he repeated it in a last interview on the airfield before take off. This alleged efficiency of the sabotage and the courage of the fighters was one of the premises the narrative was built upon – the other one was unity. The above-described compromise after the war that secured the peaceful transition to the peace-time and that granted the politicians inviolability but also confirmed the legitimacy and the success of the resistance has, as I have shown, created the image of a country united in repulsion for the Germans – each with his own tools and notwithstanding some minor attacks on the responsibility of the active resistance during the *modbevægelse*. This interpretation of the conduct of the majority of Danes during the war was also transformed into historiography and passed on through the educational system and as will be visible later, through celebrations, rituals and to some extent also through the Frihesmuseum. This phenomenon became so notorious and stable that it had been given a name: *konsensussyn* (consensus view). It would be short-sighted to claim only deliberate political intervention or political necessity and realism during the decisive months of the transition from war to peace, but as in Norway the development of an ideology of *résistancialisme* is most probably to a great degree also the effect of psychological mechanisms – mechanisms of denial and suppression in order to safeguard overall stability and peaceful recovery. On the side of the politicians though the fear of a swing towards the left and a communist takeover as reward for the active resistance and a change of the political system were real threats. And yet, with time going by, the consensual view of the war history was challenged.

The Challenges of the 'Revisionists'

The word 'revisionist' very often has a negative connotation and is used to depict views or projects that intend to extenuate the crimes of the Nazis. In this sense it is also often used as argument in a discourse in order to reject new approaches, since nobody wants to be called a

⁴²³ Cf, Kirchhoff, *Historieskrivning og myter*, p. 43.

⁴²⁴ Boye, Mogens. 1945. *Vi fuppede tyskerne...Mange smaa sande beviser paa dansk opfindsomhed og humør under besættelsen*. København: Winthers.

revisionist in that sense. In Norway this definition of the term is prevailing. In Denmark, on the other hand, the term rather seems to be used in a more neutral sense of somebody who questions tradition. In that sense historians could, in fact, all be called revisionist since historical writing and research inevitably end up in revision of long-standing assumptions. And yet, there are tidal waves of periods that seem more open to such new research and periods in which assumptions are stronger. One of the first greater waves began in Denmark in the 1970s.

In 1971 Aage Trommer defended his PhD thesis at the University in Odense. His thesis was a detailed analysis of the so-called jernbanesabotagen – the railway sabotages during the war. These courageous acts of blasting along the Danish rail-way lines were supposed to intercept the transfer of German troops from Norway and Denmark to the battlefields of north-western Europe. They represented for most of the postwar period the pride and self-image of the Danish resistance movement and great parts of the Danish wargeneration as they were the visible contribution for the allied cause. They constituted, together with the sabotage of factories that produced for the German forces, the reconnaissance of the Danish resistance movement for the allies and the Danish sailors, a proper military struggle and were therefore apparently important for the classification of Denmark as a part of the anti-Hitler-coalition. Most important for the veterans and the perception of their generation was probably that sabotage acts contained a real risk for the saboteur's lives. A lot of them ended in front of a German firing squad. What Trommer did was an analysis of the actual delay of transports caused by the interruption of the rail lines and thereby of the factual military value of the sabotage for the Allies. By examining the timetables and the actual schedules of the trains he came to the conclusion that the actual delays were minimal or at least much smaller than claimed by the veterans, hence the military contribution was limited. What he never denied was that the effect on the moral of the Danish population and on the view of Denmark from the outside was significant.⁴²⁵ But he did not just use German sources, he also went to the archives in Great Britain and analyzed what the SOE and the Danish contacts believed and reported on the effects of the sabotage. His conclusion was that the mere military effects on the German war machinery were at best marginal but at same time he stressed the significance of it for the Danish morale spirit inside the country and, as could be seen from the SOE reports, for the image of Denmark across its borders. Still, the veterans were outraged. On the day of the defence they performed ritual acts of wreath-laying at the graves of dead saboteurs and employees of the Danish Railways and several hundred came to attend the defence and act as an *ex auditorio* opponent. The defence developed an at times

⁴²⁵ Trommer, Aage, *Jernbanesabotasjen i Danmark under den anden verdenskrig. En krigshistorisk undersøgelse*, Odense: Odense University Press, Studies in History and Social Sciences 1971.

tumultuous character and the veterans expressed their strong disagreement, even if most of them were unlikely to have read the whole work.⁴²⁶

But Trommer did not stop there. In his book of 1973 he studied further the history of the resistance. He concentrated on one region of Denmark and the development of the resistance therein. His conclusions were that the resistance initially was not a people's movement but rather the task of a few who came from certain groups in society where ideology and discipline made them prone to an activist position.⁴²⁷ This theory was later taken up by another PhD thesis that influenced the historiography on the occupation a great deal and that triggered the veterans' resistance – the thesis of Hans Kirchhoff. In his three-volume examination of the strikes and the uprising of 1943 that led to the demission of the collaboration government, he showed in 1979 that it was especially the radicals from both sides who started organized resistance, and that they did so against the active resistance of the centre.⁴²⁸ That he was published by the aforementioned DNH did not prevent him from getting angry answers from those veterans who were affiliated to the previously cooperating parties. Although it shows again that the Udgiverselskab also funded critical research.

Whereas Trommer was seen by the veterans as a threat to their narrative because they felt he had downplayed their significance, Kirchhoff's position was rather a scratch on the image of a people unified in resistance against the Germans, albeit fighting with different means. Both professors have since been the supervisors and patrons of critical research on the occupation time. In 1992, Trommer was still able to trigger reactions from the veterans. They wanted to prevent his findings being incorporated into a new exhibition in the Frihedsmuseum. And the same year the protest against a critical thesis on the police during the occupation was maybe more furious because of the incumbent dean of the university, Aage Trommer.⁴²⁹ Another scholar should be named here who started his research in the 1980s – Palle Roslyng-Jensen. Following the conflict view of Danish occupation history à la Kirchhoff, his book on the relationship between the politicians and the clandestine army build up in the last years of the occupation and the role the imprisoned, released or fled army officers played, was in kind a continuation of the Hæstrup studies but ideologically close to the movement around Kirchhoff.⁴³⁰ With his work he aimed to prove, that the politicians tried to and managed to keep

⁴²⁶ Interview with Aage Trommer in Odense on 26 August 2004.

⁴²⁷ Trommer, Aage, *Modstandsarbejde i Nærbillede. Det illegale arbejde i Syd- og Sønderjylland under den tyske besættelse af Danmark 1940-1945*, Odense, Odense University Press. Odense University Studies in History and Social Sciences, vol. 7, 1973.

⁴²⁸ Kirchhoff, Hans, *Augustoprøret 1943*, København: Udgiverselskab for danmarks nyeste historie, Gyldendal 1979.

⁴²⁹ Lunn, Leif, *Klage til Universitetet*, in: *FV - Frihedskampens Veteraner*, vol. 128 (1992), pp. 11-13.

⁴³⁰ Roslyng-Jensen, Palle, *Værnenes politik - politikernes værn*, København: Gyldendal 1980.

the officers under control to use them against possible demands or threats from the resistance after the end of the war and that the officers were loyal to the politicians during the whole occupation. This was in itself not new and certainly veterans from the Frihedsrådet still remembered this but to write it for a broader audience was a rupture in the *konsenssyn*.

Also outside the historical profession, critical research was done on the Danish war or postwar history. Probably the most important contribution in this respect came from the jurisprudence of all fields. In 1985, Ditlev Tamm published a widely-read work on the Danish legal purge. In *Retsopgøret efter besættelsen* he showed the difficulties of the legal proceedings and the also touched on the sensitive issue of the liquidations of the resistance movement.⁴³¹

All this new research starting in the 1970s and early 1980s, and which called the unity of the people during the occupation into question and challenged the hitherto traded narrative of the *konsenssyn* was subsequently and logically called *konfliktsyn* (conflict view).⁴³² For some time the two 'types' or 'generations' of historical research on the war and the occupation were presented as opposite poles or incompatible, but in the last years doubts have arisen about the clarity of the divide and the characterizations.⁴³³

Second Wave of Critical Historiography - Bryld/Warring Debate

As will be visible later, a striking discrepancy between the academic historiography and memory and historical research has existed since around 1970. Historiography just had a limited effect on the public practice of memory.⁴³⁴ This discrepancy continued to reign throughout the next decade. It was the 1990s that brought changes to the reigning paradigm. These changes but also the stubbornness of the public opinion and the discourse were described in 1998 in a very detailed study by the two Roskilde-professors Claus Bryld and Anette Warring. It was a project of a very special nature and the debate it triggered should be mentioned here as well. It was special because it was not a project on the occupation history itself but a historiographical analysis about its perception not unlike the thesis at hand. In the middle of the 1990s, the two scholars of Roskilde Universitetscenter embarked on an endeavour that caused, at least in the academic environment, but also among parts of the wider public, an intensive debate. Anette Warring was not a beginner in the field; she had already in 1987 written her master's thesis on

⁴³¹ Tamm, Ditlev. *Retsopgøret efter besættelsen*, København: Jurist- og Økonomforbundets Forlag 1985.

⁴³² Roslyng-Jensen, Palle, Befrielsesjubilæet og den nyere besættelseslitteratur. Idealister og 'materialister' i besættelsesforskningen, in: *Historisk Tidsskrift* (DK), no. 95, 1995, pp. 367-398; Roslyng-Jensen, Palle, Besættelsesforskningen 1995-2001. En national eller ideologisk historieskrivning?, in: *Historisk Tidsskrift* (DK), no. 101, 2001, pp. 480-530.

⁴³³ Roslyng-Jensen, Palle, Besættelseslitteraturen 2001-2006. Postmodernistisk variation og fortsat hausse, in: *Historisk Tidsskrift* (DK), 2006, no. 106, pp. 198-242.

the celebrations of the liberation in 1985 and since then worked with the role and problems of historical teaching and the war.⁴³⁵ Her PhD thesis was a much praised examination of the fate of the so-called tyskerpiger, the women who had relationships with German soldiers during the occupation.⁴³⁶ Claus Bryld, on the other hand, had been interested in the study of the occupation and its perception already at a young age due to his personal background. His father was one of the leading members of the Danish Nazi-party and he had spent some years in exile with his family before returning to Denmark. He spent his youth and university-time searching for the truth and eventually became a critical, leftist historian.⁴³⁷ Together they looked, like the study at hand, at celebrations and the Frihedsmuseum but included also other forms of education and popular culture. Yet they restricted themselves to the study of Denmark's history culture. Their book was received fairly well by most of the scholars and the newspapers made, all in all, good reviews, even though some thought that they had not added much new information to the picture. Bent Blüdnikow for example, wrote in Weekendavisen that the authors were preaching to the converted, that their alleged findings fit in a time of a desperate need for demythologization but that Danes have been much more aware of the dark spots on their nation's history and that public debate was much more open than Bryld and Warring would acknowledge.⁴³⁸

The problem with some readers or reviewers was that they had not understood the basic theme of the book: Bryld and Warring did not try to write about the war, but about the way it was remembered. If one would read the book as a contribution to the war history, it could possibly be misunderstood as an attempt to reduce the significance of the resistance. The hints at the dark spots in the memory and the suppression of some events would get different connotations. Alarm-bells were ringing among the veterans and the same things happened as at Trommer and Kirchhoff's defences happened. Veterans spoke in public and claimed that Bryld and Warring had not understood anything and were too young to understand anyway. Some even personally accused Bryld of trying to white-wash his father.⁴³⁹ Others, also scholars, rather pointed at a general tendency to destroy 'myths', something they thought of as revision for the sake of revision. The past could just not be measured with today's moral standards.⁴⁴⁰ What was striking

⁴³⁴ Bryld, Claus, Warring, Anette, Besættelsestiden som kollektiv erindring, in: Årsberetning - Institut for Historie og Samfundsforhold, RUC, Roskilde Universitetscenter, pp. 12-22, p 13.

⁴³⁵ Warring, Anette, 40 år efter. Historiebevidsthedens og historieformidlingens samfundsmæssige betydning belyst gennem en analyse af iscenesættelsen af 40 årsjubilæet for Danmarks befrielse og dets manifestation i massekulturen, speciale, Roskilde, RUC 1987.

⁴³⁶ Warring, Anette, Tyskerpiger - under besættelse og retsopgør, København: Gyldendal 1994.

⁴³⁷ Bryld gave an account of this search in: Bryld, Claus, Hvilken befrielse?, København: Gyldendal 1995.

⁴³⁸ Bent Blüdnikow, "Myter og erindring," Weekendavisen, 28 August 1998, 3 - bøger, p. 10, 3 - bøger.

⁴³⁹ Ole Hyltoft, Extra Bladet, 24 August 1998.

⁴⁴⁰ Steffen Heiberg, "De piller ved myten," Politiken, 21 August 1998, 2, p. 4, 2.

was that the whole dispute was fought not just in academic journals but also in the newspapers, like the Historikerstreit in Germany and that it was the veterans fighting it, who probably had not read the book anyway, not scholars. The arguments in the follow-up debate in the newspapers were not exactly a discussion of a prevailing history culture but quickly became a fight to defend the resistance movement.⁴⁴¹

Bryld and Warring tried to defend themselves but those who felt upset would not give in.⁴⁴² Today the book is generally accepted as a contribution to the study of history culture – at least academically.⁴⁴³ The veteran's association on the other hand attacked the book and the authors in its journal as it has done so many times before in the case of new research.⁴⁴⁴ And plenty of veterans wrote angry letters to the editor in all major newspapers accusing Bryld and Warring of besmirching the veterans. Few commentators came up with a view that was apologetic to the existing history culture yet non-offensive to the authors. Their point was that, in fact, there were and are reasons to forget after traumatic events and that there was no reason to stir up the traumatic memories and unveil dark spots because the story that has been told ever since the war was a 'good' story, a story about freedom and justice.⁴⁴⁵ Bryld and Warring's point though, that this story had brought a degree of complacency and self-righteousness was dismissed.

A very interesting finding is the vast amount of books published around the turn of the millennium and the 60th anniversary of the liberation in 2005, and especially the increase when compared to the previous years. Especially remarkable is the thematic scope of these new books which started to centre on the 'black spots' of the war history, some of them using this expression even in their blurb.⁴⁴⁶ Many of them will be treated and quoted in the chapter dealing specifically with the topics and memories that these books addressed. But it is worth noting here that after 1995, and especially after 2004, a lot of the previously un-mentioned topics are put on the agenda and hitherto forgotten groups of victims are pulled into the spotlight. Following an analysis of the German history culture that has already been mentioned above, it would even be justifiable to speak also in the case of Denmark of a *hypermnnesia* that replaced *amnesia*.⁴⁴⁷ However, part of this *hypermnnesia* are also books that do not fit into the picture of an always

⁴⁴¹ Thomsen, Kim, "Besat af fortiden - Synet på besættelsestiden i de danske aviser 1998-2001", thesis, Københavns Universitet, 2003, p.21.

⁴⁴² Claus Bryld and Anette Warring, Svar: Besættelsestiden og den kollektive erindring, Information, 17 September 1998, 1.

⁴⁴³ An in-depth description of the different trends in the debate of the book and the perceptions can be read in Bryld, Warring, Årsberetning.

⁴⁴⁴ Trommer, Kirchhoff and Roslyng-Jensen have all been negatively reviewed in the FV-bladet. In 1992 an article was published which attacked all new research. FV-bladet, no. 128, 1992. Bryld's and Warring's book was reviewed by Jørgen Kieler in FV-bladet, no. 155, 1998.

⁴⁴⁵ Thomsen, Besat af fortiden, p. 21.

⁴⁴⁶ Larsen, Leif, Clausen, Thomas, De forrødte. Tyske Hitlerflygtninge i Danmark, København: Gyldendal 1997.

⁴⁴⁷ Bergem, Barbarei als Sinnstiftung?, p. 81.

revising and criticising historiography that developed from the 1970s onwards. Books, apologetic to the cooperation policy or in the best tradition of Jørgen Hæstrup on the importance of the SOE are absolutely part of it.⁴⁴⁸ 'Old' books were republished as well.⁴⁴⁹

⁴⁴⁸ An example for the first is Lidegaard, *Kampen for normaliteten 1940-45*; for the second is Jespersen, Knud J. V., *Med hjælp fra England. Special Operations Executive og den danske modstandskamp 1940-1945*, 2 vols, Odense: Universitetsforlag 1998-2000.

⁴⁴⁹ Andersen, Carsten, *Historie: Besat Af Besættelsen*, Politiken, 26 April 2005.

2.2. MUSEET FOR DANMARKS FRIHEDSKAMP 1940-1945

In the following chapter I would like to describe agents of memory production analogous to the part on Norway. My findings will show similarities in the organization of memory production by the state as well as dissimilarities. I will begin with the *Frihedsmuseet* or *Museet for Danmarks Frihedskamp 1940-1945* (hereafter FM). The Freedom Museum or Museum of the Danish Fight for Freedom 1940-1945 is a central topos in the Danish memorial landscape.⁴⁵⁰ The aim is to follow the development of the exhibition and the museum's functions in the postwar period.

As in Norway, the resistance movement had already developed plans during the liberation summer to establish an institution to keep the memory of the resistance struggle and its victims in peoples's minds. It seems that the idea came up even some time earlier, before the liberation. Aage Schoch, one of the leading figures in the resistance movement and one of the founders of the Freedom Council (Frihedsrådet) took the initiative.⁴⁵¹ As in Norway the fact that the first exhibition as well as the final museum was made by the resistance movement itself, makes it a memorial in itself.⁴⁵² This aspect will be discussed later on.

The Frimurerloge and the Exhibition in the Nationalmuseet

It was Svenn Seehusen, a young member of the resistance who had worked for the allies as the head of the Special Forces Black Propaganda who shortly after the liberation started looking for a place to set up an exhibition on the struggle for freedom. He found what he was looking for in the former headquarters of a collaborating Danish terror-group – the Schalburgkorps. The building, the old Freemason's lodge, was, in the summer of 1945, occupied by the half communist, half bourgeois resistance group P6. Here Seehusen also met the communist Hans Hansen, architect and himself a man of the resistance group. Together, and with help from all parts of the resistance, they created the first exhibition – *Det kæmpende Danmark* (The fighting Denmark). The name was derived from a term coined during the occupation. It came up during the popular strike in Copenhagen in 1944 and depicted the active population with respect to the passive or even collaborating parts of the Danish people.⁴⁵³ It was also a term used by the Soviet

⁴⁵⁰ Bryld, Warring, *Besættelsestiden*, p. 429

⁴⁵¹ Kjeldbæk, Esben et. al., *Frihedsmuseet, Catalogue of Museet for Danmarks Frihedskamp 1940-1945*, København:Nationalmuseet 1995, p. 43.

⁴⁵² Kristensen, Sissel Bar, Dorthe Nørskov Madsen, *Frihedsmuseet – en analyse af den permanente udstilling med særlig vægt på formidlingen af oplysningen og mindet om frihedskampen*, thesis (speciale), Roskilde Universitets Center 2000, p. 4.

⁴⁵³ Kirchhoff, Hans, *Kamp eller tilpasning. Politikerne og modstanden 1940-45*, København: Gyldendal; Nordisk Forlag 1987, p. 66.

diplomacy that did not want to acknowledge the whole state of Denmark as an ally but just the 'fighting parts'. The representation of the Danes in exile in London 'Det Danske Råd' arranged an exhibition with the same name in November 1944.⁴⁵⁴ Just the choice of the name itself was already 'polemic' since it presupposed that there was a 'non-fighting' Denmark as well.⁴⁵⁵ That made the exhibition a manifestation of the victory of the resistance over passiveness.

The exhibition in the Frimurerloge was a huge success. Already in the first weeks thousands of people visited it. The surplus of DKK 100.000 was given to the Frihedsfonden, an organization founded by the Frihedsråd to take care of the victims and the families of the victims of the fight for freedom.⁴⁵⁶ The ground plan from the brochure that was produced for the exhibition in 1945⁴⁵⁷ shows the division of the space in topics. Everything that seemed important was present: there was a tribute paid to those who gave their lives in the struggle for freedom in the form of an arrangement of drapery and flags and lights in the so-called hall of commemorations (mindehall) before the beginning of the exhibition and afterwards, there were models of drop-zones for allied parachutists, an illegal print-shop, an underground-hospital for the partisans and showcases on sabotage as well as on Nazi-terror and the Gestapo-prisons and the concentration camps. On the lawn of the lodge's garden the visitors could see an open-air exhibition with larger objects like vehicles and so forth. The visitors were not free to move through the exhibition but were confined to a path that led through the labyrinth of showcases – a path that ended with the liberation, the victory of the resistance. Similar exhibitions were held at the same time in Ålborg and Odense.⁴⁵⁸ An important detail is that in the exhibition frihedskæmper would be present in person at the exhibition to explain the different parts, i.e. would show how the print shop worked and how they had produced the weapons etc. The exhibition even went abroad after it was closed in August and was shown in Sweden in Stockholm and Göteborg in a huge tent and parts were shown in other occupied countries as well, such as in London and Moscow.⁴⁵⁹ The composition was very much like the one in the Frimurerloge, which is not surprising given the fact that it was, in the end, the same exhibition. From the pictures of this first exhibition, as they can be consulted in the FM, one can get a fairly good impression of the

⁴⁵⁴ Kjeldbæk, Esben, Ting fra besættelsen – et museologisk essay, in: Dethlefsen, Henrik, Lundbak, Henrik (ed.), *Frau mellemkrigstid til etterkrigstid. Festskrift til Hans Kirchhoff og Henrik S.Nissen på 65-årsdagen oktober 1998*, København: Museum Tusulanums Forlag, Københavns Universitet 1998, pp. 359-393, p. 389.

⁴⁵⁵ Kjeldbæk, Ting, p. 360.

⁴⁵⁶ Roussel, Aage, *Museet for Danmarks Frihedskamp 1940-1945. Oprindelse og historie*, København: Nationalismuseet ²1968, p. 4.

⁴⁵⁷ Frihedsrådet (ed.), *Det kæmpende Danmark, Frimurerlogen, Juli-August 1945*, FM Bibliotek, 37A, last page. The following remarks are based on that brochure if not stated otherwise.

⁴⁵⁸ Kristensen, Sisse, Bar, Dorthe Nørskov Madsen, *Frihedsmuseet - en analyse af den permanente udstilling med særlig vægt på formidlingen af oplysningen og mindet om frihedskampen*, thesis, Roskilde Universitetscenter 2000, p.17.

⁴⁵⁹ Roussel, Aage, *Museet - Oprindelse*, p. 4.

structure of the exhibition. The first part after the memorial hall was dedicated to the clandestine press and its growth and importance for the organization of the resistance. A print shop (the objects had been used in clandestine printing) was set up as well and frihedskæmper would explain the use of it. The main space as it seems was nevertheless dedicated to military aspects of resistance. The Danforce – the Danish Brigade in Sweden and the ventegrupper, the clandestine army built up mainly in 1944 and 1945, the way they were trained and the efforts made to equip them were at the core of the exhibition. All sorts of guns, used ones, those that were homemade and even some that had never been in use were on display, as were diagrams of military plans and strategies of the Frihedsrådet or the mock-up of a clandestine hospital. In the centre of the largest room was a model of a parachute drop-zone showing the support given by the outside world, such as the SOE, to the resistance. The train sabotage was praised and a diagram showed the sheer amount of acts of sabotage giving the impression of the importance attached to this aspect of resistance. One of the most impressive display cases was probably the one with the x-rays and the pictures of the results of terror and torture of freedom-fighters. The photos of wounds and broken limbs and human backs after torture with whips were certainly impressive. There was also a fake prison cell from Vestre Fængsel, the dreadful Gestapo torture and imprisonment centre.



The drop zone of 'Det kæmpende Danmark' in the Frimurerloge, 1945 (Courtesy Frihedsmuseet)

The brochure that came with both exhibitions was a short account on how the resistance movement perceived the last years in a series of articles written by resistance members themselves rather than a proper catalogue. It starts with a poem written by Otto Gelsted asking the visitors to stop for a moment and to reflect on the fact that it may also depend on him

whether the blood of the fallen was wasted or a sacrifice. Aage Schoch, a former member of the Frihedsråd, wrote the introduction and described the objective of the exhibition: "to show the Danish people how under very difficult circumstances, with a danger for life, it was possible to carry out a resistance struggle that according to General Montgomery was second to none."⁴⁶⁰ He mentions that preparations for the exhibition were made a year earlier and that since the liberation all groups of the resistance had had the opportunity to take part in setting it up. Børge Brandt afterwards described how acts of sabotage had saved assets and helped to place Denmark among the allies and others described different aspects of sabotage, espionage for the allied forces and the escape routes to Sweden and the Danish Brigade in that very country. To be mentioned is the article by the communist Børge Houmann who wrote on the illegal press and called it, quoting Norwegian comrades "vitamins for the soul" describing its importance to the spirit of the freedom fighters and the general public's sentiment.⁴⁶¹

One should mention the cover of the brochure. It is also the billboard add of the exhibition itself and later of the Frihedsmuseum. It shows a popular image of the Danish basic narrative and self-assertion: to be small but smart – to be David, fighting a Goliath. A group of young people, almost kids still, freedom-fighters sneaks past the huge boots of the occupation power. They carry a box probably containing sabotage materiel and one holds a gun, maybe the Danish homemade version of the British 'stengun'. The cleverness of the small Danish population is confronted with the stupidity of the big power. It might have been an innuendo to an act of sabotage in 1943 where a quarters used by the German army was blown up with explosives hidden in a box of beer bottles.⁴⁶² It was no coincidence that this motif was on the brochure, since it is such an excellent reflection of the underlying notions in Danish self-perception after the war.

⁴⁶⁰ Schoch, Aage, Det kæmpende Danmark, in: Frihedsrådet, Det kæmpende Danmark.

⁴⁶¹ Houmann, Børge, Det kæmpende Danmark, in: Frihedsrådet, Det kæmpende Danmark.

⁴⁶² Deutsches Historisches Museum, Ausstellung Mythen der Nationen, URL: http://www.dhm.de/ausstellungen/mythen-der-nationen/gemeinsam_widerstanden_daenemark.htm, last acces April 15th 2005.



Part of the cover of 'Det kæmpende Danmark' that also became the poster of the FM, courtesy Frihedsmuseet.

Even though the exhibition in the Frimurerloge had a temporary nature, the amount of objects collected and the success it had called for a continuation. So the Frihedsbevægelsens Samråd, the follow-up organization of the Frihedsråd, appointed a working committee to pursue the building of a museum.⁴⁶³ The committee decided, after negotiations with the Nationalmuseum and the Ministry of Education, to hand over the exhibition to the Nationalmuseum who was to take care of it until a permanent solution was found. How important the this monument (the exhibition) was to the veterans can be gathered from the fact that the last congress of the Samråd appointed a præsidiet (board) of the foundation 'Museet for Danmarks Frihedskamp' with professionals from the Nationalmuseum, former resistance fighters including Frode Jakobson, Aage Schoch, who became the later curator of the museum, and Svenn Seehusen as members. Svenn Seehusen was made responsible for the daily administration.⁴⁶⁴ It was also him who on the 5th anniversary of the break of the cooperation policy with the Germans in August 1948 arranged a massive rally on Langenlinie with a countrywide lottery that all together yielded a surplus of DKK 500.000 for the future museum. The people involved clearly did not know how long it would take until their wishes would be fulfilled, but already in December of the following year the work for a museum came to a halt. In a letter to the members of the committee, founded by the præsidiet, that was directly involved with the practical side of the erection of the museum, Svenn Seehusen writes about a lack of money and interest. It took another eight years until the museum would finally open its big wooden gates to the public. The

⁴⁶³ Roussel, Aage, *Museet - Oprindelse*, p. 4.

⁴⁶⁴ Roussel, Aage, *Museet - Oprindelse*, p. 5.

reasons why it took that long are probably manifold but financial restraints were most likely to be among the most eminent ones. The exhibition, in the meantime, was taken care of by the National Museum. After it ended, the objects and the whole set-up was handed over to the National Museum and on 4 May 1948, in the presence of the Royal Family, the government and foreign guests a small exhibition was opened. It was called *Danmarks Frihedskamp* (Denmark's Struggle for Freedom) and its structure was very much alike the exhibition in the Frimurerloge, with a remarkable difference – an introductory part was added explaining the pre-war period, and the resistance fighters who had explained the objects in Frimurerloge were missing.⁴⁶⁵ As in the Frimurerloge and later in the Frihedsmuseum, the exhibition had a memorial part. In the manuscript it is called memorial area for the fallen (soldiers) (Danish: Mindeafdeling for Faldne).⁴⁶⁶ The structure and the objects were all there. The future museum just had to take it and put it into the new space. The whole exhibition was smaller than the one in the Frimurerloge and yet it was in this way that the tradition was continued. It must have been unsatisfactory nevertheless – for the Nationalmuseum who seems to have had other plans for the space the exhibition held and for the veterans who felt that their struggle deserved a better and bigger setting.

Churchillparken and the Frihedsmuseum

The above-mentioned pæsidiet of the foundation Museum for Danmarks Frihedskamp seems to have shared those feelings.⁴⁶⁷ The later architect of the Frihedsmuseum, who had already created the first exhibitions, Hans Hansen produced a sketch for the building and the exhibition in May 1949.⁴⁶⁸ It does not seem to have had the necessary power of persuasion and the following years appear like blank pages in a book. The architect continued to draw sketches and the members of the præsidiet to gather money. A manuscript without a date with the title *Frihedsmuseet* signed by Svenn Seehusen, which I found in the library of the FM, talks about the problems for the organisers due to a lack of official backing.⁴⁶⁹ It is difficult to find out which year it was written but it clearly describes the main problem as being a gap in the financing – the government at that early stage did not provide support for the veteran's cause. It also shows that the veterans planned to involve other veterans of the different branches of resistance to benefit from their

⁴⁶⁵ Kristensen, Sisse /Bar, Dorthe Nørskov Madsen, *Frihedsmuseet - en analyse af den permanente udstilling med særlig vægt på formidlingen af oplysningen og mindet om frihedskampen*, Diss., Roskilde Universitetscenter 2000, p. 19.

⁴⁶⁶ Kjeldbæk, Esben, *Frihedsmuseets nyopstilling*, in: *Særtryk fra Nationalmuseets Arbejdsmark*, 1996, pp. 53-64.

⁴⁶⁷ Præsidiets for Museet for Danmarks Frihedskamp, letter to the mayor of Copenhagen H. Sørensen, 17 June 1949, FM Arkiv, 37A-12.

⁴⁶⁸ Hansen, Hans, *Forslag til frihedsmuseum ved Esplanaden*, 1949, FM Arkiv, 37A-12.

⁴⁶⁹ Seehusen, Svenn, *Frihedsmuseet*, FM Bibliotek, 37a 01.

expertise. The strategy was to let the specialists help set up 'their' topics. The aim was to avoid both omissions and that resistance groups felt left out. The Danish museum makers here followed the same line as the Norwegian veterans.

But first in 1956 the men involved could celebrate and break ground.⁴⁷⁰ Then finally the Museet for Danmarks Frihedskamp 1940-1945 (FM) was opened on 15 October 1957 in the presence of the Royal Family and the ceremony was transmitted on TV and radio.⁴⁷¹ Though Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum was opened on the date of the anniversary of the liberation, the media coverage was weaker, maybe because there was too much going on that day in 1970 in Oslo, so that the electronic media was busy elsewhere. The date does not seem to have mattered in Copenhagen. At the opening the building and the exhibition were handed over to the state free of debt and were subordinated to the National Museum.⁴⁷² The veterans who had planned the museum had finally succeeded and the museum was given to the people of Denmark as a present and as a self-made memorial. One of the few things the veterans asked for was that since the building was free of any liability no entrance fee was to be charged. This is something that was in force until it had to be changed decades later by the current director Esben Kjeldbæk because of financial burdens. At the opening it was visible that the interpretation of the resistance as a united struggle of the whole people had merged with the interpretations of the politicians as representatives of a passive resistance. The old politicians were invited and all except the communist *Land og Folk* newspaper commented on that fact.⁴⁷³ The question of why Social Democrats should be made the keepers of the memory does not seem to have mattered anymore, consensus and harmony was the motto of the day.

The building itself was made for the exhibition – and was made for the exhibition only. No larger storage room and no offices were incorporated. Only a small apartment for the porter was included. It seems that the architect as well as those who planned the exhibition thought that once established revision was not needed and maintenance could be limited to heating and book-selling. Offices for staff and research were not included in the building and even the director did not take office in the Museum but stayed in the Nationalmuseet. It was not until 1967 that the director Aage Roussel was given the FM as his only assignment and took office there in the old caretaker apartment.⁴⁷⁴ It all appears as if one had felt that the exhibition was something final,

⁴⁷⁰ Roussel, Aage, Museet - Oprindelse, p. 7.

⁴⁷¹ Kristensen/ Bar, Frihedsmuseet, p.20.

⁴⁷² Roussel, Museet - Oprindelse, p. 3.

⁴⁷³ Kristensen/ Bar, Frihedsmuseet, p.21.

⁴⁷⁴ Poulsen, Else M. Flyger, Museet for Danmarks Frihedskamp 1940-1945. En institusjonsanalyse af Frihedsmuseet med særlig henblik på formidling og udstillingen, thesis (Modul 2), Roskilde Universitetscenter 1986, p. 23.

something true.⁴⁷⁵ There was no space for a later enlargement or even temporary exhibitions. In The lack of space was compensated with the opening of an additional basement that had been built with the financial support of the state. The opening was performed on 5 May 1985 in the presence of the Crown Prince and other public figures.⁴⁷⁶ It was big enough for the archive and an additional skolestue (classroom) for seminars with school classes. As in Norway, that mirrors the notion the veterans held, we have seen it, we have been at the core of the struggle, and we tell the truth. I will try to illustrate in the following how much the veterans were reluctant to changes in the exhibition.

Since the building itself was created for the purpose of the exhibition, the architecture as such contains traces of symbolism. The architect Hans Hansen was himself a member of a resistance group and as already mentioned was also the architect of the first exhibition.⁴⁷⁷ It is a humble building located in Churchillparken just off the very centre of the city. The bolts in the entrance door of the red clinker-clad building bears the Victory-sign. The three Vs that are also the logo of the supporting institution the Frihedsmuseets Venner (Friends of Frihedsmuseet) can also be read as one of the mottos given out during the occupation: Vi vil vinne! (We will win!). The door was made high and wide enough to allow the armoured vehicle that is placed on the small square in front of the museum to be driven inside if wished. This vehicle, a truck that had been clad clandestinely with metal tiles and painted with the Danish flag in order to be used as tank in an assumed final battle with the Germans, stands as the first 'military' object right in front of the museum. The vehicle was used only once for action when a group of partisans after the liberation tried to arrest some Danish collaborators who were hiding on a farm. Jørgen Røjel attributes him a decisive role in this action.⁴⁷⁸ The important point, however, is probably not whether it was used or not but that the Danish resistance was dedicated to use it if necessary. It is rather a reflection of the courage and determination than a historical witness to military action. This is also why Esben Kjeldbæk kept it after the revision of the museum contrary to some voices who felt it was too strong of a symbol.⁴⁷⁹

⁴⁷⁵ Barfod, Jørgen H. Personal Communication with Kjeldbæk, Esben, 11 February 1991, FM Arkiv, Nyopstillingen 1995.

⁴⁷⁶ Årsberetning 1985 for Frihedsmuseet. 1986. København: Frihedsmuseets Venners Forlag.

⁴⁷⁷ Roussel, Museet - Oprindelse, p4.

⁴⁷⁸ Røjel, Jørgen, Da freden brød ud. Modbevægelse og retsopgør, København: Samleren 1995, p. 14.

⁴⁷⁹ Interview with Esben Kjeldbæk in the Frihedsmuseet on 24 August 2004.



The 'tank' in front of Frihedsmuseet, 2004.

The FM behind it is a rather small building that, except for the windows in the main hall and in the annex where today the staff has its offices, has no outside windows. The exhibition is set up in the hall and a horse-shoe shaped passageway around a courtyard. This part is rather low and the whole construction integrates in a humble way into the Churchillparken – the park around it. Of course the clinker walls and the copper roof add to that impression. Only local materials were used. Hans Hansen once said that the building was like the resistance itself, built from whatever was at hand.⁴⁸⁰ The near-by Anglican church and the headquarters of Maersk are the dominating houses in that area. The whole building gives the surprising feeling that it is bigger inside than outside. To illustrate the old exhibition is quite difficult. A complete description of all texts and objects with pictures of their setting up does not exist. I will therefore rely on several theses written about the old exhibition, the catalogues I found in the library of the FM, photos of it and the accounts made by the current director Esben Kjeldbæk in the course of the revision of the exhibition. There seems to have been some changes in the exhibition in the period from 1960 to 1989. Moreover Esben Kjeldbæk, today the director of the FM, once wrote that since 1971 there have been a series of "changes and additions".⁴⁸¹ I will try to give an overview of the main themes as can be established. One thing can already be assumed now: Most of the objects as well as the main message remained the same throughout the whole time.⁴⁸²

Behind the information desk the visitor enters a big room that in the initial design was called 'kanonhallen' (Hall of canons). This room is the museum's biggest and the roof is supported by a complicated wooden structure ending in metal eyes that have no obvious function. There are two

⁴⁸⁰ Kjeldbæk, Esben, Frihedsmuseets nyopstilling, in: Særtryk fra Nationalmuseets Arbejdsmark, 1996, pp. 53-64.

⁴⁸¹ Kjeldbæk, Ting, p. 364.

⁴⁸² Kjeldbæk, Esben, Idéoplæg til ændring af den faste udstilling på Frihedsmuseet, unpublished manuscript with courtesy of Esben Kjeldbæk, January 25th 1991, p.2.

pedestals on each side of the room. One of them is in front of a glass painting and bears an urn. This symbol from the religious sphere and the fact that on that pedestal the showcase on the executed resistance fighters is placed and the dead seamen are mourned add to the notion of a church. I will come back to this memorial feature later. In a manuscript dated May 1949 the architect Hans Hansen called the big room *flaghallen* (hall of flags) which shows that he probably wanted it adorned with flags. The purpose was to house bigger objects like the heavier weapons.⁴⁸³ From the pictures of the old exhibition that can be consulted in the extensive photo archive of the FM, it is visible that the room was literally overcrowded with guns and weapons. Rifles were on display everywhere – in displays as such but also put up against the balcony wall. The above-cited brochure of Aage Roussel on the history of the museum shows a picture from the 1960s where in the middle of the big hall a small area was enclosed and a model of a drop-zone for parachute-agents with a dummy was set up.⁴⁸⁴ It is hard to tell from the small picture but it looks as if this was the one taken from the very first exhibition. The space is also depicted in a 'catalogue from 1964'.⁴⁸⁵ In pictures taken in the 1980s this model had disappeared. One reason for the partial restructuring was maybe that the space in the main hall was used for speeches and some smaller temporary exhibitions (put up on racks). The model was then incorporated into one of the displays on the walls in the wings surrounding the courtyard.



The 'drop zone' already incorporated into the displays, courtesy Frihedsmuseet

It should be mentioned that already here in the main hall, opposite the entrance, a big, illuminated diagram of the Frihedsrådet and the resistance was put up. A map of Denmark

⁴⁸³ Hansen, Hans, Forslag til frihedsmuseum ved Esplanaden, 4 May 1949, FM Arkiv, 37A-12.

⁴⁸⁴ Roussel, Museet - Oprindelse, p. 5.

⁴⁸⁵ Roussel, Aage, Museet for Danmarks Frihedskamp 1940-1945. Kort vejledning ved Aage Roussel, København: Nationalmuseet 1964.

showed the different organizations. The association that it caused, intentionally or unintentionally was, that already from the first moment on, clear-cut structures existed: The problems and set-backs of the first years seem negligible. The same impression is evoked by the diagram in the basement of the Hjemmefrontmuseum. The map also showed the acts of sabotage against the railways and the visitors got the impression that the Germans were not safe in any place in Denmark, so extensive was the sabotage.⁴⁸⁶



The old 'kanonhallen', courtesy Frihedsmuseet

The exhibition that surrounded the courtyard counter clockwise starting on the right-hand side after entering the hall began with a chapter on the attack against Denmark. It was also stated that the German army needed Denmark mainly as "jumping-off ground to Norway"⁴⁸⁷ The following policy of cooperation does not seem to have been described in details, the catalogue just mentions it briefly and focuses instead on the first illegal or clandestine newspapers and King Christian X and how he became a symbol of Denmark as an independent nation.⁴⁸⁸ The section of the clandestine newspapers was of course again attributed great importance since it was that kind of resistance that paved the way for other forms and what involved a great number of Danes in the first years. This was also respected with the same model of a print shop as in Frimurerlogen. Following the chapter the so-called 'passive resistance' was described – the use of symbols as a show of sympathy for the king or the allied forces. As in Norway, the Danes, for

⁴⁸⁶ Ufer, Niels, Fem forbandede år - med nuancer, in: Weekendavisen, 5 August 1988, p.3.

⁴⁸⁷ Barfod, Jørgen, The Museum of Denmark's fight for freedom 1940-1945. A short guide by Jørgen Barfod, København: Frihedsmuseets Venners Forlagsfond, p. 3.

⁴⁸⁸ Hansen, Niels Jakob Mørk, En analyse af Frihedsmuseets permanente udstilling - med henblik på en diskussion af formidlingen af besættelsestidens historie. Thesis (speciale), Københavns Universitet 1988. The supervisor of the thesis was Hans Kirchhoff. This thesis is one of the main sources of the old exhibition since it presents a status of it in 1988, p. 34. According to Hansen, the forhandlingspolitiken is not mentioned, instead the description of the military situation had to suffice.

example, knitted hats in the colour of the Royal Air Force or wore self-made badges as a protest against the occupation. Closely connected to that chapter of the war was the next part of the exhibition – daily life. The experience of the normal Dane during the war was probably not the experience of clandestine work and weapon-training but of shortness of supply shortage, black-market, black-outs and substitute coffee. These problems and the ways the Danes, as all people in need and times of war, found to cope with them was described here.

The following chapters were the våbenværksted (the model of a clandestine weapon-factory with objects that were originally in such a factory in Holte) and the big chapter on sabotage. These two chapters deserve special additional attention. The weapon factory showed a workbench and the necessary tools to produce the legendary sten-gun and its Danish homemade version. Photos show that this part was also additionally decorated with guns, hanging at the walls. Since the sabotage was of crucial importance, not because of its military value but because of its moral and political effects, it is logical to assume that the FM will attribute it a special place in the exhibition. As in Norway, it is also in Denmark the cornerstone of the perception of the resistance – for the resistance fighters themselves as well as for a part of the population, it is also likely that the Museum as the Hjemmefrontmuseum is doing it stretched the importance. As I have described in one of the previous chapters, the discussion on the effect of the sabotage was intense after Aage Trommer's thesis-defence. The question is now of course whether that discussion had any influence on the exhibition. In 1988 a student of the University of Copenhagen wrote a masters thesis on the Frihedsmuseet's exhibition.⁴⁸⁹ Having been himself one of the guides in the FM, Niels Jahob Mørk Hansen tried to analyze the exhibition's main message. He wanted to find out whether this message was the notion of a national consensus or whether conflicting notions are reflected in the exhibition. He treated the sabotage as well and after a very concise introduction into the importance attributed to the sabotage – especially the sabotage of trains and tracks – in the literature, he analyses the FM's exhibition. In his opinion, the old exhibition was giving an exaggerated impression of the amount of acts of sabotage and the extent of people involved. He blames the fact that the museum allowed all the different groups of veterans to present their actions, which in turn might have given a distorted impression of war-time Denmark.⁴⁹⁰ Moreover the FM described the sabotage as the decisive element in the "process of purification that turned Denmark from a collaborating power into an allied."⁴⁹¹ The next showcase was about the breach with the collaboration policy. This structure

⁴⁸⁹ Hansen, analyse. As mentioned above, it presents the status of the exhibition in 1988 and also contains a thorough description of its development on the basis of interviews with the former director.

⁴⁹⁰ Hansen, analyse, p.76.

⁴⁹¹ Hansen, analyse, p.76.

gave the impression that there was a straightforward development from the symbolic forms of resistance via the production of arms and the growth of sabotage to the point where the 'true face' of Denmark as one of Hitler's enemies was revealed. The fact that some of the most important acts of sabotage described in that chapter actually occurred in 1944 did not match with the aesthetic impression of consistency and stringent development. This notion is also present in the catalogues where the chapter on sabotage was always among the longest. Mørk Hansen concluded that the historiography on sabotage and the occupation period did not make its way into the exhibition. Instead the picture of a country united in the (here military) fight for freedom used sabotage, and especially the sabotage of trains, as a weapon to a somewhat huge extent.⁴⁹² The exhibited objects in this chapter are in themselves interesting. They included, amongst others, the copy of a beer crate that was used to hide the explosives with which quarters for the German army in the Forum-building in Copenhagen were blown up and the coat of a saboteur that was riddled with bullets in a shoot-out with the Gestapo. Esben Kjeldbæk analyzed both objects in an article at the end of the 1990s because of their peculiarity. The beer-crate is of course a copy since the original one was blown during the operation. One is somehow reminded of the box or crate that is carried by the freedom-fighters on the museum's posters. One might argue that a museum has a certain obligation to only show originals. But how could it tell a story of such an attack otherwise? Maybe one just has to hope that the visitors understand the message.⁴⁹³ The coat is also somewhat tricky. It was worn by one of the most active saboteurs (codename 'KK') during a gun-fight under an attempted arrest by the Gestapo. He managed to get a hand into the pocket with the gun and to fire a shot through the fabric, so wounding the officer. But the cloth blocked the hammer and KK had to flee. The wounded Gestapo agent in return fired several rounds on the fleeing KK that fortunately missed him but riddled the coat-tails. The importance of KK for the trajectory of the Danish resistance is so great that the founders wanted the story to be told. The coat is marked with white and red circles around the wholes, telling where the bullets went in and out. During the revision of the exhibition it came out that if one turned the pockets there would be no traces of the bullets inside. The question came up whether the coat was a forgery. KK himself could reveal the truth – as a young saboteur he just could not afford to lose a good coat in the cold winter of 1945 and had his mother mend the holes. When asked to contribute some personal items to the exhibition he gave

⁴⁹² Hansen, analyse, p.76.

⁴⁹³ Just as a small side remark: Not even scholars did notice that it was a copy. Flyger Poulsen, Else M., *Museet for Danmarks Frihedskamp 1940-1945. En institusjonsanalyse med særlig henblik på formidling og udstillingen*, thesis (speciale), Roskilde Univeritetscenter 1986.

the coat and the seams were ripped open again for the sake of the demonstration.⁴⁹⁴ Unauthentic? Maybe. But definitely a good object to illustrate the perils of a clandestine life. The next chapter was called '29 August 1943'. The most important date in the period between the attack on Denmark and its liberation, the breach with the policy of occupation and the uprising that caused it, were the topics described after almost exactly half of the exhibition. As I will describe later, this date constitutes one of the most conflict-laden dates during the occupation. In the Frihedsmuseum it is the embodiment of the victory of the resistance and its *raison d'être*. The conflicts between the saboteurs and those groups supporting strikes and manifestations, despite German reprisals on one side and the government that called for calm on the other side, which were at the very core of the whole trajectory during the occupation yet somehow seemed to have been left out. The catalogues mention the German ultimatum and the following resignation of the government, but the conflict is melted down to a conflict between Danish patriots, that means resistance and government together, and the Germans. All this was in line with the general message of the exhibition.

The next exhibit were the displays on the prisons and the concentration camps on German soil and the infamous prison camps on Danish territory where the communists and other partisans and political prisoners were interned, Horserød and Frøslev. It does not seem that the fact that the incarceration of the communists, carried out by Danish police officers by request of the Germans was stressed. It was rather stressed that the camps on Danish territory were an attempt to keep the prisoners under Danish jurisdiction instead of having the Germans torture and imprison them.

The next chapter dealt with one of the most glorious success stories of the Danish resistance, the rescue of the Danish Jews. This chapter was, even though it could be so important to the master narrative, actually a bit toned down. Just two simple displays with a few objects illustrated those events. But maybe the reason was that such a story is just difficult to tell with the possibilities of a museum or maybe it is here that the modesty of the Danish resistance with respect to their deeds is most visible. The day when so many people joined in the effort to save the Jewish citizens from persecution is seen as the day when everybody just did their duty. On the other hand it seems reasonable to assume that a lot of foreign tourists (among them especially the US-American visitors) just come to the museum because they had heard that story.

More importantly for Danes was the chapter devoted to the *folkestrejken*, the general strike of August 1944 when the city of Copenhagen resisted the siege of the Germans and made them to

⁴⁹⁴ Kjeldbæk, Esben, Ting fra besættelsen – et museologisk essay, in: Dethlefsen, Henrik, Lundbak, Henrik (ed.), *Fra mellemkrigstid til efterkrigstid. Festskrift til Hans Kirchhoff og Henrik S. Nissen på 65-årsdagen oktober 1998*, København: Museum Tusulanums Forlag, Københavns Universitet 1998, pp. 359-393, pp. 365-367.

lift the previously imposed curfew. As with the chapter on August 29th it does not seem that the conflict between the strike committee and the public authorities and the politicians who called for an abortion was discussed. The culmination point in the old exhibition certainly was the liberation, the befrielsen. After the chapters on the Danish Brigade and the terror of the previous year, when after the incarceration of the regular Danish police the Danish collaboration troops of the HIPO (Hilfspolizei – auxiliary police) retaliated every act of sabotage ruthlessly against innocent Danes or just without reason terrorized the population, constitute the showcases on the liberation the cathartic moment. The blue-painted ceiling that got lighter the closer the visitor got to the entrance now is at its lightest colour. This underlined the notion of a quasi-inevitable and natural development throughout the whole period. And after the liberation the visitor has reached the kanonhall again and is now at the other end opposite the entrance and the beginning of the exhibition. What is left now is the 'altar', the pedestal behind the urn. Here the seamen of the merchant navy, sailing for the allied nations, are described and commemorated. A big sea-mine shows the perils of a journey in times of war and the displays show objects of sunken ships and describe the effort and contribution of those sailors and the losses. Other objects are from sailors who got into distress at sea. It is somehow logical and consistent that the sailors are described here, 1) because they were in some interpretations not part of the resistance struggle fought on Danish soil and 2) because of other interpretations they deserve special place because they constituted the biggest and the earliest contribution to the allied struggle against Hitler, and sacrificed a lot. The sailors also constitute a big number of victims.

Vis-à-vis the chapter on the sailors was located, since sometime in the 1970s, maybe the strongest single object of the museum – the original execution poles where in the military compound of Ryvangen the Germans tied the Danish resistance fighters to and then executed them with their firing squads. The poles bear the traces of the bullets, they are at some places literally shred and pieces are missing. Esben Kjeldbæk told me that the former director Jørgen Barfod found them in the archives and brought them up into the exhibition. The most probable version would be that when the Mindelunden (the memorial grove on the site of the military compound in Ryvangen where the executions took place) was opened to the public at some point the necessity emerged to replace the wooden poles with bronze copies because of the weather. Since nobody knew what to do with them they were brought into the archive of the FM.⁴⁹⁵ The poles were accompanied by displays with samples of the the farewell letters of the prisoners. These letters, often smuggled out of the prison by fellow prisoners enhanced the effect of the poles. The location on the pedestal made this part probably the most powerful in

⁴⁹⁵ Interview with Esben Kjeldbæk in Frihedsmuseet on 24 August 2004.

terms of emotions, even though the poles were exhibited in one single show-case due to a lack of space. It was here that the exhibition got closest to the individual, since in general the exhibition itself was, as already mentioned, kind of 'anonymous', that is, names of actors were not to be found. There were no biographies, not even of the members of the Frihedsrådet. The initial reason was to show that the resistance struggle was the fight of the whole of the Danish people and not of a certain group of persons. The master narrative of a people united in the struggle against Nazi-occupation and ideology is best reflected in this anonymity. Esben Kjeldbæk ascribes the success of the museum also to this anonymity. Everybody – the freedom fighter as well as the politician or the passive bystander could identify with the museum.⁴⁹⁶ It is in this regard that the old exhibition also reminds one of the Hjemmefrontmuseum where the same anonymity is applied.

The whole exhibition was determined by objects. They were legion, maybe too much and they were at times random. The pictures show showcases crammed full with objects. Some of them had the character of things normally found in a curiosity cabinet.⁴⁹⁷ It seems that the task of a museum 'to collect' had somehow overwhelmed the creators. And still the museum is probably just showing a tiny part of the whole depot. The largest group of objects were, as I have already mentioned, weapons. Guns have naturally a great importance for a guerrilla- or resistance struggle, but the question might be allowed whether they in this context were substitute also for the trauma of the initial defeat. As shown the old exhibition seems to have been a direct heir of the first one in the Frimurerloge. So probably Nils Ufer was right, when in 1988 after a visit to the FM, he wrote in the newspaper Weekendavisen, that the FM showed exactly how the resistance wanted to be seen in the summer of 1945 and that it perpetuated proper doctrine and that differences were not exhibited – just unity and victory.⁴⁹⁸

One remarkable difference of the Frihedsmuseum compared to Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum was and is that it was not connected to one specific academic institution. Of course, the directors were historians or wrote about the history of the occupation, but unlike Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, the staff seems not to have the same background in a closer circle of academics. It might have been the different academic environment in Denmark that stood for this development. Maybe it was the fact that the academia in Denmark since the 1970s had developed in another direction, a direction that detached itself from the main and popular narratives and its agents, so that it could never exert any noticeable influence on the exhibition.

⁴⁹⁶ Kjeldbæk, Ting, *passim*.

⁴⁹⁷ Hansen, *analyse*, p. 95.

⁴⁹⁸ Ufer, Niels, *Fem forbandede år - med nuancer*, in: *Weekendavisen*, 5 August 1988, p.3.

In Norway, scholars supported the traditional basic narrative and thus preserved the museum's exhibition, in Denmark on the other hand scholars did not but would not gain influence on the museum. The influence of veterans has of course been important, for example through the directors and the *Frihedsmuseet Venner* and *Frihedsmuseet Venners Fond*. For a long period that had been Svenn Seehusen, the very Seehusen who had already in 1945 played such an important role in the creation of the FM and who, as I will show later on, also influenced the celebrations. I will in a subsequent chapter describe his person and his role.

Frihedsmuseum as Memorial

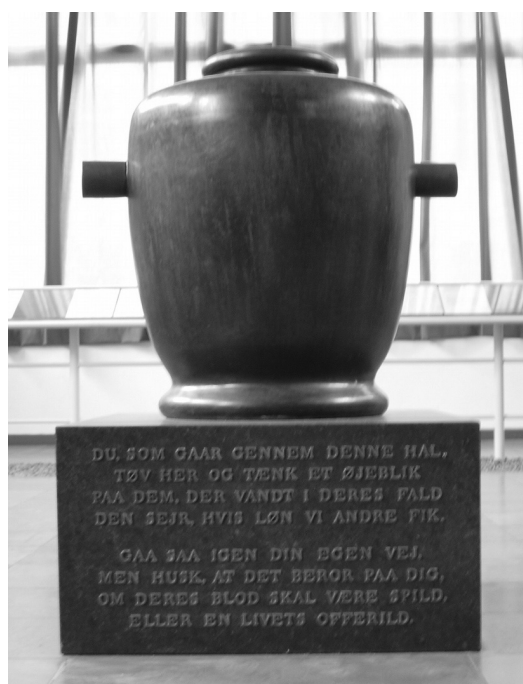
In August 1945, during the summer of the liberation, the corpses of resistance fighters were discovered in the grounds of a barrack in the north of Copenhagen. The Germans had used the shooting range as an execution site. Soon it was decided that the whole site should become a memorial ground and the last resting place for other fighters as well as those whose bodies had been exhumed at the different places where the Germans had buried them. After a solemn procession through the city, well-attended by the people of Copenhagen the first bodies were buried on 29 August 1945. Afterwards the whole grounds were turned into a cemetery with the different fields of burials and memorials grouped around a central memorial. Mindelunden I Ryvangen is Denmark's central war and resistance memorial. It is mainly here that foreign dignitaries and delegations of veterans lay wreaths as does official Denmark on the anniversaries. But besides Mindelunden, the FM was from its beginning intended to be another – a living memorial. The first exhibition of the Frihedsrådet already included a memorial hall at the start of the tour and so the FM had to incorporate this feature as well

The building itself – albeit small – bears traces of a memorial not only the kanonhallen from the inside. From the outside the otherwise red-brick building has with the main hall a feature that is different in colour and shape and therefore sticks out like a church tower.⁴⁹⁹ The surroundings at Esplanade are a park and also contain several small memorials and the whole site and the house are protected by law. However, it is also in the small details that the memorial-character of the museum is expressed. Outside the building there is a memorial plaque with the relief of R.C. Hollingsworth the head of the SOE's Danish detachment. Besides the picture is once again Montgomery's famous quote about the Danish resistance being "second to none." More than the self-made armoured truck outside and other objects inside, this perspective on the Danish resistance by somebody 'who must know' reinforces the importance of what the visitor is going to see and thereby raises the commemorative 'incentive'. The shape of a memorial plaque is

⁴⁹⁹ Kristensen, Bar, Frihedsmuseet, p. 92.

inscribed in the European collective set of images and therefore the visitor easily recognizes and understands the call. The interior reproduces this memorial-like look not only in the exhibition but in its architectural features and objects. On 29 August 1983, the 40th anniversary of the break up of the cooperation policy of the Danish government, the FM unveiled, in the presence of the Royal Family, a mosaic made of stained glass in the main hall. The piece of art called 'Frihedens Lys' by Carl Henning Pedersen in the window behind the left pedestal of the main hall is just right to add to the impression of the main hall's church-like character, since stained glass is most commonly used in religious buildings. Together with the memorial urn on the platform this part of the exhibition now clearly had an altar-like character which was again reinforced by the two topics that are dealt with in this part of the exhibition. Now and then it is the sacrifice the Danish sailors in allied service gave and the execution of resistance activists.⁵⁰⁰ The urn, which is of course empty, bears the words of Otto Gelsted that were in use in the above mentioned brochure of the very first exhibition. For the sake of the argument I will quote them here:

You passing through this hall // Stop here and think a moment // Of those who in their sacrifice // Gave us the reward // And go again your own way // But remember yours is the choice // To waste their blood // Or honour it in the flame of live⁵⁰¹

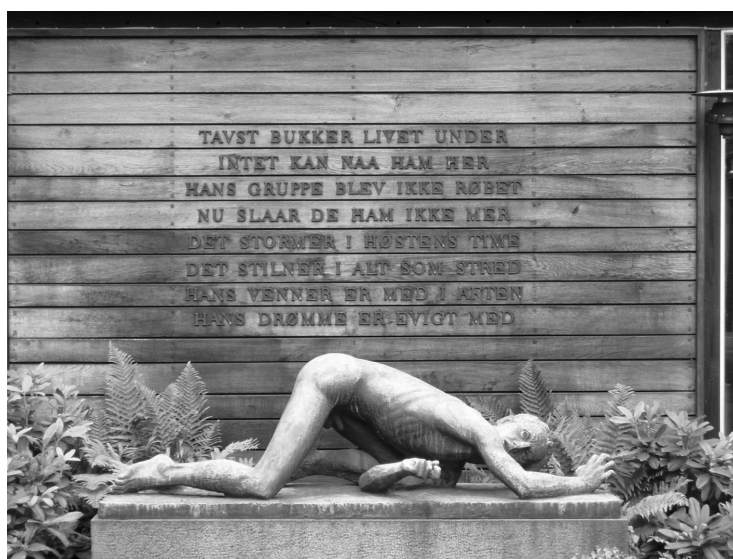


The urn in Frihedsmuseet in 2005 (on this picture the window was draped).

These words show how much the museum was seen as a memorial, a fact that was readily admitted by the veterans in the catalogue. It is stated there that the initial committee raised the

⁵⁰⁰ Kjeldbæk, Esben, Idéoplæg til ændring af den faste udstilling på Frihedsmuseet, unpublished manuscript, 1991, p. 3.

funds to build a museum to "commemorate those men and women – those who fell as well as those who survived – who fought for Denmark's freedom and in order to collect objects and documents of historic interest."⁵⁰² The combination of the urn and the words inscribed on its apron cannot and do not wish to avoid the quasi-religious connotations of a church and a tombstone or memorial. This notion is further enhanced by the second memorial element of the museum: In the courtyard the visitor sees the memorial 'Young fallen man' (Danish: Ung falden mand) by Knud Nellemose throughout the whole tour through the exhibition. The sculpture depicts a half-way fallen, half-way straightened man. He is obviously struggling to get back on his feet and pain is in his face.



Ung falden mand, 2005

The character of the FM as a memorial is stressed by the ceremonial use of the building and the small memorial in its courtyard. There are quasi-ceremonies on a regular basis. On the evening of May 4th each year the museum is open to the public until late in the evening and the lawns are adorned with torches. The message of liberation of the BBC Danish services is broadcasted.⁵⁰³ But there have been more ceremonies and rituals over the years. In 1963, for example, the foreign secretary of the Soviet Union and the chancellor of Austria laid wreaths in the FM.⁵⁰⁴ Even though it seems to have ended at some point, the museum was made the location of commemorative rituals in its early years. In 1970 on the 25th anniversary the graves of those

⁵⁰¹ Translation from the above quoted English language catalogue of the Frihedsmuseet, Barfod, The Museum, p.3.

⁵⁰² Barfod, The Museum, p. 3. All other early catalogues state the same. See Roussel, Museet for Danmarks Frihedskamp. The objective to commemorate is the first and foremost. The task to collect is somehow subordinated. To study the history of Denmark under occupation is not mentioned. This small leaflet was reprinted several times over the years and served as a substitute for a catalogue.

⁵⁰³ This seems to be an old tradition since it is mentioned already in the 1960s. Back then the two days of May 5th and August 29th would have the torches and the long opening hours. Roussel, Museet, p. 6.

⁵⁰⁴ FM Arkiv, Udenlandske gæster 1962-64. 1964, 37A-39.

perished in the struggle for freedom were adorned with a sign, a coin created by Knut Nellemose, the artist who also designed the memorial in the museum's yard. This coin was presented to the public in the museum in the presence of the Crown Princess and foreign dignitaries. At the same occasion the book *Faldne i Danmarks frihedskamp 1940-1945* a collection of all the names of those who gave their lives was also presented.⁵⁰⁵

A mission statement that reached further than being the private memory of those who had taken part in the resistance or being the memorial is hard to spot in the first exhibition. There were not clearly described objectives in any founding-document as was the case in Oslo. That research might be as much an objective of a museum was acknowledged late. It was not before 1968 that it was officially stated by the director Aage Roussel.⁵⁰⁶ Of course there were implicit aims. Hansen and Poulsen both concluded that the museum was used to glorify the resistance and its heroes, to help to suppress the memory of the first three years of the war by concentrating exclusively on the last two, to show to Danes and foreigners, that Denmark rightly was included in the ranks of the victorious allies and that it in the light of the experience needs a strong army or defence system.⁵⁰⁷ In this respect the resemblance to its 'twin' the Hjemmefrontmuseum is clearest.⁵⁰⁸ The FM was in its essence first and foremost a singular source for and representation of the self-perception of the resistance groups that were represented in the Frihedsrådet.

The Revision of the Frihedsmuseum – How to Change a Memorial?

As one can see, the exhibition of 1957 was somehow seen by its creators as something closed, something eternal, and something that would need no change in the years to come. The reasoning behind this was probably that the people behind it thought that it was authentic and true since it had been made by those who had been witnesses, those who took part. The testimony of the veterans was either permanent or it had to be torn down, when not needed anymore in the future. The Frihedsmuseum was not planned as a proper museum with all functions normally affiliated with it – collecting, preservation, research and exhibition. There was neither space for scientific staff nor for all of the collection. This might seem astonishing when seen in the light of the success the museum had and has and the importance it is generally assigned. Another problem with any revision or renewal of the exhibition was the described memorial character of the house and its exhibit. A memorial and its context, its signification, are not easily changed. The creators, the veterans would certainly like to have a word in any change.

⁵⁰⁵ Mindehjtidelighed i Frihedsmuseum, 1970, FM Arkiv, 37A 79-83.

⁵⁰⁶ Roussel, Museet, p.12.

⁵⁰⁷ See Poulsen, Museet, the introduction and Hansen, analyse, 94-98. Here Hansen quotes also Seehusen on the latter.

⁵⁰⁸ See International Herald Tribune, 18 November 1983.

This is especially so since the 1970s when new academic research on the war started to differ in some respect from the general tradition and at times came into conflict with the recollections and self-perception of the veterans. Any director who intended to redo the exhibition had to balance those opposing views – an academic seriousness and the feelings of those involved. But not just their feelings. The question had to be addressed whether any academic research could really catch the spirit of the war years and attribute the empathy needed to 'understand' the motivations and the courage of the active resistance fighters and the general population. A clear description of the way the politicians changed sides from promoting cooperation with the superior German enemy to save Denmark from destruction and plunder to the claims that they had always supported the resistance also involves the risk of weakening the trust in liberal democracy.⁵⁰⁹ So any change had to be done carefully. Still, a revision was needed nevertheless. The building and its objects were in disarray by the end of the 1980s. Maintenance work was unavoidable. It was because of this that a discussion began on whether and how a partial revision of the contents of the exhibition was to be made. Even the chairman of the *Frihedsmuseets Venner* and one of the founding fathers of the Frihedsmuseum Svenn Seehusen was in favour of a revision. But he made one precondition: Aage Trommer, the historian who doubted the military efficiency of the railroad sabotage, was not to be entrusted that task.⁵¹⁰

These were the circumstances under which Esben Kjeldbæk, the first director born after the war, had to prepare the revision. As far as it can be seen from the correspondence he had with architects and the drafts he wrote, he was very aware of those problems. He also called the most important people involved and some historians in for a seminar on the planned exhibition. Interesting enough, the head of Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, Arnfinn Moland was also invited, as were the revisionist historians of the 1970s Kirchhoff, Nissen and Trommer.⁵¹¹ Kjeldbæk also made use of the above-cited existing two studies on the exhibition of Mørk Hansen and Flyger Poulsen and visitor surveys undertaken by Henrik Lundbak at the end of the 1980s. The dissertation of Mørk Hansen seems to have played a decisive role; it is quoted in several of the drafts. Kjeldbæk also sent the first draft to Hansen.⁵¹²

The main problem the museum had to face was that it was a so-called first-generation museum, a museum made by the witnesses themselves for people who had experienced the time.⁵¹³ It had not needed too many texts since the objects were somehow familiar for the adult visitors and

⁵⁰⁹ Hansen, analyse, p.98.

⁵¹⁰ Hansen, analyse, p. 29. Seehusen made this remark in an interview with Hansen.

⁵¹¹ Kjeldbæk, Esben, letter to 'Til deltagerne i det faglige seminar på Frihedsmuseet d. 9/4 – 10/4 1992', 31 March 1992. Frihedsmuseets Arkiv, box 'Nyopstilling 1995'.

⁵¹² Kristensen/ Bar, Frihedsmuseet, p.12.

⁵¹³ On first generation museums see Kjeldbæk, Ting, passim.

could be explained to the younger ones. Veterans led guided tours and told their story and how they used some of the weapons or objects on display. The museum had of course somehow the aura of a collection of a cabinet of oddities. That had worked during the last two generations after the war with the contemporary witnesses still present, but the museum was now challenged with the changing composition of the group of visitors. Maybe this charming character of the museum with the absence of personalities but a compilation of personal objects had been a factor to his success. Everybody could identify and claim the objects as his or her 'own'. But that clearly did not work the same way anymore in the 1980s. About 30% of the visitors were now of foreign origin with English speakers being the largest non-Danish group and a majority of all visitors having been born after the war.⁵¹⁴ The texts in the exhibition were so short and meagre that people without personal experience or forehand knowledge risked not to understand neither the exhibition nor its message.⁵¹⁵ The circumstances of the war, its trajectory were not present anymore in each visitor's mind and needed to be included in the new exhibition, at least according to the director. The row of images on top of the showcases did not suffice anymore to give context and link events in Denmark to events on the other battlefields. Also the research of the previous years had shown very clearly how much the resistance in Denmark and its upswing and development was connected to the German defeats on other fronts and the allied successes. In a sense the visitors needed a museum on the war and not only on the Danish resistance.⁵¹⁶ It was exactly this that caused, as I will show later, some problems with the veterans. There seems to have been a clear-cut anxiety on the side of the veterans that such an extension of the museum's scope might result in a scant regard for their deeds and the resistance as such. The former director Jørgen Barfod admonished Esben Kjeldbæk in 1991 not to forget that the topic of the FM was the resistance.⁵¹⁷ Another fact was that more knowledge had been produced – knowledge that could challenge the message of the old exhibition. It was also seen as important to introduce more strongly new techniques and pedagogical gadgets to modernize the museum's image and to reach out to the younger generations. The question at hand was: what of the old exhibition should be kept and what was to be discarded? Should the order of the topics be kept and where should the focus lay? The drafts of Kjeldbæk were sent to numerous people including those influential veterans; care was taken not to leave out or to vex anybody important.⁵¹⁸

⁵¹⁴ Kjeldbæk, *Idéoplæg*, 14-18.

⁵¹⁵ Hansen, *analyse*, p. 34.

⁵¹⁶ That was as well the call of Hansen (Hansen, *analyse*, p.94).

⁵¹⁷ Barfod, Jørgen H., Personal Communication with Kjeldbæk, Esben, 11 February 1991, FM Arkiv, box Nyopstillingen 1995

⁵¹⁸ Parts of this correspondence was consulted in Frihedsmuseet with the permission of Esben Kjeldbæk.

The drafts and the final outline for the revision of the exhibition of 1993 clearly show some of the main new trends in historiography and the conflicting interpretations and the difficulties lying therein for a museum and that the team paid tribute to the research done in the previous years.⁵¹⁹ One of the main points was the relation between the different branches of the resistance and between the resistance and the 'old parties' of the collaboration regime. The inner-Danish ruptures had to be discussed even if the general message would speak of a united people. The origin of the resistance in the parties of the extreme right and left had to be stressed and the military character to be toned down to give more room to the other forms of resistance. The 'other side', the Danish Nazis and the active collaborators had to be included alongside the German administration to understand who the enemy was the resistance was fighting against. In particular, the military character of the exhibition was to be changed according to the first draft of the director. Guns used in actions and events described in the exhibition had their rightful place in the exhibition but others were not needed according to the draft. Only a small number of the numerous arms and weapons should stay to show to which end the resistance was prepared to go, even if fortunately they were not needed, but the emphasis on guns was to be changed.⁵²⁰ Of course this was a delicate matter since the guns and the military objects reflected the pride in the courage not only of the veterans but also of parts of the population for which they were the symbol of a Denmark that fought alongside the allies against the German enemy. The same applied to the flags handed over by the resistance groups in order to be represented in the museum and the medals of foreign associations and dignitaries acknowledging the Danish contribution. The next problem was the 'revisionists'. Clearly, the new exhibition could not ignore the research of the previous years. Kirchhoff's book on the Augustoprøret and Trommer's on the train sabotage had in the meanwhile become required reading at universities and both recognized scholars. Also different groups of collaborators and the whole policy of cooperation had come into focus and the end of the Cold War had made people look at communists and their history with leniency. The climate had changed and discussions in other countries on 'black-spots' had influenced the debate at home. And yet, veterans were still alive and not all parts of the population had been equally interested in the debates and participated actively. Besides this, it would have been hard to include any past or ongoing discourse in the exhibition. The museum is seldom the place to represent such an academic discussion. Any revision had to take these limitations into account. And finally the last problem the FM had to deal with was the question of how to incorporate the new pedagogic tools developed. If a first-generation-museum was to

⁵¹⁹ Kjeldbæk, Esben, Haastrup, Lars, Dispositionsforslag til Nyopstilling af Frihedsmuseet April 93, Frihedsmuseet, 1993, by courtesy of Esben Kjeldbæk.

⁵²⁰ Kjeldbæk, Idéoplæg, p.33.

be changed, it made sense to incorporate new techniques and gadgets to interest and catch the attention of the younger visitors. One of the major changes was therefore the introduction of interactive elements. Actually Kjeldbæk referred to Norges Hjemmefrontmuseet as a possible example for an improvement of the exhibition since it had more graphic features.⁵²¹

The New Exhibition

The outcome of all these deliberations and consultations was opened to the public on 5 May 1995. The opening ceremony was attended by a large group of invited guests with the Royal Family and the government being the guests of honour. The fact that the Queen Mother and the Crown Prince as well as the prime minister and several members of the government were present, shows the importance official Denmark assigned to the act and the institution. The opening speeches were held by the head of the National Museum, Rigsantikvar Olaf Olsen, prime minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, the director Esben Kjeldbæk and as chairman of *Frihedsmuseets Venner* Sverre Seehusen.⁵²² He made no effort to hide his discontent with parts of the new exhibition, even in front of the guests. He referred to the missing flags and to the incorporation of the general history of the Second World War.⁵²³

The new exhibition also starts in the kanonhallen and goes the same way around the inner yard. As in the original, the pedestals on both sides are included in the exhibition. Kjeldbæk's plans to clean the hall of the heavy arms and put displays in the centre of the room was not realized, a light mortar is still the centre of the room. The major change together with the flags and the guns is probably the illuminated map of Denmark that in the first exhibition showed the structure of the resistance. It is now replaced with a row of displays treating the nature of National Socialism, its fascination, its racist ideology, its system of oppression, its defeat. The first display on the right-hand side of the entrance, that is also the beginning of the tour through the exhibition, is again dedicated to the attack on the 9th of April. Photos illustrate the seizure of Copenhagen and a video tells how a boy of 15 experienced the attack. It is the first of a row of videos with eye-witness accounts called 'speaking-display' (Danish: talende monter). These video installations are the main truly new objects.⁵²⁴

The next chapter is probably one of the main renewals with respect to contents. It is called *Tilpasning 1940-41* (Adaptation) and describes the reactions of the politicians to the occupation

⁵²¹ Kjeldbæk, Esben, *Idéoplæg Til Ændring Af Den Faste Udstilling På Frihedsmuseet*, 1991, FM Bibliothek, 37a.

⁵²² Kjeldbæk, Esben, Personal Communication with Statsministeriet, April 1995, courtesy Esben Kjeldbæk, herein the Program for åbningen den 5. maj 1995 kl.15.

⁵²³ Interview with Esben Kjeldbæk in Frihedsmuseet on 4 May 2005.

⁵²⁴ On the whole concept of the talende monter see: Kjeldbæk, Esben, *Rapport om filmoptagelser til brug for Frihedsmuseets nye udstilling*, 6 January 1992, courtesy Esben Kjeldbæk.

much more in-depth than in the previous exhibition. The deliveries of butter and other agricultural goods to Germany are mentioned as well as the Danish Nazi party. This chapter passes seamlessly into the next one that deals with the German attack on the Soviet Union and the Danish signature under the 'Antikomintern-pact' and the subsequent incarceration of the Danish communist. This breach of the Danish constitution still represents one of the major points of conflict, since the government so readily followed the German demands. It also led to the first manifestation against the policy of adaptation. Students gathered in Copenhagen and showed sympathy with the imprisoned. Some small flags of the Nordic countries that were on decoration in a shop in the street were used in the demonstration of anti-German attitude. They are now on display. The Danish volunteers to the German army and especially to the Waffen-SS units, that constitute another difficult problem, are dealt with in the same context and display, since most of them believed the propaganda that the fight was against the 'bolshevist aggressor'. They are also represented with a dummy in uniform.



'Kanonhallen', in the new exhibition, 2005, the number of flags is reduced, the mortar is still visible

On the pedestal the visitor once again sees the print shop that was used in the previous exhibitions. In front of it, samples of clandestine papers are on display. Together with the chapter called 'De første illegale' (The first Clandestine Organisations), they represent the new tendencies of the 1970s when Trommer and Kirchhoff described the recruiting of the first resistance groups. The two flanks of the political spectrum where the young activists came from, the communist party DKP on the one hand and the rightist nationalist party Dansk Samling and the Youth organisation of the Conservative Party Konservativ Ungdom on the other hand are mentioned here and the partisans are represented by objects belonging to a member of the

International Brigades in the Spanish Civil-War and to a volunteer in the Finnish Winter-War. Another event that led to conflicting views in the postwar period was the 'anti-sabotage' speech of Vilhelm Buhl where in 1942 he condemned sabotage and asked the Danes to tip-off saboteurs to the police. Christmas Møller, the conservative politician who fled to London and held an 'anti-Buhl' speech, is mentioned here in this context. Sissel Kristensen and Dorthe Nørskov Madsen Bar who in 2000 wrote a master's thesis on the new exhibition, concentrating on an analysis of the kinds of narratives transferred in the exhibition, meant that this part gives the impression that the people rallied very early and in masses behind the resistance and that the consensus-narrative is perpetuated.⁵²⁵ Understanding their main point I do not share their opinion here, since I think that this part is actually quite balanced.

The early sabotage is described in the following chapter in the smaller corridor that surrounds the yard, before the topic of the week-day life is dealt with. In the new exhibition this topic receives greater attention than in the previous ones. The chapter is supposed to give an insight into those who have not experienced the war and what living under the occupation meant to the individual. The main object is a mock-up of a living-room where the radio plays music from the times and a cue in front of a shop. Here the garden in the yard is for the first time made part of the exhibition. Plants that were used as replacements for other scarce commodities are planted there, like Danish tobacco. It would be interesting whether the feeling that I got, seeing this chapter with the arm-chair on display, is shared by other visitors as well – that Danes for the most part experienced the war from their living-rooms?

The military resistance of course gets its due attention when subsequently the new exhibition describes the parachute agents, the droppings and the radio contacts with the SOE in Great Britain, necessary for the coordination. An illegal sender is exhibited in a small cabinet and the risk the radio operators ran is described. Sometimes amateur radio operators come and show how the device works. During the opening some of them contacted a colleague that was sitting in the Imperial War Museum in London on a similar radio. A very good job was done with the chapter that confronted the life of a German soldier in Denmark with the war crimes and the deaths on the eastern front. The Danish occupation was called 'whip-cream front' (Danish: flødeskumfronten) by the Germans. The chapter on the eastern front also leads closer to the Augustoprøret, the uprising and strikes in August 1943 since the defeats in the east can be seen as a motivating factor for the resistance movements in all occupied countries, also for the saboteurs. Both are described in the next corner. Unfortunately the chronology that was attempted in the new exhibition is somehow broken down, because the chapter of sabotage is

⁵²⁵ Kristensen/ Bar, Frihedsmuseet, p. 102.

placed before the one on the August-riots. However, since most of the bigger acts of sabotage occurred later, it could, as the early exhibition, lead to an incorrect assessment of the sabotage as being already well organized that early.

The Augustoprøret itself is described at eye level with the available research. The beginnings in the provincial towns, the spreading, the initiators and the reluctance of the government to give in to the wish of the population, the resignation with the continuation of the cooperation through the heads of the departments and the reaction of the army. The fights of the few army units and the sinking of the fleet is not glorified in comparison with the public uprising and the communists and independent labour unionists as major agents are not withheld. Kristensen and Bar might be right though that the communist share in the successful organization of the strikes could have been described more intensively.⁵²⁶ I cannot however share their criticism on what they call the "de-politisation of the narrative".⁵²⁷ They claim that the exhibition omits to tell the visitor to what extent the resigning government and the political parties were fighting the breach with the Germans or actually wanted it. A museum can hardly describe such things and the exhibition clearly shows the dissatisfaction of leading social-democrats with the development. The consensus-narrative is not perpetuated here.

Most scholars today agree that the uprising and the breach of the cooperation policy were linked to the successful rescue of the Jews.⁵²⁸ The population was mentally prepared and the time was ripe for an action of that scale. That might also have been, besides the chronological proximity, the reason to put that topic next. The flight of the 7,000 Danish Jews and the help-apparatus created for it is hard to tell in a museum, the FM tells it by text, the model of a trawler that was used and tickets to the coastal towns from Copenhagen, two photos taken on board a ship and the account of the flight by a survivor. The events in Denmark are linked to the world by a showcase on the Holocaust. The most remarkable object is maybe a small statue of the riding king at the end of that chapter. Many people around the world still believe the story that the king once threatened the Germans that if they introduced the yellow-star for the Danish Jews that he would wear it too. The story is not true, although the king never made secret his sympathy with the Jewish community. A lot of American tourists come to the FM with admiration and are looking for this story.⁵²⁹ The story is represented in the exhibition with the statue of the riding king. The title of the objects reads "Kongemyten" (The myth of the king and the Star of David).

⁵²⁶ Kristensen/ Bar, Frihedsmuseet, p. 102.

⁵²⁷ Kristensen/ Bar, Frihedsmuseet, p. 103.

⁵²⁸ More on that topic in a later chapter.

⁵²⁹ Interview with Esben Kjeldbæk in Frihedsmuseet on 24 August 2004.

The chapter on concentration camps creates a cruel impression not just because of its topic but also because of the position of the objects. A dummy wearing a prisoner's jacket stands in front of a rifle used by the guards. It looks as if the barrel points at the neck of the prisoner. This is something, that according to the director, was not intended.⁵³⁰

The chapter on the general strike in Copenhagen (folkestrejken) is reported next and here the contextualization, criticized by the veterans, is felt again. The general strike was preceded by the invasion of Normandy on D-day which had a decisive influence on morale in Denmark. The invasion is represented by, among other things, a flag smudged with oil from a vessel that took part in the allied invasion. Here the contextualisation is actually linked to the praise of the Danish sailors in allied service. It is introduced in the new exhibition at the appropriate place and the general strike is told on the background of the allied advance. The fact that the old parties and the local authorities tried to persuade the population to stop the strike is not withheld and the conflict is made clear. Their appeal posted in the streets is on display.

The two new parts of this last part of the corridor around the courtyard are the Frihedsrådet and the train sabotage. In the old exhibition names were scarce, in the new exhibition the members of the board of the resistance are present in names, photos and face-masks. Right next to it, the technique of the detonation of a train track is demonstrated with fake packages of explosives fixed to a piece of track. In the old exhibition the sabotage of trains was described in the general chapter on sabotage. In the new one the place of the chapter corresponds somewhat better to the historical trajectory since the amount and the effect of acts of sabotage and the day was later, closer to the liberation and connected to troop-movements to the other European fronts. In the courtyard there is another track, twisted and destroyed, and the texts talk about the 1,500 acts of sabotage directed against the rail-network and the greetings telegram of the SOE to the resistance praising the successes. This part talks about victorious acts and delays caused to the German transports by the resistance. The small text that says that the effects of sabotage were probably overrated back then risks being kind of drowned out by the rest of the exhibits talking telling another narrative. The visitors might also be confused because they must assume that nowadays the effect is not overrated anymore, which certainly is not always the case.⁵³¹

The last chapter before the visitor returns into the main hall again on his tour of the exhibition is of course the liberation. A loudspeaker plays the BBC message over and over again and a TV screen shows pictures from different places. The signs of the resistance fighters, the armband in red, blue and white is shown in its different versions and the history of the white buses that

⁵³⁰ Interview with Esben Kjeldbæk in Frihedsmuseet on 22 February 2006.

⁵³¹ Kristensen/ Bar, Frihedsmuseet, p. 79.

rescued the Scandinavian prisoners is also told. The visitor now comes out of the corridor and enters the 'kanonhall'. On his left, the big sea-mine and the display about the Danish sailors of the merchant navy is told on the pedestal. The mine is still a powerful means to show the threat of death at sea at the hands of the German navy. But as in the old exhibition, the execution poles of Ryvangen create the strongest single object of the exhibition. In their brutal reality and shape they are part of the memorial structure of the museum since they represent an intensive reminder of the nature of the oppression. In the old exhibition they were almost drowned in their small display between the other uniform displays. Now the poles stand alone, just a very small, low showcase on the floor that shows the simple wooden sign with which the mass-graves of the executed were marked shares the space on the left side of the pedestal. The poles are further away from each other, maybe at the same distance to each other as they had been at the execution site, but their order has been changed. In Ryvangen as well as in the old exhibition the pole farthest to the right was the highest. Now this one is the one in the middle. The visual effect caused by this is the same as the one created in the Hjemmefrontmuseum in Oslo when one reaches the part on the first three murdered freedom fighters – connotations to Christian iconography and the mound of Golgotha automatically suggest itself. The effect might be lesser, however, if the poles had been in the original order. After being addressed on that point, Esben Kjeldbæk came up with a very simple explanation of the order: the longest pole had to be put in the centre because of practical reasons. The poles needed to be fixed on the rear wall of the display and since the ready-made show case had a door in the rear only the longest one was high enough to tower above the door and be fixed at the wall above the door. The explanation is easy and convincing and yet the impression stays. Maybe this example can show how subconscious the context and the set-up of objects in an exhibition work is and how much the exhibitor can play with it and at the same time how cautious one has to be with drawing conclusions too early.



The execution poles in the old exhibition, courtesy Frihedsmuseet.



The execution poles in the new exhibition.

Of course, no exhibition can be without omissions, mistakes and the like. I have already mentioned that Svern Seehusen was not happy with the overall outcome. His criticism could be discarded as the ideas of just another elderly veteran who sees his memory and his war experience endangered by a generation of historians who never lived through a war, but one might as well look at his arguments as a reflection of a more general feeling amongst veterans

and the war generation and therefore as something that should be taken seriously when dealing with such a topic. The fact that the new exhibition incorporated the historical context – contextualized the resistance was criticised by Svenn Seehusen, who might have thought that would devalue the resistance.⁵³² In a note to the director of the National Museum he asked with reference to his position as one of the three people who had laid the actual cornerstone whether the "day-to-day head of administration" (daglig leder) can decide on the image of the FM and the freedom fight or whether the veterans, those who went through it and founded the museum, should have the last word as the former directors always have respected.⁵³³ He claimed that Kjeldbæk seemed to have made the description of Nazism and the Second World War his main objective and forgot the actual task of the museum. He also referred to an embarrassing episode around the opening. Kjeldbæk had originally put up a bust of Hitler in his chapter on the nature of the Nazi ideology to describe the cult around the 'Führer'. This bust had aroused anger among some veterans, including Seehusen, who felt offended by it. They protested but Kjeldbæk insisted on the bust. It took the Rigsantikvar, the highest authority in the administration, to take it away. In the same letter Seehusen also incriminated other things. He argued that the fact that Kjeldbæk had put a police helmet in the same display case where the terror of the Germans and their Danish henchmen was described could lead visitors to the fatal conclusion that the police was a terror group alongside the HIPO-korps and the Schalburgkorps. Kjeldbæk had also refused to put the medal that was introduced 1970 to mark the graves of resistance fighters into the display with the poles from Ryvangen and to set up a lectern where the registry of the victims could be consulted. All this led Seehusen to complain about the way the museum was set up and managed. The times had changed and Seehusen suspected that the heritage of the resistance fight was endangered. Visitors now read that short before the Augustoprøret, the Germans had suffered terrible defeats on the eastern front and in Italy and that the general strike in Copenhagen was preceded by the allied invasion in Normandy. Maybe the veterans felt that instead of contextualising the events, the visitors might draw the wrong conclusions – that Denmark just cowardly swam with the tide.

Whereas probably most of the veterans afterwards made their peace with the exhibition, Seehusen's opinion nevertheless shows how even 50 years after the end of the war the war generation could still feel hurt and feared distortion of the history they had experienced. Another group of veterans that had problems with the new exhibition were those who somehow felt left out. The space in any museum, and also in the FM, is limited and cuts always have to be made.

⁵³² Kristensen/ Bar, Frihedsmuseet, p. 9.

⁵³³ Seehusen, Sven, PM: Museet for Danmarks Frihedskamp 1940 til 1945, 4 February 1996, FM Arkiv, box: Nyopstilling 1995.

Most of the time the cuts can be explained with financial restraints and lack of space. But of course there are also those omissions that are 'political', that have their origin in the conscious suppression of stories and people. Groups of veterans suspected this also in the new exhibition. The largest was the group of sailors who had always felt a bit left out from the public recognition. In several letters to the director their association complained about the, as they thought, measly way their contribution to the Danish war and the allied campaigns was treated.⁵³⁴

Scholars have been of differing opinions on the new exhibition. Most probably did not bother, others agreed and some of course did not agree. Kristensen and Bar conclude that the FM's new exhibition is not completely perpetuating the consensus-narrative of a whole people united against the German but that it adds nuances, even though the tone of the exhibition stays inclined to the old notion of consensus.⁵³⁵ One could probably sum up the new exhibition and the development of the FM that the first exhibitions followed the compromise generated in the liberation and the following elections between the anger and activism of the freedom-fighters and the caution or passiveness of the politicians. After more than 30 years promoting this interpretation independently of ongoing research, since the beginning of the 1990s the FM once again linked itself closer to the academic discourse which in the meantime had developed a perception of the occupation years as a time of internal strife and conflict. Kirchhoff's interpretations were accepted and the academic paradigm was given a much broader space. Astonishingly enough that did not, as I will show now, apply to the official celebrations of the anniversaries of the liberation where the old consensus was, with modifications, re-enacted again and again. The same conclusion is drawn by Bryld and Warring who grant the new exhibition a more "historical correct"⁵³⁶ account but also claim that it keeps the master narrative and a classic structure of myth. They do, however, say that the conflicting moments are mentioned, the lop-sided distribution of arms, the Danish cooperation and so forth, but that the visitor would not be able to understand and weigh the arguments and texts without previous knowledge of the literature. The military character of the old exhibition was toned down but it remains strong.⁵³⁷ I do understand and partly agree with that criticism and also think that the changes made could have been taken further. But from own experience I think that making an exhibition always involves making a lot of compromises and includes restraints neither visible to the visitor nor to the analyzing eye of a scholar. They include space, money and the ability to

⁵³⁴ The correspondence was consulted in Frihedsmuseet with courtesy of Esben Kjeldbæk. I will return to that correspondence later.

⁵³⁵ Kristensen/Bar, Frihedsmuseet, p.103.

⁵³⁶ Bryld, Warring, Besættelsestiden, p. 443.

communicate things in a manner that respects the established facts and catches the attention of the visitor. What did not change and should not change is the central position of Frihedsmuseet as the frame for a number of memorial features around the resistance – it still is a memorial to the resistance and not a war museum.

2005 – A New View? The Exhibition *Spærretid*

As will be shown also with regard to the political discourse around the celebrations, the 60th anniversary was of some interest. In the FM plans were made to create a temporary exhibition on the occupation. The topic and concept of this exhibition which was to set up for DKK 4 million in the Nationalmuseet in Copenhagen was left to Kjeldbæk and his team in collaboration with the Nationalmuseet. The location inside Natmus had to be the great space for temporary exhibitions Egmonthallen – a single but huge room. The team worked on the sketches from at the latest fall 2003.⁵³⁸ They also tried to connect to the academic environment and the current research and arranged a seminar on the master plan with an impressive list of participants, including the very grand-seigneurs of the field like Hans Kirchhoff, Henrik Nissen, and Palle Roslyng Jensen as well as scholars like Henrik Lundbak of Frihedsmuseet and Niels Wium Olesen.⁵³⁹ The discussants seem to have all agreed that the perspective that would yield new and interesting results and attract visitors, and which so far might have been neglected, would be every-day life. They had good reasons to believe that, since the most successful temporary exhibition ever held in the Frihedsmuseum had been the one on daily life in 1982.⁵⁴⁰ The result was a new exhibition, which will not be included in Frihedsmuseet afterwards, but which showed the weekday under the occupation and was called *Spærretid. Hverdag under Besættelsen 1940-45* (Curfew. Daily life during the Occupation 1940-45). Already the title is special and was a reference to a solid memory of the war – the curfew – of the last year.

The five years were tackled with a threefold perspective. The visitors were led alongside a chronological, broad, central 'track' through the history of the occupation in which the important topics affecting each citizen, young and old, active and passive were dealt with, like blackout, scarcity, food rationing and so forth. On this path the broad movements and the general tendencies were addressed as well. The gathering around national symbols like the figure of the

⁵³⁷ Bryld, Warring, *Besættelsestiden*, p. 443.

⁵³⁸ Kjeldbæk, Esben, *Besættelsen. Idéoplæg til en udstilling om besættelsestiden i Nationalmuseets Egmonthal*, september 2005, unpublished manuscript with courtesy of Esben Kjeldbæk, Copenhagen August 2003.

⁵³⁹ Kjeldbæk, Esben, *Frihedsmuseet, Seminar den 1. marts 2004 i Nationalmuseets festsal om Egmont-udstillingen 2005 'Besættelsen 1940-1945'*, on March, 1st 2004, transcript with courtesy of Esben Kjeldbæk.

⁵⁴⁰ Kjeldbæk, Seminar den 1. marts, transcript, p. 4.

King, the flag or the songs or the widely shown sympathy for Britain and the Allies are treated here as well as the cultural trends and the music that the majority of the population listened to.

At any time, the visitor was able to leave the main path of the common Dane, the passive population or the bystander and choose one of the two other alternatives in the exhibition, the one of the collaborator or the perspective of a resistance fighter. Of course such a strict corset and categorization did not leave much space for the shades of grey of the real situation, something that as we will see posed a difficulty not only with the case of the flight of the Jews, and yet it showed clearly that at any time Danes made choices. Ironically, the main track and its texts were held in neutral grey colours to set it apart from the red collaborator side and the blue resistance fighter side.

Spærretid surely constitutes a much more intensive breach with ideology of the Danes as freedom fighters than any exhibition before. The paradigm of national consensus is abandoned and the historiography has finally caught up with the public representations of the war. Surely that was also easier in an exhibition that was meant to describe life during the occupation than in a museum that is specifically meant to describe the resistance.

The exhibition proved successful in terms of numbers of visitors, which might indicate a renewed or persisting interest for the field of war history. It was the most successful temporary exhibition of the Natmus in the last ten years.⁵⁴¹ But of course it is also possible that the anniversary year of 2005 had its share in spurring on the interest. The reactions of the visitors were overwhelmingly good. A survey of the visitors showed that 91% of the visitors gave very positive responses to an evaluation.⁵⁴² Also the majority of press, besides some minor criticism, was on the whole positive to the exhibition.⁵⁴³ The accolade for the makers, however, was the benevolent advocacy of two veterans during the opening which was shown in parts in the news as well as a positive review by the FV-bladet, the veterans' journal.⁵⁴⁴

The exhibition was not only taking on all different kinds of difficult memories by its wide scope and its extensive treatment of the collaborating population but its division into three different paths was a good way of showing on the one hand the complexity of reactions to the occupation and the fact that they were ranging between different extremes and that there was a 'middle-ground' which was closest to the experience of the common Dane and on the other hand showed

⁵⁴¹ Nils M. Jensen, Kommunikationschef of Nationalmuseet in an e-mail to the author on 19 May 2006. See also press release "Den mest besøgte særudstilling på Nationalmuseet i 10 år er slut at Nationalmuseet, <http://www.natmus.dk/sw31670.asp>.

⁵⁴² Kjeldbæk, Esben, Evaluering af udstillingen Spærretid i Nationalmuseets Egmonthal, 7. oktober 2005 til 17. april 2006, courtesy Kjeldbæk.

⁵⁴³ Examples are: Hellman, Helle, Da husmoderen var helt, Politiken, 7 October 2005; Knippel, Lars Ole, Sammenhold i mørket, Jyllandsposten, 7 Oktober 2005.

⁵⁴⁴ Olsen, Erik Heimann, Spærretid, in FV-bladet, no. 183, 2005, pp. 40-41.

that people have made choices in that situation, in favour of one or the other side or extreme. As mentioned above, this division of *Spærretid* though proved too strict. The reactions of Danes and life as such were and are too complex for this framework. The makers had, for the sake of the structure, put those who worked for German enterprises or at German installations and the girlfriends of German soldiers on the collaboration path. This was on the one hand surely representing the view of a lot of Danes during and right after the war, but would on the other hand today probably be considered a justifiable conduct.

The representation of the railway sabotage, one of the lackmus-tests for every exhibition that is being up to date with historiography, shows again the new nature of this exhibition. The overall more than 1,500 interruptions of the tracks caused by it are shown and the assessment of the allied command that thought the sabotage to be of great efficiency is on display as well. But the exhibit also shows a map of the sabotage that was once shown in the old exhibition in the Frihedsmuseum and which stressed the overall activity and did not reflect the sabotage's efficiency with a text that this map represents the "traditional interpretation of the sabotage as being effective."⁵⁴⁵ This way *Spærretid* engages into the discussion of interpretations and their changes. It might be argued, however, that the big map and the tiny text communicate at first glance a different message than intended. The *tyskerpiger* – the girlfriends of the German soldiers – are also included in the exhibition – with a very interesting display. I will deal with it in greater detail in the chapter on these women in the second half of the thesis. The most interesting part of *Spærretid* for this project certainly is the last part, which deals with the liberation and its aftermath. The Frihedsmuseum had not included it, *Spærretid* however had a rather extensive section set up directly at the exit – outside the actual 'war-time' dealing with it. When compared to the exhibition in Frihedsmuseet, the exhibition in Egmonthallen gave far greater possibilities for the visitor to understand the inter-dependency of developments within the country and with the outer world. The makers also made a point of embedding the history on display with the memory and the historiography on it. The visitor was, for example, greeted at the very beginning or 'dismissed' at the doors with a little three-sided pyramid with a sten-gun mounted on each side. Supplemented by further objects, the guns were to symbolize three different approaches of the war historiography. One was the patriotic approach, or the view of the 1950s. The gun on display was a homemade gun of the resistance group Holier Danske. It reflects the way the war was seen as a struggle of the (in this case, conservative) resistance with small means against an overpowering enemy. The next one was called revisionist approach,

⁵⁴⁵ Nationalmuseet, exhibition *Spærretid*, "Jernbanesabotage og ventegrupper – Railway Sabotage and Standby Groups", 2005.

reflecting the view of the 1970s and the gun was a homemade model of BOPA, an originally communist resistance group and the gun reflected, according to the caption, the overrating of the military strength of the resistance that was beginning to be unveiled in the 1970s by Trommer and others. Another gun on this part, a Swedish model referred to those guns that were bought in Sweden and were distributed mainly to the Officers groups and caused the scandal on the skew dissemination of weapons. The last gun represented the new-moralistic approach of the 1990s as the makers had called it. The caption read: "Homemade sten-gun produced by 'Ringen'. A murder weapon made by self-appointed groups and perhaps used for killing informers. These 'liquidations' often took place without the guilt of the victims having been proven."⁵⁴⁶ Obviously this was referring to the discussion on the stickerlikvideringer, which I will come back to later. In addition to the pyramid, another display – albeit at the staircase outside the actual exhibition – was put up on Remembering the Occupation. Here in a little recess objects of commemoration, posters and little statues were on displays that were meant to represent the ways the war was remembered afterwards. The introductory text to this chapter was again explaining how the compromise between the politicians and the Freedom Council prevented the resistance from confronting the collaboration policy of the first five years and how the split in the resistance movement after the war and the succeeding claims of politicians that they had shared the same values but pursued a different strategy had created an image of the war that is characterized by a sense of unity and consensus, which has been periodically confronted by historians. Spærretid was hitherto the last attempt to represent the war in Denmark on a grand level in the capital and it is an exhibition that is different from the others. Albeit a striking abundance of uniforms, the exhibition manages to incorporate both the individual and the common Dane. The overall atmosphere is less one of military struggle than in Frihedsmuseet. Difficult topics are not avoided and current research on the topic is incorporated. The excellent catalogue with essays reflecting up-to-date historiography and which could be used as a reference book takes up all topics including the ones on the memory of the war.⁵⁴⁷ Even a topic as new as the ill-treatment of the German displaced persons after the war is included.⁵⁴⁸ In addition to the catalogue an extensive programme had been set up to accompany the exhibition. It included items and events

⁵⁴⁶ Nationalmuseet, exhibition Spærretid, "Ny-moralistisk", 2005.

⁵⁴⁷ Lundbak, Henrik (ed.), Spærretid. Hverdag under besættelsen 1940-1945, København: Nationalmuseet 2005.

⁵⁴⁸ In 2005 physician Kirsten Lyloff defended a thesis at the Department of History at the University of Copenhagen on the topic of Children of the German refugees that had perished in the months after the war because physicians had refused to treat them properly. Lyloff, Kirsten, Barn eller fjende? Uledsagde tyske flygtningebørn i Danmark 1945-1949. thesis, København Universitet, Det Humanistiske Fakultet 2004. She had published already essays on that matter in Historisk Tidsskrift, vol. 99 and 102 which caused a discussion in Denmark with veterans feeling that she had twisted the history. On January 31, 2003 the Dansk Radio brought a long interview with her on the topic with the historian Bent Blüdnikov as opponent on the question whether it poses a moral lesson for Danes.

of all kinds of media and for all age groups. Children and pupils were invited to 'learn' to make sabotage tools, to make their own toys from simple material and to tailor new clothes from old one. Or they learned how to cook something with just very basic ingredients at their disposal. Here the aim was to make the pupils acquainted with the situation of shortages throughout the war. Old and new movies on the war and the resistance were shown, among them also the 'classics' like *Det gælder din frihed* and *Danmark I lænker* which were produced right after the war with the involvement of the Frihedsråd. Most important for this topic: a series of speeches and discussions was arranged for that centred also on the new and debated topics of the occupation history like the economic collaboration, Jewish refugees who were sent back to Germany, the German refugees in postwar Denmark, the collaboration of Danes and the liquidations. A part of these speeches by prominent and new historians was grouped together in the months of April and May 2006 in a series that was called "Eftertanke" (Afterthought).⁵⁴⁹

In my opinion, Spærretid is a sign that the museum has in its presentation caught up with the historiography, albeit the limits of representing such events that are so strongly embossed with a dominant narrative and so much part of a societies cultural memory become visible. This way the exhibition might of course also serve as a reminder of the limitations of museum-representations and the discourse on the tasks and strategies of history museums in general that I have included in the chapter on Norway. A narrative constructed by an exhibition responds and corresponds to the narrative that is dominant within a culture. The previous exhibitions to a varying degree have represented a different and narrower view of the history. The first exhibition was already planned during the war, the second and third were done by the leading veterans themselves and the current exhibition in Frihedsmuseet by a curator and a team that had not been adults during the war but within the existing structures. Spærretid though was planned and done without these 'restrains' and consequently adopted another message. Of course, an exhibition on the resistance alone would neither have been necessary nor desirable with the FM in the same city but somehow the sequence of all exhibitions described represents a development from the first generation museum to the third generation museum.⁵⁵⁰

The next chapter will deal with another important agent of the memory production, the celebrations of the anniversary of the liberation. We will come across the FM there as well.

⁵⁴⁹ Nationalmuseet, Spærretid – Hverdag under besættelsen 1940-45, brochure Film aktiviteter 08 oktober 2005 – 17 april 2006. Nationalmuseet 2005.

⁵⁵⁰ Kjeldbæk, Post Modernism.

2.3. THE CELEBRATIONS OF DENMARK'S VICTORY

In one of the previous chapters I have already described the importance and meaning of anniversaries. Of course Liberation Day is also in Norway's southern neighbour a day of remembrance and celebrations. As in Norway the message of freedom came on the evening before the actual surrender of the German troops in Denmark and northern Germany on 5 May 1945. Therefore the evening of the 4th is generally seen as the day of celebrations of the more cheerful kind whereas the 5th is the day of commemorations and official celebrations.

Denmark has more than one national newspaper that is produced in the capital: *Politiken* and *Berlingske Tidende*. Whereas *Politiken* is liberal, *Berlingske Tidende* could be regarded as being closer to the conservative parties. The biggest Danish newspaper *Jyllandsposten* is published on Jutland and used to be less well informed on the events in the capital. The other two are nearly equally as strong in terms of subscriptions and circulation. In order to manage the amount of sources; I restrict my analysis of the main events on the anniversaries to an evaluation of *Politiken*, but it goes without saying that I will include *Berlingske Tidende* if the editorial part reflects an opposing view as well as *Jyllandsposten* or the politically independent opinion-forming dailies *Kristeligt Dagblad* and *Information*.

The surrender of the German army units in the Netherlands, north-west Germany and Denmark came into force on 5 May 1945. But already on the evening of the 4th the liberation was a fact. During the Danish BBC programme the presenter was interrupted and handed a news bulletin which he read out to the Danes at around 8:30 p.m. It contained news of the surrender. Right after the news the people went into the streets of that relatively warm early summer evening and celebrated peace and liberation. The blackout curtains were torn down and at times burned in the streets and some people lit candles in the windows to show their joy. In Copenhagen a torchlight procession to the Royal castle was made and everywhere a carnival atmosphere was spreading. It seems that the 'return of light' – symbolized by the opening of the blackout curtains and the torches, fires and candles – after five years of darkness – could be interpreted as the decisive theme of the night. This light iconography was, as will be visible later, more strongly integrated into the Danish set of symbols referring to the war than was the case in Norway. The candles in the windows became symbols and avowals of the right political standpoint. The former resistance movement – the Frihedsfonden – later even sold special candles for windows. A certain amount of the revenue was used for care institutions for the war victims and the invalid members of the resistance.



4th of May candles, photo taken in the exhibition Spærretid.

The days of the liberation were days of rejoicing but also the most bloody days of the five years.⁵⁵¹ The German commander-in-chief fortunately surrendered – but only on the 5th and he insisted on the British military taking over. So there were a couple of critical situations all around the country. But most of the casualties of the liberation days were caused by fights between the freedom fighters and desperate groups of Danish collaborators from the terror units of the HIPO (Hilfspolizei). The frihedskæmper had the task of arresting them according to prepared lists. These arrests started the fifth. So the next day was the day of seriousness and solemnity when the freedom fighters came into the streets and the prisoners were released and the dead were counted. This division of the two days is still in effect in Denmark, as it is Norway, and still influences and characterizes the festivities. The basic outlines of the celebrations in the years to come were created in 1945 – the 4th as the day of rejoicing and the 5th as the more earnest day of commemorations and public mourning.

It was along those lines that the different veteran groups, the associations and clubs celebrated the freedom and commemorated their own dead. The state was involved only in as much as state officials went to the meetings and held speeches. One reason was of course that despite the compromise of the liberation days the Danish trajectory held potential for conflicts. Many of the veterans were very much aware of the fact that the politicians had only reluctantly joined the resistance and that it was mainly the active resistance groups that had brought Denmark into the ranks of the allies. The politicians were also aware of that fact and were cautious not to provoke disapproval of the veterans.⁵⁵² They confined themselves to evoke the notion of unity and the resistance as a struggle of the whole Danish people in their speeches.⁵⁵³ Only gradually did the governments start to get more involved and actually planned events themselves and it happened

⁵⁵¹ Skov, Andreas/ Søeborg, Flemming, *Befrielsen. Den 5. maj 1945*, Hellerup: Documentas 2004 gives a vivid account of those days.

⁵⁵² Bryld, Warring, *Besættelsestiden*, p. 143-149.

⁵⁵³ The early developments are not within the scope of this thesis but Bryld and Warring give a fairly good overview of these speeches in *Besættelsestiden*, pp. 138-162.

in close contact with certain groups of veterans, who expected not to break with the perception of consensus and unity.⁵⁵⁴ The anniversary of 1965 was the first big event with a considerable participation of the Danish state, but already before the basic themes and rituals of the celebrations had been established. The theme of light for example, the theme of the end of the blackout and the celebrations of the night of the liberation is ever since represented with torchlight parades on the fourth and there is always a memorial service – normally on the fifth – and the elite and the important veterans celebrate with dinners and a special performance in the Royal Theatre.

With the creation of Mindelunden in Ryvangen on the side of army barracks misused by the Germans and also the location of numerous executions of Danish freedom fighters as the official memorial, even specific words were added to the celebrations. On the tombs and memorial plaques the word "Kæmp for alt du har kært" (Fight for all you have loved) are engraved. They are taken from the song *Altid frejdig*. In the song the words are completed by a verse that says that death is not that hard if one dies in a struggle for the beloved.⁵⁵⁵ The song is always the last one sang at any ceremony in Denmark.

The First Big Celebration – 1965

The 20th anniversary of the liberation, however, was also celebrated as in Norway with nationwide events. In order to prepare the official celebrations, a committee under the auspices of the prime minister's office was formed.⁵⁵⁶ The committee comprised several officials from different branches of the government and the media and coordinated its activities with Svenn Seehusen as representative of the resistance and the veteran's largest association, the Frihedskampens Veteraner.⁵⁵⁷ Ever since then, Seehusen became the principal contact of the government to the resistance movement. It was the last time that the resistance organizations were not directly represented at the prime minister's office, but were just consulted. But it becomes very clear from the files that the veterans already exerted some influence. Not only Seehusen but also Jørgen Barfod, later curator of Frihedsmuseet, was involved. In his role as the chairman of an association of former prisoners (Landsforeningen Gestapofangerne) he coordinated the actual events around the torchlight parade and the evening events in the square at

⁵⁵⁴ Bryld, Warring, *Besættelsestiden*, pp. 148 and 155.

⁵⁵⁵ The Danish text is: Kæmp for alt, hvad du har kært; dø, om så det gælder, da er livet ej så svært, døden ikke heller.

⁵⁵⁶ The committee's work can be consulted at Statsministerens kontor, København:093-1/ 1965.

⁵⁵⁷ Seehusen, Sven. Personal Communication with Jørgensen, Eigil, 15 March 1965, Starsministerens kontor (DK), Stm (DK), 04-28/1962-70.

the city hall.⁵⁵⁸ The committee planned and arranged the central events and coordinated the events where the presence of the prime minister and other members of the government or the royal family were desired. This anniversary, the traditional distinction between the joyful 4th and the solemn 5th of May was broken; the wreath-laying in the memorial park in Ryvangen was scheduled for the 4th already before the street festival in the square in front of the city hall (Rådhuspladsen), where, the former member of the Frihedsrådet Aage Schoch and the prime minister Jens Otto Krag spoke to the public. At 8.45 p.m. the original BBC message was broadcasted followed by singing. Despite the pouring rain thousands took part in the march from the memorial for the sailors in Nyhavn via the memorial for the unknown concentration camp prisoner to the city hall. In Nyhavn some demonstrators, who wanted to protest about the war in Vietnam, tried to disturb the ceremony but they were pushed aside by sailors. The speeches on Rådhuspladsen expressed gratefulness to the allies, the Swedes and the Norwegians (for their example of strength). The mayor of Copenhagen also reminded the gathering about the importance of international contracts to the security of Denmark, surely a reference to NATO.⁵⁵⁹ NATO was seen as the big legacy of the war and was invoked by the leading article of the newspaper *Politiken* as well. The speaker expressed his admiration for the few thousands who actively took up the fight when the majority clung to their daily lives. They constituted the end of a dark chapter of Danish history as well as the beginning of a new one – the gathering around the defence forces and the great alliance. He complained that the youth would not understand anymore what happened and that no-one could live detached from one's historical experience.⁵⁶⁰ The gratitude towards Sweden that had already been mentioned in the speeches on Rådhuspladsen seems to have been the other central theme in the celebrations of 1965. On the third of May the Swedish Foreign Secretary had already been invited alongside veterans and officials to Helsingør where a wreath was lowered into the sea to commemorate those who had lost their lives in the traffic to Sweden. The Danish Brigade in Sweden was celebrated as an expression of the will to fight for freedom and Denmark expressed its gratitude for the warm reception of the Danish refugees in Sweden.⁵⁶¹

On May 5th, the government had originally planned to invite veterans and officials to a festive supper in Christiansborg castle and a gala in the Royal Theatre (Det kongelige Teater). The supper was probably dropped because of financial reasons.⁵⁶² As compensation maybe, the

⁵⁵⁸ Barfod, Jørgen H., KZ-fanger og modstandsfolk ude og hjemme arrangerer den 4.maj højtideligheder og fakkeltog, *Stm* (DK), 04-28/1962-70.

⁵⁵⁹ Mange samledes for at mindes den store dag for 20 år siden, *Politiken*, 5 May 1965.

⁵⁶⁰ Mindet om befrielsen, *Politiken*, 4 May 1965.

⁵⁶¹ 'Tak til Sverige'-fest, *Politiken*, 3 May 1965.

⁵⁶² Hjortdal, H., *Notits*, *Stm* (DK), 04-28/1962-70.

Theatre was filled with as many veterans, including some 30 widows of sailors, as there were seats in the room and the King and Queen were present.⁵⁶³ The gala was, according to Bryld and Warring, even made subject of a kind of blackmailing on the side of Svenn Seehusen. After the government showed reluctance to finance the publication of the book *Faldne i Danmarks Frihedskamp 1940-45* and the decoration of the resistance fighter's graves with a medal, Seehusen threatened to boycott the gala, something that surely would have provoked a devastating publicity.⁵⁶⁴

It can be said that with the slight adjustment in the schedule the main political and symbolic themes were maintained as in the first years after the liberation. That the war could and was invoked to legitimize Denmark's NATO membership in the NATO was a central moment in the first of the bigger celebrations. The celebrations therefore have to be seen in the background of the Cold War. The state took an active part in the organization, maybe to safeguard its political agenda. It can also be noticed that the committee as the organizer tried to include various groups of victims and veterans. Somewhat surprising is the fact that neither the committee nor the government dedicated a considerable sum to educational purposes. The FM's request for financial support to produce school material was denied.⁵⁶⁵ Maybe the government did not deem it necessary, since the memory of the war and the proper interpretation seemed rooted enough.

25 Years – Consensus and Conflict

The 25th anniversary of the liberation was also of course in Denmark an event celebrated on all levels of society. The prime minister again appointed a committee, this time well in advance in 1968 to lay out the framework of the celebrations to come.⁵⁶⁶ Represented in that committee were the head of the prime minister's office, a representative of the merchant fleet, the head of the Danish police forces, a secretary of the parliamentary administration, the Chief of Staff and Frode Jakobsen, former member of the Frihedsrådet. The committee put forward some general suggestions on how to celebrate the anniversary in a "spirit of harmony", assuming that it might be the last bigger celebration.⁵⁶⁷ It stressed the aim to celebrate not only the efforts of all different branches of the resistance, but also to commemorate the smaller military contribution of Danish soldiers and the of the merchant and again to celebrate the Swedish assistance throughout the war. The celebrations were to be nationwide and the committee pointed

⁵⁶³ Da 5. mai fejredes i aftes i Det kgl. Teater ... ved Frihedsmuseet ... og i Frøslev, Politiken, 6 May 1965, p. 20.

⁵⁶⁴ Bryld, Warring, Besættelsestiden, p.149.

⁵⁶⁵ Bryld, Warring, Besættelsestiden, p.144.

⁵⁶⁶ Internal memorandum by Jørgensen, Eigil, Statsministeriet, København:04-28/1962-70

⁵⁶⁷ Udvalget vedrørende 5. maj 1970, Indstilling til regeringen fra Udvalget til forberedelse af 25-årsdagen for Danmarks befrielse, 13 August 1969, Stm (DK), 04-28/1962-70, p.1.

specifically at the necessity to involve the Danish Radio to "ensure, that [it, C.M.] would broadcast on a suitable scale".⁵⁶⁸ The involvement of the Danish Radio could be interpreted as a sign that television had gained an importance to an extent that it could not be left out of the preparations but maybe also that it could be used to transport the intended message. The programme suggested by the Udvalg massed again the festivities on the 4th of May and the arrangements of a more ceremonial character on the 5th of May. Torchlight parades, suppers and concerts were planned for the evening of the 4th and altogether six different ceremonies of wreath-laying for the 5th.⁵⁶⁹ All these considerations were again taken up by a second committee that was formed in November 1969 to carry out the practical preparations and to dispose of the allocated budget. It was called *arrangementsudvalg*. Members were officers and secretaries from those ministries involved, a representative of the municipality of Copenhagen and, as intended by the previous committee, two representatives of respectively Danmarks Radio and an association of journalists. The resistance was not directly involved anymore but the omnipresent Svenn Seehusen and a so-called *kontaktudvalg* (liaison-committee) of the veterans' organizations were consulted.⁵⁷⁰ As in 1965, the government did not make any effort to incorporate the schools or to send out educational material.⁵⁷¹ However, money was granted to an initiative of the Frihedskampens Veteraner to donate a silver torch to Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum.⁵⁷² The torch was brought to Oslo and presented on the 7th of May. Today it hangs in the library of the Hjemmefrontmuseum.

The final programme did not have many surprises in store. On the whole it followed the familiar tracks. On May 4th, which in 1970 was a Monday, the torchlight parade from Nyhavn to the Rådhusplads and the following street festival took place and the different organizations of veterans had their respective festivities. These festivities were to a large extent financially supported by the committee. The speeches on the torch- and candlelit Rådhusplads were held by the prime minister Hilmar Baunsgaard and Frode Jakobsen. Jakobsen expressed his disappointment that the younger generations were occupied with a war in a far-off country (Vietnam?) and that they did not understand the war generation and why the liberation was an event to celebrate. The prime minister spoke after the gathering had heard the BBC liberation message and also expressed his fear that the young generations might not understand the

⁵⁶⁸ Udvalget vedrørende 5. maj 1970, Indstilling, p. 3.

⁵⁶⁹ Udvalget vedrørende 5. maj 1970, Notat om forslag til arrangementer i anledning af 25-året for Danmarks befrielse den 4. - 5. maj 1970, Stm (DK), 04-28/1962-70.

⁵⁷⁰ Arrangementsudvalget vedrørende 4-5 maj 1970, Arrangementer ved 25-årsdagen for Danmarks befrielse den 4-5 maj 1970. Beretning afgivet til statsministeriet den 1. maj 1970, Stm (DK), 94-28/1962-70.

⁵⁷¹ Bryld, Warring, Besættelsestiden, p. 144.

⁵⁷² Seehusen, Svenn, Personal Communication with Ministersekretær E.M. Eskesen, Økonomiministeriet, 23 April 1970, Stm (DK), 04-28 II 1962-70.

importance of that day. He afterwards called on the public to exercise tolerance and respect towards all people since that would be the only way to prevent more wars.⁵⁷³

The government's guests of honour from the allied and Swedish sides, general Richard Dewing, Sir Colin Gubbins from the SOE, general Fyodor Korotkov and countess Estelle Bernadotte were together with around 1000 veterans also invited to a concert in Tivoli after the event on Rådhuspladsen. The tickets were to be distributed by the kontaktudvalg. The 5th of May saw again the usual wreath-laying and a commemoration service in Domkirken. In Mindelunden the wreathes were laid by the prime minister, the president of the parliament and the king. Two minutes of silence were obeyed by those who felt the need on the square in front of the city hall.⁵⁷⁴ The king made a speech that was broadcasted on TV, in which he expressed, as did all speakers on these occasions, his gratitude to the allies. Characteristic of the basic narrative, he said that the Danes had from the very beginning felt the alliance.⁵⁷⁵

This was also to be represented at the gala in the Royal Theatre. But the initial programme seems to have met the veterans' disapproval. They became active when it was suggested that at the show in the Royal Theatre on the occasion of the celebrations on May 5th the play should be the piece *År* by Klaus Rifbjerg. The piece was not an account of the heroic deeds of the resistance but showed the everyday life and problems of a common family and was, after massive protest by the resistance movement, cancelled and Bertolt Brecht's *Svejk* was shown instead.⁵⁷⁶ Around 1000 veterans and widows were again invited to both the service and the gala. It seems that those responsible thought that these celebrations would be the last ones on that scale and that they should therefore communicate a meaning beyond the actual days of festivities and make an enormous effort to celebrate, a notion that again became visible on the 40th anniversary. The speeches took on a new under-tone – it became obvious that the population was beginning to lose contact with the past and that the war was beginning to become less important for much of the younger population. At the same time the occupation and liberation and the symbols connected to them were still powerful enough to make others commemorate and celebrate. The living lights were not yet forgotten as icons and symbols. Other problems became pressing, the question about whether to join the European Community for example was hotly debated around 1970. Finally in 1972 Denmark, ten years after it had applied for the membership, joined the European common market organization. Certainly, there have been agitators against the membership using also the memory of the war to stand out

⁵⁷³ Ingen må glemme kampen, in: Berlingske Tidende, 5 May 1970.

⁵⁷⁴ 20 af de vigtigste begivenheder I Storkøbenhavn 4. og 5. maj, in: Berlingske Tidende, 4 May 1970 and To minutters stillhed for de faldne, in: Berlingske Tidende, 6 May 1970.

⁵⁷⁵ Deres idealer bør gå av, in: Berlingske Tidende, 6 May 1970.

against membership, but it seems that those arguments were less strong for most parts of the population than others. Maybe it is in the light of this 'transition' that the following celebrations of 1985 have to be interpreted.

1985 – the Last Celebrations?

The 40th anniversary of an event is seldom celebrated with the same enthusiasm as the 25th or the 50th. 40 years are a long time since the event happened but at the same time the 'magic' 50 years have not yet been reached. In addition, as mentioned earlier, the government in 1970 had initially thought that the 25th anniversary was the last big event. And yet the 40th anniversary was given a considerable attention in Denmark – even to a larger extent than in Norway. The notorious Svann Seehusen had contacted the Prime Minister again in 1983 and suggested the setting-up of a new committee for the 40th anniversary with regards to the numerous survivors who are alive. It is mere speculation, whether the extent of the celebrations in 1985 was solely due to the intervention of the veterans and whether there would have been any events of that size without the personal intervention of their organizations and Svann Seehusen. The veterans especially might have feared that this anniversary would be the last chance to celebrate with the survivors.⁵⁷⁷ Officially the government felt compelled to arrange the festivities because of an assumed "widespread desire" to do so.⁵⁷⁸ But as Anette Warring pointed out, that means that there was also a portion of the public that did not wish for extensive celebrations.⁵⁷⁹ The younger generations that had not lived through the war were probably less eager to celebrate. It was them the arrangements were directed towards – as an educational programme.

Besides these considerations from the official side, one can see how well the date was rooted in public memory by looking, for example, at the numbers of visitors Frihedsmuseet had in this year. According to the FM's annual report the mark of 100,000 visitors was met at the earliest date in the course of the year since the opening of the museum. Since the liberation celebration is in early May, it is not illogical to assume a connection.⁵⁸⁰ The letter the prime minister sent out to the mayors and governors (borgmestre og amtsborgmestre) in which he called the celebrations a national responsibility may, on the other hand, indicate that the celebrations were

⁵⁷⁶ Bryld, Warring, *Besættelsestiden*, p. 150.

⁵⁷⁷ Seehusen, Svann, Personal Communication with Schlüter, Poul, 2 August 1983, Stm (DK), 057-6 I Udvalget for 40-året.

⁵⁷⁸ Schlüter, Poul, letter to 'Til samtlige borgmestre og amtsborgmestre', 8 October 1984, Stm (DK), 057-6 I Udvalget for 40-året.

⁵⁷⁹ Warring, Anette, *Historieformidling - i et demokratisk perspektiv*, in: *At bruge historie - i en sen-/postmoderne tid*. Edited by Bernard Eric Jensen. Roskilde: Roskilde Universitetsforlag 2000.

⁵⁸⁰ Årsberetning 1985 for Frihedsmuseet, in: *Årsskrift for Frihedsmuseets Venner*, København: Frihedsmuseets Venners Forlag 1985.

not seen as granted.⁵⁸¹ The prime minister also appointed a committee again to plan the official celebrations even though the prevailing opinion pointed into the direction of a lower profile. There was the wish to limit the celebrations to one day (May 4th), which met some resistance by the veterans who asked for the traditional wreath-laying on May 5th.⁵⁸² In the end, the government complied with their wish. Still, the effort to keep a low profile can be seen from the draft the second committee handed in. The members, including Seehusen and a nother veteran representative Frode Toft, agreed to restrict the official events to a 'national level' and not invite foreign guests and to put emphasis on arrangements in the local communities and not on nationwide events in Copenhagen. Maybe the letter to the mayors can also be seen in this light. At the same time the committee also agreed that in order to make any celebration a success, educational projects and information on the war and the "significance of the liberation for peace and democracy" would be needed.⁵⁸³ According to the draft, the main expectation was clearly lying on the TV, but additionally the school authorities were expected to contribute with material and the local libraries and museums were expected to arrange exhibitions. The FM was meant as to support the local initiatives. The committee also drafted the possibility to celebrate the 5th of May with two minutes silence but showed a remarkable sense of reality when it came to the conclusion that it was doubtfully whether such an initiative would meet enough response since 5 May 1985 was a Sunday. As can be seen from the draft programme and the newspapers of the actual anniversary, the celebrations in the end did not differ in any respect from the preceding ones – they were even bigger. They followed the well-established pattern and even added elements. On the 4th of May the veterans had their annual ceremony in Mindelunden and the gathering on the Rådhuspladsen was arranged. That year two elements were even added for that day. In order to tie the events around the country as had been the committee's wish, the author and poet Halfdan Rasmussen was asked to write a 'prologue' that was to be read at all events at or around the same time as in Copenhagen during the main festival. The prologue was somehow a short lesson in artistic form of what had happened and what was to be commemorated. The tone corresponded to the period's spirit of the international peace movements and the contents could probably be agreed on by anybody who was of a peaceful outlook. The events of the occupation were connected to contemporary victims of war.⁵⁸⁴ Since

⁵⁸¹ Schlüter, Poul, letter to 'Til samtlige borgmestre og amtsborgmestre', 8 October 1984, Stm (DK), 057-6 I Udvalget for 40-året.

⁵⁸² The suggestion is found in: Statsministeriet, Notat om eventuel festligholdelse af 40-året for Danmarks befrielse (4. maj 1985), 22 August 1983, Stm (DK), 057-6 I Udvalget for 40-året. The answer of Seehusen in: Seehusen, Svann, Personal Communication with Statsministeriet, 5 September 1983, Stm (DK), 057-6 I Udvalget for 40-året.

⁵⁸³ Udvalget vedrørende 40-året for Danmarks befrielse, Indstilling, 1984, Stm (DK), 057-6 I Udvalget for 40-året.

⁵⁸⁴ Halfdan Rasmussen, Prologen, Stm (DK), 057-6 I Udvalget for 40-året.

the committee does not seem to have been confident that the population would spontaneously light candles in windows, the government ordered public authorities to adorn their windows with 'levende lys' as an example to the rest. Something that was also published in the press beforehand.⁵⁸⁵ The prologue also contained the call to light candles. The whole last verse was about that theme. Letters from several mayors and municipal authorities kept in the files of the committee at the prime ministers office show that the call by Prime Minister Schlüter was followed and also that the prologue was duly integrated all around the country.

The speakers on the Rådhuspladsen who came after the prologue were chosen carefully in order not to provoke anybody or to leave anybody out. Their composition was meant to truly reflect the spirit of the consensus reached after the war and the liberation government. Besides the conservative prime minister Poul Schlüter, Alfred Jensen (former minister in the liberation government and a communist), Frode Jakobsen (Frihedsrådet and social democrat) and the mayor of Copenhagen Egon Weidekamp (likewise social democrat) spoke this time.⁵⁸⁶ The communists had this time agreed to join the official celebrations despite the previous criticism of the government's arrangements on the other anniversaries.⁵⁸⁷ Whether Jensen and the DKP were invited from the beginning on is hard to assess. A newspaper article of January 1985 in the leftist *Information* complained that the politicians who had not fought were celebrating and the communists who had suffered the most were not invited. The author might not have been informed correctly but the fact that the article was found in the files of the prime minister's office, can also hint that the article was taken note of.⁵⁸⁸ Maybe the committee had afterwards decided to invite Jensen. No communist organization had a representative in the committee.

Not everybody viewed the day with the same solemn feelings, some people saw it as a way to express their discontentment with current politics. Protesters from the political left used the event on the big square, the audience and the media coverage to demonstrate their dissatisfaction with the Schlüter's policy. Not during the speech of the resistance veterans but during Schlüter's and Weidekamp's speech they disturbed with boo-ing and shouting. Schlüter was even greeted with tomatoes and rotten eggs and had to be protected by policemen and their plastic shields. According to *Politiken*, around half of the 20,000 people present on the square were protesting, whereas the other half was quite shocked. Some of the elder people even attacked the young

⁵⁸⁵ Inga Kjøgx Pedersen, Lørdag er en festdag, *Politiken*, 3 May 1985. The same article confirms that the governments initiative and the prime minister's letter was successful and that there were exhibitions and celebrations all over the country.

⁵⁸⁶ Warring, Anette, 40 år efter. Historiebevindstheden og historieformidlingens samfundsmæssige betydning belyst gennem en analyse af iscenesættelsen af 40 årsjubilæet for Danmarks befrielse og dets manifestation i massekulturen, Diss. RUC, Roskilde 1987, p. 14-15.

⁵⁸⁷ Bryld, Warring, Besættelsestiden, p. 157.

protesters since they felt insulted by their protests.⁵⁸⁹ The protesters wanted to protest against Schlüter's foreign policy (with regard to NATO) but were perhaps also furious because they felt that he with his appearance on that occasion, had tried to unrightfully 'usurp' the legacy of the resistance.

The media coverage was very broad. Anette Warring, who in her master thesis wrote an in-depth analysis of the celebrations of that year and the treatment of the date in popular culture, interpreted the various reports and TV programmes. She concluded that most comments and the reaction of the newspapers were coined by a strong anti-communism.⁵⁹⁰ All articles and reports were full of criticism for the protesters and some leading articles claimed that they had brought shame on the celebrations and the memory of the liberation. Some compared the protest to the methods of the Nazis.⁵⁹¹ Sympathy with the protests was seldom shown.⁵⁹² The prime minister's speech itself did not offer anything new. He referred to the allies, quoted the former prime minister Wilhelm Buhl who at the re-opening of the parliament in 1945 had said, that the Danes always had felt allied with the victors and then repeated again the old themes of the necessity of a strong defence in international cooperation with friendly nations (i.e. NATO).⁵⁹³ Interesting to note is that Jensen's speech represented a stark contrast to the prime minister's. He hailed the Soviet Union and criticised the collaboration policy of the war time government.⁵⁹⁴ Also, the incident on Rådhuspladsen was not the only protest during the two days of celebration. The following day the association of stage hands formed a 'guard of honour' at the gala in the Royal Theatre. The guests had to pass a row of torchbearers that greeted the old veterans but also protested against Schlüter and the government's share in the performance.⁵⁹⁵

The veterans also found something to complain about at this anniversary. This time, it was the state TV-channel DR that was the object of anger. DR had initially planned to broadcast the Swedish serial about Jane Horney, a woman who had played a dubious role during the war and was probably mistakenly killed by the Danish resistance. The showing on May 4th was moved to a later date in fall due to the angry protests of the veterans. I will go into more detail about this programme and the reason for the protests by the veterans in the chapter on the liquidations. The critical documentary was cancelled and replaced by the movie *Det gælder din frihed* by Theodor

⁵⁸⁸ Styrk, Mads Nissen, Hvad skal Schlüter på Rådhuspladsen 5. maj?, Information, 11 January 1985, Stm (DK), 057-6 I Udvalget for 40-året.

⁵⁸⁹ Utzon, Susanne, Æg og tomater mod Schlüter, Politiken, 5 May 1985.

⁵⁹⁰ Warring, 40-året, p. 21.

⁵⁹¹ See as example: Foragt - det fortjener demonstranterne, Politiken, 6 May 1985.

⁵⁹² One example was: Vestergaard, Jørn, Det var en provokation, Politiken, 8 May 1985.

⁵⁹³ Statsministeriet, Statsminister Poul Schlüters tale på Rådhuspladsen lørdag den 4. maj 1985, Stm (DK), 051-19, 1992 I.

⁵⁹⁴ Warring, 40-året, p.24.

⁵⁹⁵ Thøgersen, Birger, Kongelig fest for frihedskæmperne, Politiken, 6 May 1985.

Christensen – a movie that according to Bryld and Warring is a "monument to the resistance's view on the war."⁵⁹⁶ Made on the initiative of the Frihedsrådet, the movie tells the basic narrative, taking a starting point in the events of 29 August 1943 with flashbacks to the previous years. In addition, the DR produced a new series *Profiler fra besættelsestiden* consisting of interviews and portraits of former resistance fighters. It also re-ran the programme *Besættelsestidens Danmark* produced in the 1960s and 1970s around the 25th anniversary.⁵⁹⁷ It becomes clear that there had been no 'experiments' – except debate that was broadcasted on TV with Hans Kirchhoff and another historian Erik Kjersgaard as well as Frode Jakobsen. Kjersgaard had before made the statement in the series *Danmarkshistorier* that not all Danes had been freedom fighters and had doubted the harmonious interpretation of the war times.⁵⁹⁸ If this programme was slightly critical to the narrative another TV-programme became an integral part of the celebrations: the extremely popular TV serial *Matador*. *Matador* describes the history of the people of a Danish coastal town through the 1930s and 1940s and also has a 10-minute part on the liberation and the BBC message. This part (*Vi vil fred her til lands*) was broadcasted on the evening of the 4th and repeated on the 5th. The serial seems to have been so popular that the mayor of the municipality of Varde wrote to the Statsministeriet and asked to delay the transmission because he feared that less people might come to the celebrations because they would stay at home to watch it. The request was not followed with reference to the re-run the following day at 3.15 pm.⁵⁹⁹ We will hear more about this astonishingly popular series later. Interestingly, the DR took the concern of the above-quoted mayor of Varde serious enough to include a note in its brochure that explicitly reminded the readers that the episode would be transmitted again the next day so that "nobody should feel forced to refrain from taking part in the arrangements."⁶⁰⁰

The celebrations seem to have been arranged with the parties of the parliament, at least did Schlüter checked with his own parliamentary group the Social Democrat. Their secretary expressed his agreement over the planned festivities but suggested including members of the Frihedsrådet more closely into the celebrations in order to strengthen the historical bond with the past. Interestingly though, in this document a handwritten note can be found on the margins that suggests that these members of the Frihedsrådet should get good seats in the Tivoli and

⁵⁹⁶ Bryld, Warring, *Besættelsestiden*, p. 151.

⁵⁹⁷ Warring, *40-året*, p. 13.

⁵⁹⁸ Dabelsteen, Per, *Nu Er Det 40 År Siden*, *Politiken*, 23 August 1983.

⁵⁹⁹ Statsministeriet (DK), Personal Communication with Nielsen, Christian mayor Varde kommune, 15 April 1985, Stm (DK), 057-6 I Udvalget for 40-året.

⁶⁰⁰ Danmarks Radio, *40-år for befrielsen i radio og TV*, brochure, København: DR 1985.

should also be welcomed explicitly but: "they should *not* talk."⁶⁰¹ (Emphasize by the unknown author of the note.) Why that was to be avoided or what was feared is unclear, but maybe those responsible feared that additional speeches by more veterans held the risk of embarrassing the prime minister or that criticism to his politics might be voiced.

Also rather cynical is a small anecdote I stumbled over while scanning the Prime Ministry's files on that anniversary. In a report, probably from the foreign ministry to the Statsministeriet, of May 3rd, a civil service officer referred to a call from and a discussion with the German chargé d'affaires (around the end of April) who wanted to discuss a delicate issue: The embassy had been asked by the German foreign ministry to enquire whether a tank-unit of 600-800 men that was supposed to arrive on May 5th for a joint manoeuvre should delay their arrival in Denmark in order not to cross the border on that day of importance for the Danes. The plans were made long ago without Danish complaints. The German chargé d'affaires had been instructed to report that from the German side a Danish wish to delay the arrival in order not to hurt feelings would meet unlimited understanding on the German side. The report continues by stating that the Statsministeriet had discussed it with the secretary of defence and they had agreed on that the Federal Republic of Germany was not the third Reich and the Bundeswehr not an occupation army and one should stick to what had been agreed earlier. The Germans now seemed to have ordered the delay of one day and officially stated it as a Danish wish, which in turn met with some confusion on the Danish side who had agreed on ignoring the coincidence. Unfortunately, it is not clear from the document what happened afterwards but it indicates that the some members of the official Denmark (here the Prime Minister's Office and the Foreign Ministry) did not attribute that great importance to the symbolic value of the date. It had not been seen as decisive in the planning of the manoeuvre to begin with and when discussed the German offer was not accepted. It could of course also be that the Danish side, after finding out what had happened, preferred to keep it low and give the impression of something unimportant.⁶⁰²

As with the previous anniversaries, new books on the occupation were also published in 1985. Among them was the critical book of Ditlev Tamm on the legal purge after the war.⁶⁰³ Another book I would like to mention was *Danmarks besættelse og befrielse – 40 år efter*.⁶⁰⁴ It contained essays of a different nature with authors ranking from one of the leaders of the Frihedsrådet

⁶⁰¹ Anker Jørgensen, Personal Communication with Schlüter, Poul, 27 August 1984, Stm (DK), 057-6 I Udvalget for 40-året

⁶⁰² I was kindly allowed access to this report by the Statsministeriet under the condition not to quote names and whole passages. The report 'Notits' can be consulted at Starsministerens kontor (DK), 057-6 I Udvalget for 40-året.

⁶⁰³ Tamm, Ditlev, Retsopgøret efter besættelsen, København: Jurist- og Økonomforbundets Forlag 1985.

⁶⁰⁴ Dansk Historielærereforening (ed.), Danmarks besættelse og befrielse - 40 år efter, Historie & Samtidsorientering, vol. 1, 1985.

Frode Jakobsen to the most well-known academics confronting the basic narrative like Claus Bryld and Aage Trommer, the latter literarily calling to put an end to the "Myths about the occupation."⁶⁰⁵ The book was published with the financial support of the Ministry of Education. The last book that is of interest here is probably the most critical: *Dengang under besættelsen – ubekvemme historier om en splitted nation* (In those days during the occupation – awkward stories about a torn country).⁶⁰⁶ The book contains essays to most of the pressing awkward memories like the volunteers for the Germans or the press under the occupation. Former resistance fighters of the left and communist resistance are among its contributors.

To sum the 40th anniversary up: The 1985 celebrations were, with respect to their setting and structure, not at all different to the previous ones. The official agents followed the well-established patterns and the tried and tested way. Probably due to the veteran's wishes, nothing was changed to a great extent and the aim of the government to engage continuously in deliberate history-politics is clearly visible. But something also becomes very clear: the audience, the addressee of the message had changed. The use of the memory of the war was felt and despised, but on the other hand the protesters made use of it themselves. The publication of very critical books also shows how much a part of the population had become more open to the critical scrutiny of traditions and new translations of the basic narrative. Moreover, the need to accompany the official rites with information and to direct the celebrations by instructions as the prologue and the call for exhibitions shows how distant the occupation had become for some Danes as a means of identity-construction. The anecdote with the manoeuvre re-enforces that notion. It is logical to assume that these tendencies were even stronger in the next big celebrations in 1995.

1995 – 50 years of Peace and Democracy

1995 was the year of large scale celebrations worldwide. The 50th anniversary of the allied victory and the end of the war seemed to have been of great importance in the countries that fought in the war. This is maybe because the already previously expressed fear that it would be the last anniversary where still a considerable number of veterans would be around, had become even more pressing and had helped to fuel the preparations. Denmark was also infected by the celebration-virus and started preparing the days fairly early. The usual committees under the prime minister's office were again used for that purpose. As a matter of fact, the committees of

⁶⁰⁵ Jakobsen, Frode, *Det seolvoplevede. Folkevalgte – selvbestaltede*; and Trommer, Aage, *Myter om besættelsestiden*, in: Dansk Historielærforening (ed.), *Danmarks besættelse og befrielse - 40 år efter*, Historie & Samtidsorientering, vol. 1, 1985, pp. 6-17 and 67-74.

1994 and 1995 had not been the first ones in the 1990s. Since 1990 was the 50th anniversary of the invasion and 1993 the 50th of the end of the cooperation policy, the Statsministeriet had somehow plenty of practice in the organization of celebrations. It started the preparations for May 1995 with an evaluation of the previous events and the work in the committees. One of the lessons of the last years was that the composition of the committee was to be made carefully with respect to the different veteran organizations and the size of the committee in order to keep it fit for work.⁶⁰⁷ In March 1994, a committee at the prime minister's office was again elected. Its seven to eight members were all *departementschefer* (ministers of state or undersecretaries) assigned the task to take care of the practical side of the celebrations on a national level and to coordinate all bigger events and, most importantly, to distribute the 15 million Danish Crowns that were at the committee's disposal – a sum larger than ever. They were supported by the so-called 5.maj udvalget, a much larger committee that contained the representatives of at least eight different veteran organizations, some representatives of the media, the FM and some other patriotic lobby-groups. The DKP and veterans from the right-conservative Dansk Samling were not directly invited, since the committee followed the customs of the earlier years.⁶⁰⁸ The composition therefore once again corresponded rather to the current political realities than to the historical relative strength after the liberation. It seems legitimate to ask whether such a fact could not, if inadvertently, also direct the themes and contents of the coordinated events. As we will see later, it was exactly what happened. The committee met eight times until June 1995 when it had its last meeting. The *departementschefsudvalget* had already met four days earlier and their chairman Ulrik Federspiel, Departementschef in the prime minister's office, was also the chairman of the 5. maj-udvalg. In the first meeting he could report that the secretaries were thinking about celebrations in the usual style with a gala and service. The discussion in the first meeting was concerned with the very general questions but it becomes clear that the numerous organizations involved were all pursuing their specific interests and tried to safeguard their own events publicity, time-slots or the royal family as speakers. The traditional division between the 4th and the 5th was submitted to that objective. Some opted for a gala in the Royal Theatre, others for a street festival, others feared that there might not be enough public interest in a festival. The whole discussion resembled a brainstorming. Esben Kjeldbæk, who was invited to

⁶⁰⁶ Møller, Lars, Wiborg, Annette (ed.), *Dengang under besættelsen - ubekvemme historier om en splitted nation*, København: Københavns Bogforlag 1985.

⁶⁰⁷ Skydsgaard, Inger, *Notits vedrørende markering af 50-året for 29. august 1943 m.v. og festligholdelse af 50-året for 4.-5. maj 1945*, Stm (DK), 051-5 1999-2003.

⁶⁰⁸ Ulrik Federspiel in *Information* 7/1 1995, cited in Nielsen, Lars, *50-års jubilæet for besættelsen*, master thesis (speciale), København: KU 2000, p. 19.

the committee, presented his budget-proposal for the new exhibition of the Frihedsmuseum. There seems to have been no opposition to it.⁶⁰⁹

The tradition of the *levende lys* – the living light was re-evoked. As mentioned above, on 5 May 1945 the Danes spontaneously lit candles in the windows after five years of blackout darkness against the 'enemy' (i.e. allied) planes. In 1995 a state-sponsored campaign with a number of well-known Danes was launched to make the population do the same.⁶¹⁰ It seems that the tradition the veterans attached so much importance to was somehow outworn and needed to be re-introduced and refreshed. The candles became the official logo of the whole celebrations. The lights were given a quasi-religious meaning when the 'light of freedom' was lit in Hvidsten on the 4th and brought to all parts of the country and to the Rådhuspladsen for the celebrations on the 5th.⁶¹¹ This links strongly to the rites of the orthodox or catholic celebrations of Easter and plays strongly with the symbolic of the light in Christian iconography. There was also a torchlight parade from the Rådhuspladsen to Tivoli after the celebrations there and a guard of honour for the veterans with torches by schoolchildren in front of the Royal Theatre. Also in the motto of that year's celebration: *Frihedens lys over Danmark* (The light of freedom above Denmark) the light theme is invoked and repeated. It seems that there was a really big effort made to re-install the sign and symbol of the living lights. It seems ironic that this theme was actually taken up by an artist, just not the way the veterans inside and outside the committee had wished.

On the meeting on the second of May, probably the most difficult point came up. Elle-Mie Ejdrup Hansen presented her art project to the committee. She planned to send a 530km long laser-beam from the most northern point of Jutland across the country into Germany, connecting the German bunkers and fortifications. Music was to be played and there would be art exhibitions, installations and events along the beam. The whole project was called *Linien-Lyset* or *Fredsskulptur 1995* (Light along the Line, Peace-sculpture 1995). The veterans were all opposed to it, even though Federspiel gave to understand that there was a political backing to the project. Their reasons were that the bunkers constituted blots in the landscape and the Danish history and that no attention should be drawn towards them.⁶¹² The opposition to the project was so harsh that in the next meeting Svenn Seehusen commented on the budget proposal of the departementschefsudvalg, which included the project, that the way the secretaries handled the

⁶⁰⁹ 5. maj udvalget, Referat af 1. møde den 11. april 1994 i representantskabet vedr. Markeringen af 50-års jubilæet for Danmarks befrielse, 21 April 1994, Stm (DK), 051-4, 1995.

⁶¹⁰ Heiberg, Steffen, De piller ved myten, Politiken, 21 August 1998.

⁶¹¹ Olsen, Erik HeimannStore øjeblikke i maj. 50-året for befrielsen blev fejret eftertrykkeligt over hele landet, in: FV-bladet, no. 142, 1995, pp. 7-13.

topic reminded him of the reign of the departementschefer during the last years of the occupation, insinuating Nazi-methods.⁶¹³

The veteran's protests were considerable with calls to the public to boycott and even sabotage the installation.⁶¹⁴ An intensive media debate on the freedom of art and the 'correct' way of commemorating was stirred up. The question of the Fredsskulptur was fought over bitterly. From the minutes of the meetings of the two committees it is hard to assess which one was supreme. It seems that the departementschefsudvalg prepared the logistics and asked the 5. maj-udvalg for approval. It might also have prepared the applications for funding sent in by numerous organizations and individuals who asked for support for their local celebrations or the erection of memorials and the like. It was then up to the 5. maj-udvalg to allocate the money according to its preferences. This, the distribution of money, was what consumed most of the time since the coordination of the main events seems to have been an easy task once a consensus on the outlines was reached. But again, the protocols do not clearly state the supremacy of one committee over the other and it is reasonable to assume an informal system of bargaining.

The minutes of the meeting on 22 November 1994 and on 17 March 1995 list the final results of this bargaining.⁶¹⁵ It becomes clear that the bulk of the money was allocated to initiatives represented directly in the 5. maj-udvalg. All represented veteran organizations got their books or festivities supported. Also the military acted as a pressure group. Its representatives would not hold speeches but their uniforms were and are present through parades, guards of honour and orchestras and military tattoos. Very clearly it contributed to and influenced the arrangements in 1995 via associations for the promotion of defence issues and patriotic, military lobbyist groups like *Værn om Danmark* (Defence for Denmark), *Atlantsammenslutningen* (a group for the promotion of Danish involvement in the NATO) and *Samvirket Folk og Forsvar* (Association People and Military), that were all represented in the 5. maj-udvalg. Through their educational material – a skolepakke (a compilation of brochures, guide-lines for the curriculum, videos and other material) – which they spread with the support of the 5. maj-udvalg, they tried (and maybe managed) to directly influence the interpretation of the war and of the significance of the anniversary for today's Denmark. The *Hjemmeværn*, a state-funded paramilitary militia of volunteers for crisis intervention, was mobilised to produce and distribute the material. The

⁶¹² 5. maj-udvalget, Referat af 2. møde i 5. maj-udvalget mandag den 2. maj 1994, 4 May 1994, Stm (DK), 051-4, 1995.

⁶¹³ 5. maj-udvalget, Referat af 3. møde i 5. maj-udvalget fredag den 24. maj 1994, 30 May 1994, Stm (DK), 051-4, 1995.

⁶¹⁴ Tobiesen, Niels, Laserlys blev saboteret, Politiken, 6 May 1995.

⁶¹⁵ 5. maj-udvalget, Referat af 6. møde i 5. maj-udvalget fredag den 4. november 1994, 22 November 1994, Stm (DK) 051-4, 1995 and 5. maj-udvalget, Referat af 7. møde i 5. maj-udvalget fredag den 17. mars 1994, 29 March 1995, Stm (DK), 051-4, 1995.

Hjemmeværn sees it self as the embodiment of the legacy of the freedom fight and was therefore eager to help.

As always with this kind of material it is hard to assess which way the material was perceived or even whether it was read at all. Palle Roslyng-Jensen, a scholar of the University of Copenhagen and specialist in the history of the occupation, told me that he thinks that the skolepakke was not read at all. The teachers had enough good material at their disposal and simply did not need it.⁶¹⁶

It is striking though, that besides the skolepakke, which can safely be called propaganda, only a very few other educational or scientific research or publications were funded. On an event that was seen as so intimately entangled with the aim of educating the younger generations, which was referred to in most of the speeches, this is a sign of where the priorities were and who managed to pressure them.⁶¹⁷

After having said all that, the 1995 celebrations had a surprise in store for those who might think that the veterans and the grundfortællingen dictated the whole event. One of the main publicly-financed events of the anniversary was, in the end, the Fredsskulptur 1995. The installation of Elle-Mie Ejdrup Hansen laser beam shone between 10 and 12 p.m. on May 4th all along the western coast of Jutland and connected the German fortifications and reached across the border into Germany. A 'two minutes of silence' – an audiovisual installation – was broadcasted via satellite as a salutation from Denmark. That shows clearly that even if the udvalg perceived itself as the decisive institution in the planning of the celebrations, other agents existed, made themselves heard and pushed their wishes through, something that underlines that any memory production is a complex field. The calls by the veterans to sabotage the installation and the whole issue reminds one strongly of the actions against Aage Trommer's defence. In this light the insistence on the laser-show clearly was a risk, which the social-democratic government was able to run because it otherwise fulfilled the wishes of the interest groups. However, the actual show reflected the previous debate. On the one hand, more than 350,000 spectators caused chaos at the coast, showing the widespread interest in the installation, but on the other hand the light was sabotaged at several points with cables being cut.⁶¹⁸

By the composition of the committee it had signalled that it wished a smooth realization of the anniversary. In light of the events in 1985 the prime minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen also refrained from talking on the 5th of May, knowing that an over-representation of the government

⁶¹⁶ Interview with Palle Roslyng-Jensen in Copenhagen on 23 August 2004

⁶¹⁷ Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, the prime minister, referred in his welcome to the skolepakke to this educational task connecting it to the defence of human rights in Denmark and other parts of the world. Rasmussen, Poul Nyrup, *Det handler om frihed*, in: *Da Danmark blev frit. 5. Maj 50 årsdagen for Danmarks befrielse - En temapakke til historieundervisningen om tiden omkring den 5. maj 1945. Den historiske dato for Danmarks befrielse.* Norgreen, Jørgen. 95. Samvirket Folk og Forsvar, p. 3.

in the celebration of something so anti-authoritarian by nature could cause problems within some groups of society. It restricted itself to organizing the event.⁶¹⁹ That might indicate that the government, a coalition of *Socialdemokratiet* and *Radikale Venstre*, did not believe that the postwar compromise and the notion of the Social-democracy and the old politicians as part of the resistance would still hold valid. In order to avoid protests that could soil the celebrations, the critical leftist veteran groups that had been hitherto left out, also got generous funding, even though they were not included in the committee. As in 1985, the leftist group *Aktive Modstandsfolk* (Association of Active Partisans) was marginalized because they were not big enough to create a pressure group of some significance.⁶²⁰ But for the first time it was also comprised of representatives of the resistance organizations of BOPA and Holger Danske, the two pioneer-movements to the far left and the far right.⁶²¹

The programme in 1995 was extensive. Not just the capital, but as in 1985 also the whole country and the majority of the municipalities and counties celebrated. The government published 500,000 copies of a brochure with the schedule of all the different events to keep everybody informed.⁶²² The other major print-job of that anniversary was the state-sponsored new bibliography on the war. The new bibliography tried to grasp the postwar literature in its entirety.⁶²³ The preface by John Lauridsen explicitly states that the aim of the new bibliography was "to create a tool to set new proportions in Danish occupation history."⁶²⁴ It was extensive and its records showed that the emphasis within the historiography was not the same anymore.

The Queen and the Queen Mother were both present at several events, the Queen laid the traditional wreath in Ryvangen on the 4th and spoke to the people on Rådhuspladsen on the 5th. She also paid her respects to the resistance in other parts of the country and went to Hvidsten, where she honoured an extraordinary resistance group that was nearly wiped out by the Gestapo. The prime minister planted a tree in Tivoli and spoke at the opening of the new exhibition in Frihedsmuseet. The speeches were cleared of all controversial elements and neither touched on the historical events nor evoked the consensus view of the occupation but simply stayed on a general level to avoid criticism.⁶²⁵ The cooperation policy was not criticised – not even mentioned. Mentioned were just the young resistance fighters, those who dared.

⁶¹⁸ Tobiesen, Niels, *Laserlys blev saboteret*, Politiken, 6 May 1995.

⁶¹⁹ Nielsen, 50-års jubilæet, p. 22.

⁶²⁰ Bryld, Warring, *Besættelsestiden*, p. 152.

⁶²¹ Bryld, Warring, *Besættelsestiden*, p. 156.

⁶²² Danmark markerer 50-året for befrielsen. Hvad, hvor og hvornår? København: Statens Information 1995.

⁶²³ Lauridsen, John T. (ed.), *Samarbejde og modstand. Danmark under den tyske besættelse 1940-45. En bibliografi*, København: Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Museum Tusulanums Forlag 1995.

⁶²⁴ Lauridsen, *Samarbejde*, p. 16.

⁶²⁵ Nielsen, 50-års jubilæet, p. 21.

As in Norway, it is conspicuous that with time passing by the need to re-invoke the central themes of the master narrative was acknowledged by the main agents and the anniversaries gradually developed from mere commemorations into a combination of commemorations and educational projects. The message had to be adapted to the time and made digestible for the generations that had not experienced the occupation and war and to prove its validity. The 50th anniversary, with its various educational projects planned at a central level, constituted an expression of this trend. That this to a certain degree also included a weakening of the traditional black-and-white picture of the occupation and an incorporation of hitherto forgotten groups of victims or the 'stains on the nation's self-image' should not be overestimated.⁶²⁶ The central historical message in all the celebrations over the years was that of consensus and unity within the Danish people during the occupation. This was reflected for example in the choice of speakers on Rådhuspladsen. Besides the governing prime minister one of the important veterans would always speak.⁶²⁷ This message was present always and everywhere, even though it could be toned down or, during the Cold War, stressed.

Claus Bryld and Anette Warring described the celebrations as a period where especially in the media through background-articles "[t]he black-and-white picture of the occupation was complemented by some shades of grey, which represented democratization [...]."⁶²⁸ This democratisation they claimed was specifically visible with respect to hitherto neglected topics like the girlfriends of German soldiers, the SS volunteers and also the extent of the resistance. They claim that this did not subsequently lead to a change in the basic narrative. Lars Nielsen, who concentrated in his thesis on the media around that anniversary came to a very different conclusion though. In his opinion the media integrated to a hitherto unseen extent the existing scientific literature and reflected "to a great extent also the winding up of the basic narrative [...]."⁶²⁹ Certainly there might have been a gap between the media and what the organizers wanted to communicate.

If the 40th and the 50th anniversaries were already seen as the last ones where the heroes of the war could be present, this was even more pressing at the 60th, and perhaps more so in Norway than in Denmark, where the resistance was all-in-all younger. The 2005 celebrations were really the last time that the governments could celebrate with the veterans present and yet the celebrations were very different in both countries.

⁶²⁶ Bryld, Warring, *Besættelsestiden*, p. 176.

⁶²⁷ Bryld, Warring, *Besættelsestiden*, p. 156.

⁶²⁸ Bryld, Warring, *Besættelsestiden*, p. 176.

⁶²⁹ Nielsen, *50-års jubilæet*.

The 60th Anniversary – 'Historikerstreit' and Politicians Re-write History

As I have described above, the 60th anniversary did not receive much attention in Norway. In Denmark, however, the attention paid to this anniversary was far greater and the debate on what the memory about it meant to the people was far more intense. One reason for this was certainly also the contribution of the prime minister to this very debate. In 2001 a new prime minister was elected – the conservative politician of the Venstre Anders Fogh Rasmussen. Fogh Rasmussen, born in 1953 is a relatively young prime minister in the history of Denmark and his political style is not characterized by carefulness. In 2003, on the occasion of the the 60th anniversary of the the break down of the cooperation-policy and the introduction of the curfew after the riots of summer 1943, he announced his interpretation on the war history. In numerous interviews but also officially in his words of welcome for the webpage that was created as an electronic portal to the numerous ceremonies and activities around the anniversary, he condemned the cooperation with the Germans and praised the resistance. His remarks caused an intensive debate that rocked the very heart of the dominant version of the narrative. Therefore the 60th anniversary will be dealt with in its entirety in the second part dealing with the challenges to the basic narrative. The webpage *Befrielsen 1945* deserves some attention at this point, although it will be dealt with more extensively later.⁶³⁰ The growing importance and the possibilities especially in the field of education of a web-based information-point that would also generate educational material was at the core of the planning committee's 2005 anniversary efforts. The webpage that came out of the deliberations is an excellent example of how a multimedia-portal into aspects of history could be managed. The historian responsible for the webpage was Hans Kirchhoff and the portal was therefore not only rich in sources but also included the hitherto officially neglected stories. Full of empathy for the resistance and the veterans, the authors did not fail to mention collaboration and the resistance but also the debates caused by the war-trajectory in the postwar period. The page featured all kinds of material and media – pictures, original newspaper-clippings as PDFs, sound recordings and movie-clips, guidelines for teachers as well as links to other sides including the Dansk Radio's webpage on the liberation which featured even more movie-clips.⁶³¹ The certainly most interactive part was an 'oral-history' feature where contemporary witnesses could leave their memories of the war and the liberation. The authors came from all parts of the Danish historical profession with younger names dominating. The richness of the portal in all respects makes it a prime source for the state of the current culture of remembrance. We will therefore meet it again in the next parts.

⁶³⁰ Danmarks Undervisningsportal, Danmarks befrielse 5. maj 1945, <http://befrielsen1945.dk>

⁶³¹ Dansk Radio, Befrielsen – den 5. maj, <http://dr.dk/befrielsen/da/forside/>

Denmark: Celebrating Unity

By way of summarizing, the Danish anniversary celebrations show striking similarities to the Norwegian: the distribution over two days, the early established and never changed rituals of mourning, the gradual inclusion of new historiography, the gradual growth of educational material produced, and the ever growing involvement of the state as organizer and financier of the celebrations. And yet, the differences are also striking. The underlying conflict between the politicians as representatives of the old order and a system that for three years had collaborated with the Germans and the resistance as representatives of an uprising not so much against the German occupation soldiers but against the very policy of collaboration that had been fought out in the first months after the liberation continued to boil 'underground'. The monopoly of interpretation of this conflict was what both sides were eager to achieve. It determined the interpretation of the war and the successive celebrations up to the 60th anniversary. Besides that – or maybe because of that fact – the anniversaries have been stunningly ritualised and humdrum. In 1985 some groups showed their discontent with the instrumentalization of the anniversaries and in 2005 the prime minister stirred some protest with his remarks. But both times the protest was moderate and could be integrated. The protesters in 1985 were rejected by the media and the official Denmark, and in 2005 the negative responses to Fogh Rasmussen's instrumentalization were also meagre.

Throughout the years the element of education has increased, overtaking the element of commemoration as the leading aim of the celebrations and the programmes attached to them. This also brought back historians to the stages that were to supply the structure to the contents that had slightly changed. As in Norway, the extent of the problematic memories and groups included in the basic narrative was widened and there are signs of a certain tiredness of celebrations. Whereas the celebrations and their narrative structure, as reflected in speeches and the media, became totally detached from findings of historical research in the first three postwar decades, the gap has lately been considerably narrowed to a degree where there are spaces for discourse. The obstacles for an open debate not only of the war history but for its instrumentalization were obviously the veterans and their lobby-groups. Caught in a process of self-legitimization, they could not accept changes of the basic narrative communicated through the rituals. In the beginning that was because they would see differing versions as wrong or fraud, later because any new narrative endangered the very basis of their existence within the memory landscape. Who are or were these men? On the following pages I will present some of them as I have done in the Norwegian case.

2.4. PEOPLE AND PROTAGONISTS

In Norway a set of people could be identified as bearing political importance to the memory production on the war. These men had, due to their political roles, their roles within the historiography or as icons of the basic narrative some power of interpretation and were heard in the public not only by the other politicians of remembrance but by the consumers of media, books and movies. In Denmark, however, the picture is due to different trajectory more complex. The conflicts between the active resistance and the cooperating parties were concealed by the agreement reached in the liberation spring and summer but continued to boil underneath. The politicians feared the armed and high-spirited freedom fighters and their calls on a fundamental change of the political and social system. In what was later called *modbevægelsen* they curbed the resistance's influence. These efforts to either integrate or annihilate the resistance organizations further strengthened the suspicions of those parts of the resistance which just reluctantly joined the compromise. The parties were successful and most veterans were tamed and the movement as a whole was curbed and after the first free elections the resistance ceased to exist as an organisational body other than from a welfare organization for the veterans. Some former resistance fighters, however, continued political work in either smaller oppositional parties or in the mainstream parties of the old cooperation government. Unlike in Norway where such men became the leading politicians and influential parts of the establishment, these men in Denmark were rather quickly pushed aside by the more experienced politicians. But, as could be seen from the previous pages, some veterans and the concept of the resistance still plays an important role in the shaping of public opinion on the occupation period. These former resistance fighters were those who did not rock neither the compromise nor the consensus that all of Denmark had contributed to the resistance and the liberation – everyone with his own means. The leading politicians who were in the beginning careful – after the taming of the resistance – not to endanger their position by causing too much anger from the veterans, engaged step-by-step in a cooperation with these 'harmless folks'. Frode Jakobsen is the earliest central person in this respect. His background in the most harmonizing part of the resistance that always sought for compromises had always led him to tone down the conflicts within the movement.⁶³² That Jakobsen was acknowledged publicly to be an important figure even in the postwar period is shown by the series of articles Politiken dedicated to central figures of the resistance movement where Jakobsen was described as being "synonymous with

⁶³² Ahnefeldt-Møllerup, Eline, Historien som nyhed - den offentlige debat om Jane Horney-serien, in: Ladegaard, Claus (ed.), Når medierne spinder historiens tråd, København: Akademisk Forlag 1993, pp. 65-85, p. 78.

resistance".⁶³³ He became the main contact for interviews and was, as Hauge and Sønsteby in Norway, frequently interviewed during the anniversaries. He became a sort of archetype of the resistance man.

The second individual that exercised some influence until his death was certainly Svenn Seehusen. Albeit not an important figure during the occupation and within the resistance when compared to others, he managed to quickly move to the top of the ranks of the 'politicians of remembrance'. As could be seen he was one of the most active men behind the realization of the exhibition in the Frimurerlogen and the erection of the Frihedsmuseum. After the initial phase in which politicians and the administration hesitated to engage too strongly in the preparation of the anniversaries he became the main contact of the administration to the veterans. As a member of the board of the *Frihedskampens Veteraner* and the *Frihedsmuseet Venner* he connected with a fair number of the veterans who did not generally oppose the involvement of the government in the administration and development of the memory culture on the war. His position became so strong that he was able to demand programmes or events he deemed important or to hinder others he disapproved of. That his position was far from safe throughout the whole postwar period can be seen in the last decades where both the planning committee and the Frihedsmuseum acted and were changed without his total approval. That he never ceased to work for his goals became visible in the previous chapter. Shortly before he died he had a bitter struggle with the current director of Frihedsmuseet, Esben Kjeldbæk. The renewal of the permanent exhibition did not, as shown above, meet his expectations. The contextualization of the Danish resistance and the introduction of the Nazi ideology as the background for the occupation was criticised even in front of the visitors. Seehusen's dissatisfaction with the way the memory of the resistance was administered by the new curator and the new exhibition was so strong that he complained to the Rigsantikvar to have Kjeldbæk removed.⁶³⁴ His accusations were grave and included that Kjeldbæk had laid hands on the memory of those who liberated the country. How much he perceived himself as the 'keeper of the grail or memory' can be seen from the letters he wrote – not only on this occasion – which never failed to include an introductory passage referring to him as the person who had laid the cornerstone for the museum. He obviously concluded a special position from this fact. Of course Seehusen has been important for the museum – as spiritus rector and a most successful fundraiser. In the early years his work for the museum can hardly be overrated. But the question is whether these merits should lead to a position as the uncontested authority for the interpretation of the war history. He certainly felt

⁶³³ At være tro mod tanken, Politikken 16 March 1995, cited in Nielsen, års, p. 28.

⁶³⁴ Interview with Esben Kjeldbæk in Frihedsmuseet on 24 August 2004 and Svenn Seehusen, PM: Museet for Danmarks Frihedskamp 1940 til 1945 to Rigsantikvaren, Kjeldbæk's private correspondence.

that way. And if one takes into consideration that he was one of the veterans' representatives in the Prime Minister's committees from 1965 onwards, one might assume that he indeed exercised a certain influence.

In Denmark, the heterogeneity of the resistance movement did not allow the formation of one single lobby group to represent all and neither did the individual groups, as in Norway, agree on the basics of their politics with regard to the memory of the war. The question of NATO, the EU, the war in Vietnam and in recent times immigration prevented a common action. The left wing of the resistance did not find a common organisation, maybe due to the Communist party's claim to represent the heritage of the resistance. On the conservative side of the resistance, the former member of the Frihedsrådet Erling Foss founded the Frihedskampens Veteraner in the early 1950s which became the biggest and most influential of all veteran's groups. His chairman Jørgen Barfod and the very active former chairman Sven Seehusen became probably the most influential veterans. Between 1971 and 1987 Barfod was for sixteen years the head of the FM and Sven Seehusen the chairman of the support organisation *Frihedsmuseets Venner* and the representative in the planning committee at the last five bigger anniversaries. As can already be seen and will become clearer later on, it was especially Seehusen who managed to monopolize the representation for the veterans at the relevant memory political forums.

2.5. 'MATADOR' AND 'DANMARK BESAT' – POPULAR CULTURE AS HISTORY TEACHER

As stated by way of the introduction, the scope of this project is limited to certain features of the memory cultures of the two countries. Certainly, at various parts of the examination glimpses at representations of popular culture and at expressions from other fields of culture and art have been drawn into the description, but the concentration has been on historiography, museums and celebrations. There are two elements of popular culture though which by virtue of their importance or the nature of their medium deserve a special attention. The first is the highly successive and frequently rerun TV series *Matador*.

Matador, based on the idea of Lise Nørgaard and directed by Erik Balling was produced in four 'blocks' between 1978 and 1981 and broadcasted for the first time in 24 episodes between November 1978 and January 1982. Some of the most popular Danish actors and actresses of the time appear in the series. It became the hitherto most successful Danish TV production – one that even made it to the international market.⁶³⁵ Its presentation and very good reception at home still make it Denmark's most favourite TV serial. The programme tells the story of the life in the fictional coastal town Korsbæk. Although the name is a fictitious and the town only existed in the studios of the producing company Nordisk Film, the TV town easily reminds the average Dane of any of the small places along the long coasts of Denmark that lives on fisheries and is a small Danish micro cosmos in itself. Maybe that is where the success is rooted. The time period covered is the 30s and the 40s, the programme's first part takes place in 1929 and the last one in 1947. The story is centred around two families, the old-established family of the local bank manager Hans Christian Varnæs and the family of Mads Andersen-Skjern, a businessman coming to the town in the first episode in 1929 who establishes itself in Korsbæk. Both families are supplemented by some of the other town inhabitants representing certain archetypes of Danish society in the 1930s, like a communist railway worker, the local trader of pork-meat, the commander of the army garrison, and the local police chief. The series shows the social climate and composition of Danish society in the interwar years and its reaction to the pressure of the occupation. The contents of the programme is very much shaped by the political approach of the author Lise Nørgaard who was a radical liberal and a champion of women's rights. The women in the story are diverse and the struggle for emancipation is clearly visible, though Nørgaard could not develop it totally without clichés. The Germans as occupiers are described as human and not overly brutal. The resistance though, and that is characteristic, is basically staffed with

the more conservative and bourgeois part of the population, something that has no correspondence with the real development.

When the series was first run, many Danes could still remember the war. And yet, it seems incomprehensible for most foreigners, and maybe also for some Danes, why this programme became so popular and successful, that one must assume that it even became influential on the perception of the war history as well. The whole series was broadcasted four times with reruns in 1984-1985, 1989-1990 and again in 1997-1998. Around the 25th anniversary of the first broadcasting, a company produced a DVD version which again became a bestseller. As with books, the number of copies purchased within a free market society and the coverage in the media or the number of reviews might serve as indicators. Around 800,000 video-tapes and 400,000 DVDs of the programme have hitherto been sold. This in a small market like Denmark is an incredible number even if one takes into account that the number probably applies to single DVDs and not to the whole series. The Crown Prince, at the press conference where he announced his engagement, received a decorative issue of it and people claim the programme has become part of Denmark's cultural heritage.⁶³⁶ The huge success of *Matador* might at least in the first years be partly explained by the fact that back then Denmark just had two TV programmes. The choice was therefore limited for the viewers and a well-produced programme was more likely to gain a big audience. The later success in the late 1990s though has to be based on more factors albeit, once introduced, the series might have acquired something of a sentimental charm for those who were young at the first run and now were in their mid-thirties and had a high individual purchasing power as well as for an older group that had childhood memories of the war and were already adult when it was first shown. When it was rerun the first time in 1985, around 85% of the population watched it – it was the highest figure ever in Danish TV history. When the series was again on air in 1990 the TV landscape had changed and more channels were offering a broader variety and yet *Matador* still attracted around 55% viewers and was again the most popular programme.⁶³⁷ It is of course as difficult to measure the reception of a TV programme as it is to measure it of a museum, a celebration, a speech or a book. There are indicators on the credibility of the programme, one of the many reviews stated as late as in 2005 that a lot of Danes probably believe that *Matador* truly reflected the time it was describing – it

⁶³⁵ Fridorf, Frie, *Matador - fiktion som historieformidling*, in: Ladegaard, Claus (ed.), *Når medierne spinder historiens tråd*, København: Akademisk Forlag 1993, pp. 117-138, p. 118.

⁶³⁶ Grubb, Ultik, HemmersamJørgensen, Jårgen Riskær, *Matador / den vellykkede historiske fiktion*, Historie Nu, online at <http://www.historie.nu/matador1.pdf>.

⁶³⁷ Fridorf, Rie, and Annika Sørensen, *Matador Set Som Historieformidling - Indholds- Og Receptionsanalyse Af En Historisk Fiktionsserie, speciale, RUC, 1991*, pp. 42-43.

was and is believed to be a trustworthy account.⁶³⁸ This was confirmed to me by Palle Roslyng-Jensen.⁶³⁹ Even veterans would agree on that.⁶⁴⁰

How much that is, can also be seen by the fact that the programme was even used as an educational supplement. In 1998 Janus Madsen published a complete educational scheme for the younger classes on the occupation that is based on the programme. A textbook with a complementary collection of model tasks and text copies as well as a book designed to help the teachers to use the material and the film, treat all – also the critical – parts of the occupation period. The package was published by the State Television Company Dansk Radio.⁶⁴¹ But also students in higher secondary education can not do without *Matador*. Ulrik Grubb, Karl-Johann Hemmersam, and Jørgen Riskær Jørgensen wrote a book on how to use it in the older classes.⁶⁴² Both book and school material each approach with their own methods the 'dark sides' of the Danish war like the cooperation government, SS-volunteers, economic collaboration, the treatment of communists and others. Not surprisingly if one takes into account that they have been published in the latter part of the 1990s.

The second feature of popular culture that I would like to have a look at is a series of five cartoons called *Danmark besat* (Denmark occupied). They were published by the well-established publishing house Carlsen Comics from 1991 onwards. The last episode *Hjemsoegt* (haunted) was published in the year of the 50th anniversary of the end of the war in 1995. There are no indicators as to the reception or popularity of the series, it nevertheless is an interesting object of analysis since the three authors Morten Hesseldahl, Niels Roland and Henrik Rehr took up a couple of sensitive issues in their story about a young couple from a small fishermen's town – not unlike *Matador's* Korsbæk – and their families on their way through the occupation period: Danish Nazis, SS-volunteers, economic collaboration, the flight of the Jews and interestingly enough also the question of the girlfriends of the German soldiers and the quarrels between the different parts of the resistance. The whole cartoon is carried by a negative attitude towards the politician's cooperation policy. One of the main protagonists is a reserve officer who fought in the short defence of Denmark in April 1945 and came back disillusioned and with a thirst for

⁶³⁸ Claes Kastholm, "Tør vi tro på fortællingen?," *Berlingske Tidende*, 16 January 2005.

⁶³⁹ Interview with Palle Roslyng-Jensen at Copenhagen University on 23 August 2004.

⁶⁴⁰ Bent A Koch stated in a discussion on the 2005 exhibition in the Nationalmuseet on the day-to-day-life during the occupation that, in his mind, a journal sit had had the deepest impact on the perception about the war in Denmark, Lise Nørgaard with *Matador*. Kjeldbæk, Esben, Frihedsmuseet, Seminar den 1. marts 2004 i Nationalmuseets festsal om Egmont-udstillingen 2005 'Besættelsen 1940-1945', on March, 1st 2004, transcript with courtesy of Esben Kjeldbæk.

⁶⁴¹ Madsen, Janus. *Matador og besættelsestiden - et undervisningsmateriale baseret på tv-serien*. Elevhæfte, København: DR Multimedie 1998 (plus kopimappe and lærervejledning).

⁶⁴² Grubb, Ulrik, Hemmersam, Karl-Johann, Jørgensen, Jørgen Riskær, *Matador - og vor egen tid*, København: Munksgaard 1996.

revenge and functions as commander of one of the 'officially' approved local illegal army groups (ventegrupper) which were also assigned certain sabotage missions. Together with a communist, he joins forces and is later betrayed by the politicians and the army officers in the Frihedsrådet and executed. This part probably refers to the episode of Lieutenant Knud Skov and the affair around General Hjalff that was accused by parts of the resistance to have favoured the clandestine army groups in the dissemination of weapons. The whole affair was called 'skew dissemination of guns' (skæve våbenfordeling) and has been described earlier. The cartoon referred here to a very important debate of the 1960s. But not only the conflicts of the war but also the so-called tyskerpiger or tyskertøser – the Danish girlfriends of German soldiers are part of the story. Volume four of the series even shows a well-known picture from the war time where a woman is sitting naked on a park bench with swastikas smeared over her body after she had been attacked by 'patriots' and 'punished' for her relationship with a German. Interestingly enough, the episode is described in a rather negative tone and the protagonists of the cartoon do not agree with the act itself and the officer who had this relationship with the girl is described as being cultivated, resentful to the Nazis, longing for peace and full of love for the girl. The cartoon shows a mixture of attitudes from that time as well as of today. Even the humour and cunning that is so much part of any narration on the war in Denmark is not missing. In a frame/picture in the first part a butchers car is decorated with advertising slogan that, when the doors of the van are open, is split and suddenly reads "Down with SA [storm troopers, C.M.] long live the King."⁶⁴³ The liquidations of informers which will be treated in a later chapter, is also mentioned and, most funny, the FM plays a crucial part in the whole story. Even the tank in front of it is shown 'in action' – something the car has never been through. The plot that ties the five cartoons together is a diary of a traitor that was stored in the museum's vault. In the first book the diary was stolen and the reader is taken through the story of this diary until the thief kills the former writer after having read the whole diary. The museum is depicted as the keeper of secrets and the heritage of the war. I have no evidence that the cartoons have ever been used in schools or have even been recommended for educational purposes, but both the inclusion of the museum and the critical parts of the war history and the fact that the medium appeals to a young age-group made me include it in the following descriptions. Both *Matador* and *Denmark besat* show an astonishingly high degree of awareness of the more difficult memories on the war and make them themes of a TV show and a cartoon. And yet both also often seem stuck in the old and main narratives. They will both be consulted in the next chapter.

⁶⁴³ Hesseldahl, Morten, Roland, Niels, and Rehr, Henrik. Bristepunktet. Bind 2 - 1941-42. 91. København:Carlsen Comics. Danmark besat, p. 46.

2.6. SILENCED COLLABORATION – DANISH POLITICS OF REMEMBRANCE

Denmark's very special war history, which included a great deal of forced collaboration and a violent last year during which the view of the allies and the Danes towards the country was changed extensively, had to be reconciled after the war. The efforts of both politicians and the resistance movement in the last months of the European war resulted in a gentlemen's agreement that helped keeping the country at peace in the liberation summer and to bridge the mental gaps between the established elites and the young and active fighters who now demanded their share. The political processes of the first summer helped the old politicians to push their agenda to an extent that the resistance movement was forced to either integrate or drop out of the basic narrative – as agents not as points of reference. As the latter they could not possibly be played down because their contribution was too important both domestically and in the field of foreign politics. At the edges between the private and the public, the perception of the individual Danes and the political processes the veterans then managed to claim some ground. The establishment of the FM is one of those examples as are the celebrations of the liberation. However, it seems that through deft mechanisms the edges never became problematic but were integrated into an all-encompassing narrative of unity and successful resistance. For the first decades that worked rather well, but since for two decades the gap between historical research, the common perception of the war history and the veteran's interests and the agenda of the politicians seems to have been shifted in favour of a more open and critical discourse.

3. TWO COUNTRIES – TWO NARRATIVES?

The aim of the previous chapters had been to describe the origins, mechanisms, agents and developments of the memory production in Norway and Denmark. The historical situation in the immediate postwar period as well as in the following decades had been tied to these developments in order to explain the degree of change as well as of perseverance. Consequently, the historiography in both cases shows differing developments. In Norway, research on the war was early on monopolized by certain institutions which focussed, for example, on the military resistance. The last decades have seen the incorporation of new approaches and well as the integration of more scholars. In the 1970s the Danish historiography began to differ to a large extent from the public perception whereas the Norwegian research was incorporated to a great extent into the common view of the war, which is due to a maybe less problematic trajectory

but maybe also to a tighter 'control' through certain well-established institutions. The 1990s brought in both countries new approaches as well as new focuses. Whereas that meant in Norway a new interest in the 'other side' of the conflict, it meant in Denmark a rapprochement to the critical historiography by the public. The museums played and play important roles in the communication of certain views of the war, represented by the resistance generation. They developed differently but have common features. The main differences are the time of the opening and the change that has occurred in the FM. The new exhibition could be seen as either the attempt to communicate older traditions with new means or it could be interpreted as the reaction to the change of the generations and the general rapprochement to the critical historiography. The fact that the NHM is still in its original state is due to its younger age but maybe also a sign of the less conflict-laden Norwegian trajectory or to greater persistency to change of the Norwegian narrative. Norges Hjemmefrontmuseet and Frihedsmuseet were founded both by those who actively fought the German occupier and – in Norway its henchman, in Denmark the ruling elites. In Norway the founders were members of the elite, all being members of the higher echelons of society, Professors, a Bishop, lawyers, businessmen and even ministers of the government. The Danish veterans built the museum earlier, financed it themselves and handed it over to the government. Maybe precisely in order to have their story told. In Norway the money was granted, although not amply, and the project was embraced by the military and other influential institutions. The Norwegian museum became a pool for researchers; the Danish museum was not planned as such. Both museums mirror, at the same time, the unproblematic parts of the two trajectories and in their omissions and focuses they also implicitly mirror the more difficult ones.

One common element to both countries is the notion that the postwar memory production is directed at the overcoming of the trauma of defeat and collaboration. A concentration on the resistance which in both countries developed and fought and experienced losses and victories has helped to win the peace. This concentration included very similar objects and icons and rituals – sometimes to the extent of interchangeability. The time of the occupation is called the 'five dark years' and symbols of resistance always include the king or clothing with the RAF-colours. Both countries have their poets that are cited during the events (Norway Nordahl Grieg, Denmark Ebbe Munck) and both countries feature the same events during the anniversaries. The decisive difference becomes visible when the content of the celebrations is compared over the years. The Norwegian veterans, who because of their social background became the leading postwar figures, did not seem to have their interpretation threatened as much as their Danish comrades, where their interpretation had to compete or to integrate the perception of the

politicians. The Danish example made it very clear that the ruling parties or groups were not able to totally control the perception of the war and the special Danish trajectory, even if they at times had tried hard to make use of old symbols established after the war. Yet, a description like the one above is not complete without additional analysis. Memory production is placed within a field that is competitive, fought over and in constant movement. Even if, as I claim, the two respective societies have experienced a high degree of continuity and perseverance in the traditions of the war, the challenges have already been visible. In Denmark the Statsministeriet started organizing the festivities in the 1960s with the first big anniversary through advisory boards or committees, including representatives from involved agencies and state authorities. This method of planning was meant to curb memory-political conflicts and keep control of the celebrations.⁶⁴⁴ Norway followed up and both countries showed a tendency towards larger festivities throughout the period at hand. The same trend can be observed all over the Western world. Some scholars have talked about obsessive trends in the development of anniversaries and the latter half of the 20th century as an era of celebrations.⁶⁴⁵ Both countries experienced an ever-growing government involvement in the organization and performance of the celebrations. This included deliberate memory politics on the side of the leading politicians that were concerned with the preparations as well as attempts to monopolize the use of the celebrations on the part of the veterans. In both countries certain trends can be observed. The nature of the celebrations did not change totally with respect to the rituals performed or the message to be delivered, and yet there were modifications.

Norway was a very young nation at the time of the German attack and when it re-gained its freedom. This might be the reason why it celebrated the *frigjøring* so much in the spirit of national liberation and self-determination. The country was not just very young it was also a country whose people had also just recently gone through an identity crisis connected to a language question. Both countries are liberal and democratic western European nations that provide freedom of research and a free press. Therefore there is no reason to assume a 'prescribed' official memory. There are, however, strong indicators that a certain narrative evolved in both countries that was promoted by state-funded institutions and that served a general (and sometimes specific) political agenda, the promotion of a self image or a political system. This narrative corresponded most of the time to the one that was prevailing among the populations. Especially in Denmark though, the "results of historical research are not to a great degree represented in history production outside the historical scientific research or within the

⁶⁴⁴ Warring, Anette, *Historie, magt og identitet. Grundlovsfejringer gennem 150 år*, Århus: Aarhus Universitetsforlag 2004, p. 186.

⁶⁴⁵ Warring, *Historie, magt og identitet*, p. 184.

popular understanding of history."⁶⁴⁶ The perseverance of the narratives was and is often an outcome of deliberate politics of remembrance that influenced public perception. As could be seen, a relatively small number of agents – institutions and persons – were able to dominate the scene. I would not go so far as to call in all aspects an effort to impose one single version on the population from above in an effort to create hegemony on the memory, but certainly efforts were made to perpetuate one version that was created in the immediate postwar period.⁶⁴⁷ In both countries the legal purge after the war was of decisive importance for the development of the basic narratives. In Norway the condemnation and legal persecution of one clearly defined segment of the population represented a certain protection against a re-interpretation of the narrative, since attacks and challenges could simply be discharged as being opposed to the officially and legally established one. In Denmark, the indulgence against the politicians in the liberation compromise and the following transitional justice incorporated them into the narrative and created a balance that was – since it was so exactly balanced – a safety belt against change because no-one wanted to disturb it.

But a notion of an imposed remembrance is interesting enough to be tested. That is why in the following chapter I will look at the challenges to the narrations as they have occurred from underneath the 'official' sphere. It is in the specific nature of these challenges where the differences between the two nations' history cultures become clearer. Problems in the master narrative of one country must not necessarily be a problem to the other country's narrative. Denmark's more problematic memory of cooperation with the Germans, which was, although forced, at least for the most time backed by the population and even confirmed in relatively free elections, is the burden that decisively distinguishes the two cases. It is the main reason for the differing discourses on the war.

Challenges should neither be understood solely as ruptures that endanger all details of a narration nor as completely deviating variations of their own right. Those do exist, but most of them can be rejected as attempts of the extreme-right to justify Nazi ideology. The following chapters will try to identify the development of alternative narratives and the sometimes violent struggle against them. It will also try to show how much a notion of 'demystifying' is misleading and how much modern media and the end of the Cold War has, on the one hand, helped to shed new light on certain aspects but, on the other hand, has produced a new kind of historian or journalist striving to 'unmask myths' – with sometimes dubious consequences. The next

⁶⁴⁶ Nielsen, Carsten Tage, "Historie til aftenkaffen", thesis, Roskilde: RUC, 1996, p. 30.

⁶⁴⁷ Warring therefore calls this history-politics undemocratic. Warring, Anette, *Historieformidling - i et demokratisk perspektiv*, in: *At bruge historie - i en sen-/postmoderne tid*, edited by Bernard Eric Jensen, Roskilde: Roskilde Universitetsforlag 2000.

chapters, where I am going to pick some of the most disturbing memories as probes for the durability for the master narratives communicated in literature, museums and rituals will give more hints on that.

II. TOWARDS A COMPLETION OF THE BASIC NARRATIVE – CHANGES AND CHALLENGES

As we have seen, it is possible to locate a beaten path through the Norwegian and Danish memory-landscapes, a path that has been trodden for the last years and which only few people left in order to go into the dark forests and swamps on both sides. At this point, one needs to talk about those who did this and we might also see that the path might have reached a more open landscape that allows us a look at the lands on both sides.

In an article, Odd-Bjørn Fure summed up what we might see – something he called a "marginalised history" – fields that represent somehow traumatic parts of the past.⁶⁴⁸ These he states are 1. The fate of the Jews (i.e. Norwegian Jews under the occupation and the regime of the NS), 2. The question of the Norwegian volunteers in the German army and Waffen-SS, 3. The problem of the liquidations of informers by the home front, 4. The fate of the children of the collaborators, 5. The fate of the offspring of German soldiers who had relations with Norwegian women, and 6. The fate of the eastern European prisoners of war who died in POW camps also under Norwegian custody.⁶⁴⁹ The article deals with Norwegian history, but Danish history as we have seen includes similar traumatic parts. In the following, I will go into some of these fields in depth and add some other important ones that have been neglected for different reasons, for example, the communist part of the resistance. The approach is again fully comparative and the outcome might be a fuller picture of each of the respective countries as well as of general patterns.

The following chapter will deal with groups of people who, for different reasons, had specific problems entering the master narrative. They fell into oblivion – not always, not at the same time, and no longer, but for a long time. These groups and aspects of the war history are, for example, the cooperation with the occupant and more precisely the military cooperation within the ranks of the SS, the communist resistance, the fate of those women that had German boyfriends and partners and their offspring, the fate of the Jews and the way it was dealt with after the war and finally the liquidations of informers and the way it was silenced or instrumentalized.

This chapter is intended to deal with the painful memories of the Norwegian and Danish population – things that were 'forgotten' because they did not fit into the master narrative. On an

⁶⁴⁸ Fure, Odd-Bjørn, Norsk okkupasjonshistorie. Konsensus, berøringsangst og tabuisering, in: Ugelvik Larsen, Stein (ed.) *I krigens kjølvann. Nye sider ved norsk krigshistorie og etterkrigstid*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget; 1999; pp. 31-43, pp. 33.

individual level, the psychological mechanism of the repression of traumatic events for the sake of the preservation of sanity is well known. This concept, even if methodologically difficult, has frequently been applied to the social level as well, which is certainly difficult. The task is to see, whether I can find resemblances of these mechanisms and ask for the specific reasons. The following pages are based on very different materials – ranging from newspapers and movies to archival material and include movies and cartoons again. I have, however, focussed on celebrations and museums again in order to reflect on the two-way functions of these fields of history culture. It is this ambiguity of the same sources and tools of history-politics that should be demonstrated here.

⁶⁴⁹ Fure, *Norsk okkupasjonshistorie*, pp. 34-38.

1. COLLABORATION AND COOPERATION

Both countries' supply of food and resources became increasingly important for the Wehrmacht and the Reich. The Nazi government and planners had expected, however, that the two 'Germanic' populations would easily fall for the German offers and eventually even opt for being integrated into the 'Greater German Reich'.⁶⁵⁰ The attacks were at first successful, but the hopes of the Germans were not fulfilled – Norway took up the military fight and after defeat, the government went into exile leaving a vacuum that was difficult to fill. Furthermore, the Danes, though surrendering early, proved deaf to German and Danish Nazi temptations. The reactions of occupied populations depend heavily on the kind of regime imposed by the occupiers – maybe as much as the occupier reacts to the behaviour of the occupied people. Both forms of conduct are intertwined, and it is hard to find the loose ends to explain the rest of the trajectory. The unusual events during the invasion of Denmark that resulted in the so-called peace-occupation set the Danish case apart from any other European country under German occupation. The need for finding a working relationship with the factual occupant that saved territorial integrity and Danish lives resulted in the specific Danish trajectory in a government at the mercy of the Germans. The contemporaries might not even have interpreted that in a critical way, since it seemed to work out fairly well. Later, when the German advance in Europe was turned into a retreat and victories were replaced by defeats the same policy was often condemned. In Norway, on the other hand, the question of active government cooperation with the attackers did not play any significant role since the resistance of the Norwegian army allowed the rightful government to flee and establish itself in Great Britain and continue the struggle. A certain amount of cooperation was nevertheless acknowledged as also being necessary in Norway. It was meant to guarantee the continuity of essential civil services.

The Norwegian scholar Ole Kristian Grimnes distinguishes between 1) ideological, 2) political, 3) administrative and 4) economic collaboration.⁶⁵¹ Such a classification provides a good overview of the different forms any cooperation with an enemy can take, though it does not adequately consider the motivation for it. Another attempt to grasp the different responses of the occupied populations to the occupier – varying between partaking and adjusting to the occupation as the easiest and resistance as the most dangerous one – is to distinguish between

⁶⁵⁰ Petrick, Fritz, Vorwort zum vorliegenden Band, in: Petrick, Fritz, Die Okkupationspolitik des deutschen Faschismus in Dänemark und Norwegen (1940-1945). Dokumentenauswahl und Einleitung von Fritz Petrick, edited by the Bundesarchiv, Die Okkupationspolitik des deutschen Faschismus (1938-1945), vol. 7, Berlin, Heidelberg: Hüthig Verlagsgesellschaft 1992, pp. 9-13, and newer Bohn, Robert, Die deutsche Herrschaft in den "germanischen" Ländern 1940 - 1945, Stuttgart: Steiner 1997, Historische Mitteilungen: Beiheft, no. 26.

collaboration and *collaborationism*. Collaboration in this dualism could be stripped of its negative connotations and be seen as the search for a mode of survival and a way of eking out a living under extremely difficult conditions. Collaborationism, on the other hand, would be seen as the voluntary and desired cooperation with the invader for the sake of one's own profit.⁶⁵² On the following pages, I will try to describe the effects that these different forms of cooperation had on the memory of the war and that were, by the resistance movements and parts of the population, probably interpreted as collaborationism according to the above-mentioned specification. The intrinsic difficulty of the two words becomes apparent. The categories cannot clearly be separated from one another. Particularly in the case of Denmark, it all breaks down to political interests and stand-points. On the following pages I will stick to 'collaboration', albeit with an awareness of its problematic connotations. The difficulty with an acknowledgement of the existence of collaboration is the threat that poses to the notion of a country unified in resistance – something I have shown was the essential aim of a great deal of the politics of remembrance for a great part of the last decades. Another big challenge that the field of collaboration poses is the question of delinquency and guilt. I will try to show to what extent the different developments during the conquest of the countries were decisive for both the specific and the similar features of the trajectories and forms of cooperation with the Germans and on the labels 'collaboration' and 'collaborationism'. One group that during and after the war was seen as collaborators will not be discussed here but in a special chapter – the group of the *tyskerpiger*, the girlfriends of the German soldiers.

Quisling and the Nasjonal Samling

When on 6 June 1940 King Håkon VII left the country on board the *Devonshire* he left behind not only a defeated army and a country at the hands of the Germans but he also made way for the infamous Vidkun Quisling to grasp power. Quisling had already tried it once before, shortly after the beginning of the attack on Norway but was turned down by the Germans who hoped for a mutual deal with the Norwegians as they had struck in Denmark. But already in September 1940, it became clear to the Germans that the majority of Norwegians, would not cooperate to the extent they wished. Josef Terboven, the 'Reichskommissar für die besetzten norwegischen Gebiete', appointed provisional 'ministers' and, in 1942, Quisling Prime Minister. The

⁶⁵¹ Grimnes, Ole Kristian, Kollaborasjon og oppgjør, in: Larsen, Stein Ugelvik (ed.), I krigens kjølvann. Nye sider ved norsk krigshistorie og etterkrigstid, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget 1999, pp. 47-57, pp. 48-49.

⁶⁵² Klemperer, Clemens von, Über Widerstand Und Kollaboration Oder: Im Angesicht Des Absurden, in: Widerstand Und Kollaboration in Europa. editor Mechthild Gilzmer, 13-29. Münster: Lit, 2004. pp.13,19.

democratic parties were forbidden, and the NS got the support they needed for their programmes of Nazification. The main character of the following struggle during the war was not so much against the German occupant, but against its Norwegian henchmen. In the meantime, life was continuing in the seized cities. The situation was confusing and some Norwegians, individuals as well as public bodies, were tempted to accommodate the situation. Even some members of the parliament and parts of its presidency were willing to negotiate with the Germans on the abdication of the King and the introduction of an Imperial Council (Riksråd) if the Germans in return promised to keep Quisling out of the picture. These negotiations were afterwards seen as attempted collaboration by many Norwegians even though they had failed, partly because of limited backing in Norway, and partly because the Germans kept on trying to push their NS candidates through.⁶⁵³ And yet, the general line of those entrusted with the administration of the nation was to 'keep the wheels turning'. In order to continue life as normally as possible, a certain amount of adjustment to the situation, and a certain level of communication and cooperation with the de facto masters in the country was deemed necessary. Consequently, this weakened the position of those who from the very beginning of the war were determined to resist. Johannes Andenæs, the grand seigneur of Norwegian jurisprudence and a veteran, once called 1940 "the year of confusion," which shows how much civil society in Norway was disoriented after the war – also with regard to whom to obey.⁶⁵⁴

The politics of the Germans, however, were all the time directed toward a Nazification from above which would solidify their and Quisling's power. The Nasjonal Samling was organized along the same lines and structures as the German NSDAP and with the power of being the only legal organ tried to infiltrate all sections of social life as had her example in Germany. In youth groups and sport clubs as well as in the labour unions – everywhere the old authorities were gradually exchanged by NS members. And if they would not yield to the pressure they were removed by force. Also the heads of the local authorities and the regional entities (fylke) were exchanged or forced to become a member of the party. The resistance to this kind of pressure was not equally strong and some professions or layers of administration were not resisting altogether. After all, even in Norway certain sympathy for authoritarian or corporative ideas and notions of social engineering were prevalent among the bourgeois and lower middle-classes and certain promises made by the regime were viewed with favour. However, the majority of the

⁶⁵³ Petrick, Fritz, Einleitung, in: Petrick, Fritz, Die Okkupationspolitik des deutschen Faschismus in Dänemark und Norwegen (1940-1945). Dokumentenauswahl und Einleitung von Fritz Petrick, edited by the Bundesarchiv, Die Okkupationspolitik des deutschen Faschismus (1938-1945), vol. 7, Berlin, Heidelberg: Hüthig Verlagsgesellschaft 1992, pp. 18-61, p. 25 and Andenæs, Johannes, Det vanskelige oppgjøret. Rettsoppgjøret etter okkupasjonen, Oslo: Tanum-Norli 1979, p. 22.

⁶⁵⁴ Andenæs, Det vanskelige oppgjøret. Rettsoppgjøret etter okkupasjonen, Oslo: Tanum-Norli 1979, pp. 20-22.

higher ranks of the civil service kept their distance and the example of the high court stepping down was strongly received among other functionaries as the model for behaviour. On the other hand people stayed on the job and even became members of the party without too much enthusiasm in order to fulfil their duty and prevent the worst – or at least claimed so later. A proper account of the proportions of different behaviours does not exist.

The transitional justice after the end of the war was not keen on identifying all kinds of inappropriate behaviour – what it did though was to penalize the entire apparatus of Quisling and punish each and every member of his party. As I elaborated earlier, such a criminalization of a whole organization combined with the subsequent legal purge on each individual member is unique in the history of the Second World War. The German Nazi party was naturally outlawed in the Nuremberg trials but the members were not called to account for the party's deeds but solely for crimes they had committed themselves. Surely the number of convicts in Germany would have been incomparably higher but also in Norway these regulations affected as shown around 50,000 people and a whole group of the population was singled out as criminals. This did not happen in any of the other occupied countries. The effect of this categorization also in turn affected the self-image of the majority of the population that saw itself as – now even officially – excluded from the label of collaboration. The release from any trace of guilt was continued with the official parliamentary board of inquiry set up to assess the conduct of several branches of the administration. The official report that was written among others by leading historians like Sverre Steen laid down who misbehaved and who had shown the right patriotic behaviour.⁶⁵⁵ Most service men and institutions were freed from allegations. From a point of view that stresses the practicality of a democracy and the need of the nation to come to terms with the last years, the legal purge and the board of inquiry were necessary steps to guarantee faith in the system but there was a risk that this would lead in parts to a certain self-righteousness.

This self-righteousness is very obvious when the field where the extent of cooperation with the German enemy was most widespread is tackled – the economy. The overall extent of the Norwegian economic collaboration with Germany during the occupation – the direct and voluntary economic cooperation of state agents and private businessmen, is hard to assess. It is also difficult to distinguish between a minimal continuation of production and work, which is covered by international law and needed to safeguard the workers income, and the profit-seeking involvement with the occupier for the aim of profit-maximization. The German attack

⁶⁵⁵ Innstilling fra Undersøkelseskommissjonen av 1945 oppnevnt ved kongelige resolusjon av 6. August 1945, vols. I-III. Oslo: Stortinget, Aschehoug 1946-47, especially vol. I.

on Norway put the economy under great pressure. Norway was, more than any other European country, dependent on a free export market. In addition, once the occupation became a fact, currency earnings through shipping and whaling ceased. The inter-war years saw a massive economic crisis, and the immediate pre-war years an increase in consumption and a taste of better times, making businessmen and businesswomen keen to compensate for the loss of customers through the German demand to avoid sinking into crisis again. Furthermore the provisional Administration Council, founded by members of the High Court in the confusing days after the attack, called for 'keeping the wheels turning,' creating a further incentive to cooperate for those still hesitating. Since Norway, unlike Denmark, was regarded as enemy territory, the exploitation of the resources was also to be enforced with violence. Threats, however, were not always needed. Besides those, who due to the situation had no other choice than to close down businesses or work for and with the Germans, most entrepreneurs and workers could be tempted with good profits and high pay. Thousands streamed into 'German service' in the first months of the occupation. Still, in many cases the involvement seems to have gone further than what was needed to keep businesses open.⁶⁵⁶ The fundamentals of the economic relations between Norway and Germany were already laid out in 1940, with the establishment of the *Deutsche Handelskammer* in Norway (German Chamber of Commerce) which was meant to make cooperation easier.⁶⁵⁷ The Germans had a vital interest in smoothing relationships, since just providing the necessary products to maintain such a huge invasion army was a difficult task. Reichskommissar Terboven himself took the initiative with regards to the founding of the Handelskammer, which was joined by all business associations, as well as the public banks and a large number of the leading Norwegian companies.⁶⁵⁸ There were also businessmen who joined the Nasjonal Samling in the pursuit of even better relations and even more contracts with the Germans.⁶⁵⁹ The Handelskammer, in November 1943, had around 1,000 members, most of whom were in commerce and not in industry.⁶⁶⁰ They sold Norwegian resources profitably to the Germans. Dag Ellingsen distinguished between three different 'eras' in the economic collaboration during the war with respect to the way the cooperation was judged under the legal purge after the war. The first era was the (period/time) of uncertainty until the total German takeover in September 1940. Armed resistance were still going on in northern Norway and nobody knew the outcome. This was followed by the second era, which lasted until

⁶⁵⁶ Andenæs, Det vanskelige oppgjøret, pp. 49-51.

⁶⁵⁷ Ve, Næringslivet, pp.63-70.

⁶⁵⁸ Andenæs, Det vanskelige oppgjøret, p. 51.

⁶⁵⁹ Ellingsen, Krigsprofitørene, p. 203.

summer 1942, and was seen as a result of the first era. With the beginning of organised resistance on a large scale in 1942 cooperation was then seen in a much more loathsome light. Those who still cooperated were seen as guilty of treason.⁶⁶¹ Also here we see the connection between public opinion and the definition of collaboration, and the interplay of collaboration and resistance. Another factor of economic collaboration concerns the 110,000 Norwegian workers —approximately every fifth Norwegian worker — who directly or indirectly worked on German construction sites in Norway or for the German army. They made good money and felt entitled to work for the Germans since even their labour unions had in the beginning cooperated and negotiated with German administrators.⁶⁶² The large number of Norwegians in the service of Germans can be partly explained by the high numbers of German soldiers on Norwegian soil, and the high military activity. The soldiers had to be accommodated, fed and clad and also entertained. This created a whole economy around the military installations. The clandestine press had always propagated against the economic cooperation with the enemy and condemned and published crass cases. In the legal purge just a few cases were punished though.⁶⁶³ As in many countries economic cooperation was not high on the agenda of the prosecutors. In the late 1960s and the 1970s criticism came from the left who, with an anti-capitalist argument used the cooperation as a vehicle for a more general criticism of the economic system.⁶⁶⁴ Sometimes these accusations took some wild routes when allegations were brought forward that they 'took the Hjemmefront for a ride' and dispersed its attention to the NS in order to be able to exploit big industry.⁶⁶⁵ The view was blurred by too much conspiracy theory. However, serious historical research did not for a long time deal with the economic collaboration. The first book was not surprisingly published outside Norway – Allan Milward's *The Fascist Economy in Norway* paved the way for later studies.⁶⁶⁶ The Hjemmefrontmuseum does mention it in its exhibition. It is put between the chapters on the clandestine arms factories and the German installations and forces in Norway and the chapter on a communist action in the basement of the exhibition. The display designed like the mathematical minus sign shows pictures of men queuing for work and contains an extensive text first elaborated in three paragraphs on the

⁶⁶⁰ Petrick, Fritz, Die norwegische Kollaboration 1940-1945, in: Röhr, Werner, Bundesarchiv (ed.) Okkupation und Kollaboration (1938-1945). Beiträge zu Konzepten und Praxis der Kollaboration in der deutschen Besatzungspolitik, Berlin, Heidelberg: Hüthig Verlagsgemeinschaft 1994 pp. 119-129, p.128.

⁶⁶¹ Ellingsen, Krigsprofitørene, p. 205.

⁶⁶² Petrick, Die norwegische Kollaboration, p. 129.

⁶⁶³ For an in-depth description see: Undersøkelseskommissjonen av 1945, vol. I, Innstilling I, Oslo 1946, p. 163.

⁶⁶⁴ The earliest example I found, besides the official publications of the NKP, was: Krog, Helge, 6. Kolonne? Om den norske storindustriens bidrag til Nazi-Tysklands krigføring, Oslo: Pax 1969. Later: Veia, Jon, Næringslivet i 1940, in: Dahl, Hans Fredrik, Krigen i Norge, Oslo: Pax 1974, pp. 41-74 and Hans Fredrik Dahl, Comments on Økonomisk Samarbeid - Økonomisk Landsvik. Tilfellet Treindustrien, pp. 89-105.

⁶⁶⁵ Krog, Helge, 6. kolonneI. Om den norske storindustriens bidrag til Nazi-Tysklands krigføring, Oslo: Pax 1969.

⁶⁶⁶ Milward, Alan, *The Fascist Economy in Norway*, Oxford: Clarendon 1972.

necessity to cooperate to a certain extent with the occupying power but then says that: "[...] some Norwegians fulfilled the enemy's wishes willingly, without need or force, just for their own profit – profiteers."⁶⁶⁷ The text fails to elaborate in which sectors the collaboration was strongest or what had happened to the profiteers later. There is a certain irony in the fact that out of four paragraphs one is actually dealing with the matter and the three others explain or justify a certain amount of cooperation. This reflects how little a museum on the resistance is keen to talk about collaboration if it is not fought as in the case of Quisling and the labour conscriptions. Besides this one could argue that the more fitting location for this chapter would have been near the display on the daily life since it affected a considerable number of individuals. The catalogue does not mention this aspect at all.

The first Norwegian in-depth study was undertaken at the beginning of the 1990s.⁶⁶⁸ The book not only described the collaboration but also contained a critical analysis of the legal purge. It was preceded by a book on a smaller aspect of the field – the behaviour of editors and newspapers during the war. Guri Hjeltnes' book dealt with the so-called *avisoppjøret* the purge on the editorial boards of the most prominent newspapers after the war.⁶⁶⁹ Hjeltnes managed to show to which degree the editors of the nationwide and smaller newspapers, including *Aftenposten*, had printed propaganda beyond the actual regulations of censorship and how few were punished. There were summary fines decreed but the newspapers continued. Most of these books did not raise a great deal of debate or discussion. That was very different with a topic that saw the flare up of a fierce debate in newspapers around the turn of the century. And here there was a lobby group that was active – retired army officers. The debate actually was not about an alleged massive collaboration of the army with Quisling, but about supposed findings that a fairly high number of officers actually enlisted the service of the NS but of the general affinity some officers, among them generals might out of a conservative tradition have felt towards the Quisling party, also after the defeat. A number, he claimed, had joined the NS after the occupation but later turned to the Milorg, the military resistance. The debate was triggered by an article published by Lars Borgersrud in the media previous to the publication of an anthology about new research on the occupation.⁶⁷⁰ The military historian Lars Borgersrud had already at the end of the 1970s caused some discussions when he in three books among other allegations

⁶⁶⁷ NHM, exhibition, *Profitørvirksomhet og tyskerarbeid (profiteers and collaborators)*. The museum's own English text is far less harsh, it says: "But a number of Norwegians collaborated actively with the enemy for personal gain,

⁶⁶⁸ Ellingsen, Dag, *Krigsprofitørene og rettsoppjøret*, Oslo: Gyldendal 1993.

⁶⁶⁹ Hjeltnes, Guri. *Avisoppjøret Etter 1945*. Oslo: Aschehoug, 1990.

⁶⁷⁰ Borgersrud, Lars, *Militære Veivalg 1940-1945. En undersøkelse av de øverste norske militære sjefers valg mellom motstand og samarbeid under okkupasjonen*, in: Larsen, Stein Ugelvik (ed.), *I krigens kjølvan. Nye sider ved norsk krigshistorie og etterkrigstid*, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget 1999, pp. 149-226.

accused the war-time army leadership of having let down the country or even having conspired against the democratic government by not mobilizing all the conscripted men at once. Contrary to the orders of the government the chief of staff, so he thought he could prove had just ordered a partial mobilization via mail and not via radio broadcast. That, so the allegations, had added to the defencelessness of the country.⁶⁷¹ A second book dealt with the general anticommunist tendencies in the military before the war.⁶⁷² The books were based on the material of his master thesis which he was threatened not to publish and which were published in a rather small communist publishing house under a pseudonym. They did not, however, gain any significance. The new allegations in 1999, however, were based on the earlier studies and triggered a debate on data protection and libel because this time Borgersrud named some high-ranking officers and got angry responses. Not only the family of those accused but also the Hjemmefrontmuseum, who had allegedly helped to protect this secret, mounted a counterattack. A wave of articles rained down on Borgersrud after he had claimed that the NHM (under pressure from Jens Christian Hauge, the former Milorg leader) had steered research in order to avoid critical questions.⁶⁷³ The reason was his paper for a conference in Bergen where he again presented his findings on the NS membership of officers. One of the generals who became a short-time member of the NS was according to Borgersrud General Hansson, a close collaborator with Hauge later.⁶⁷⁴ Not only had the sons of Hansson reacted strongly to it but also the Hjemmefrontmuseum.⁶⁷⁵ Frode Færøy from the Hjemmefrontmuseum focussed in his response rather on the question of data protection and the misuse of archival material than on the question of the NS membership at hand. He explained why he thought Borgersrud had missed to consider the historical context properly and then debated whether Borgersrud had violated the rules of the National Archives and called for consequences.⁶⁷⁶ Though Færøy did not explicitly call for an exclusion of Borgersrud from access, some read it that way. Borgersrud just a few days later gave an even more direct and aggressive response. In yet another article he explicitly claimed that Færøy and the NHM were just attempting to protect their former bosses including the former head of research, Rolf Rynning Eriksen. According to Borgersrud had Eriksen also

⁶⁷¹ Ottar Strømme/ Lars Borgersrud, *Stille mobilisering. Hvorfor det blei stille og delvis mobilisering 9. april 1940 og hvorfor soldatene fikk ubrukelige våpen*, Oslo: Oktober 1977.

⁶⁷² Ottar Strømme/ Lars Borgersrud, *Den hemmelige hæren. Den hemmelige militære organisasjonen mot "indre uren" i Norge fra 1918 til 1940*, Oslo, Oktober 1978. The third book was not directly connected to the topic at hand but based on material from the same research: *I tilfelle opprør. Det norske militærapparatet fra 1814 til 1905*, Oslo: Oktober 1979.

⁶⁷³ Hjultgren, John, *Historieforskning har styrt unna ubehageligheter*, *Aftenposten* 24 March 1998.

⁶⁷⁴ Borgersrud, Lars, *Hansson var NS-medlem*, in: *Dagbladet*, 23 April 1998.

⁶⁷⁵ The sons had contested the allegations in Hannson, Bjørn I., *General Hansson valgte aldri NS*, in: *Dagbladet*, 22 April 1998.

⁶⁷⁶ Færøy, Frode, *Forskningsetikk og personvern*, in: *Dagbladet*, 4 May 1998.

applied for membership in the NS and joined before he came into contact with Hauge and became his advisor in 1942. Since he was also very prominent after the war and active in the building up of the museum he certainly had an interest that this information would not become public and had access to files and could grant access to archival sources. At the Hjemmefrontmuseum, as per Borgersrud, a blending of roles was prevalent – actors of the resistance would direct research and suppress proper source scrutiny. His material, so he claimed would trigger the necessary revision of the version of the resistance narrative that the museum still clung to. It should be possible to discuss the fact that a number of later resistance fighters first joined the NS. Færøy, he said, was just another victim of the blending of roles at the Hjemmefrontmuseum that sees as its main task the defence of one version of the narrative.⁶⁷⁷ Such accusations were hard besides the obvious moment of conspiracy theory by Borgersrud. It was Tore Pryser who tried to calm the things and bring again a research perspective into the debate. In his article in *Dag og Tid*, he expresses his astonishment over the hard reactions to Borgersrud's publications since, as he rightfully pointed out, most of it had already been laid down in the parliamentary inquiry on the military after the war which was expressively not published because of the embarrassment that could cause to some of the officers and which was the basis of the book Borgersrud had published in the late 1970s under a pseudonym. It had not caused any debate back then. Now, Pryser wrote, would Borgersrud add a significant new perspective to the research by pointing out how much parts of the Norwegian population displayed a 'wait and see' stance and hesitated after the occupation was a fact. The Hjemmefrontmuseum should not act as the military's advocate.⁶⁷⁸ The discussion though was not over, and continued for another month but the arguments were basically exchanged, the tone got still harsher though. The anthology of the papers was delayed a year and Borgersrud seems to have got into troubles with the National Archives and had to appeal to the Ministry of Justice to gain access again.⁶⁷⁹

The question of army officers' possible involvement in the NS certainly held the power of a major memory political dispute. A discussion some years earlier but not less painful for Norwegians was the case of one of the most prominent Norwegians – the Nobel Prize winner Knut Hamsun. Emotions can still rise high, when Hamsun's role under the occupation is discussed. Knut Hamsun, Norway's national poet and 1920 Nobel Prize winner, had expressed his sympathy with the German Fascism more than once, and was even received by Hitler and rounded that record off with a sympathy telegram on the event of Hitler's death. After the war he

⁶⁷⁷ Borgersrud, Lars, *Motstand mot ny kunnskap*, in: *Dagbladet*, 7 May 1998.

⁶⁷⁸ Pryser, Tore, *Offiserene og krigsåra*, in: *Dag og Tid*, 19 May 1998.

⁶⁷⁹ Helgheim, Roald, *Krigen om historia*, in: *Dag og Tid*, 21 September 2000.

was charged with treason but the punishment was mild because doctors certified dementia, an assertion against which Hamsun fought in vain. Most Norwegians would have probably preferred to see Hamsun as an old confused man and separate the man from the work that is among the best ever written in Norwegian. But in 1978 this peace was disturbed by a Danish author that published a semi-documentary on Hamsun's trial simultaneously in Denmark, Norway and Sweden. In *Prosessen mot Hamsun* Thorkild Hansen blended the fictional with the documentary genre and called the trial a witch-hunt.⁶⁸⁰ Hansen also stressed the genius in Hamsun and made himself vulnerable to accusations claiming he had justified Hamsun's flirt with the Nazis.⁶⁸¹ The discourse did neither find a climax nor an end and still today the person of Knut Hamsun is object of fierce discussions. Cultural Norway is not able to cope with Hamsun – the man and the work. These debates easily break out when yet another time the naming of a street in Norway after Hamsun is suggested.⁶⁸²

But more important of course for the Norwegians is still the figure of Vidkun Quisling. He represents the focal point for the judgement of the era and of the whole field of collaboration. His name became synonymous with treason and as mentioned before his face the opposite pole of that of the King. His trial constituted for Norway what the Nuremberg trials constituted for the Germans. Quisling's effort to justify his treason with noble motives and to characterize himself as the saviour of the country who, contrary to the fleeing government, had the courage to step in and throw himself and his party between the Germans and the Norwegian civilians. A lot of the later propaganda and publications by former NS members and their associations continued these justifications that remind one strongly of the notion Vichy-France tried to evoke during and after the war – as a shield for the nation. The interpretation and re-interpretation of Quisling is a highly-contested field of politics of remembrance not only because the former Nazis might use it as the lever to re-introduce themselves and their party into the narrative but also because the veterans of the resistance which was so much, in its military but most of all its civilian wings, a resistance against this man and his party would certainly view any contextualization of Quisling's person as a threat to the basics of their struggle. The aforementioned book by Ralph Hewins logically triggered a counter-attack and the publication of an English-language description of the war history by the Foreign Office.⁶⁸³ Also the next

⁶⁸⁰ Hansen, Thorkild, *Prosessen mot Hamsun*, Oslo: Gyldendal 1978.

⁶⁸¹ Maerz Susanne, *Landesverrat versus Widerstand. Stationen und Probleme der "Vergangenheitsbewältigung" in Norwegen*, in: *Nordeuropaforum*, 2005, 2, pp. 43-73, p. 55.

⁶⁸² Maerz Susanne, *Genie oder Landesverräter? Die Debatte über Thorkild Hansens Hamsun-Prozess als Alteritätsdiskurs*, in: Barz Christiane, Behschnitt, Wolfgang (eds.), *bildung und anderes. Alterität in Bildungsdiskursen in den skandinavischen Literaturen*. Würzburg: Ergon, 2006, pp. 175-199, p. 198. Maerz supplies an in-depth analysis of the relationship between the Norwegians and 'their' Hamsun.

⁶⁸³ See Hewins, *Quisling and Andenæs, Riste, Skodvin, Norway*. Both were discussed in the chapter on Norway.

biography was originally written in English, albeit by a Norwegian, and then translated into Norwegian.⁶⁸⁴ The hitherto still most important biography was written by Hans Fredrik Dahl.⁶⁸⁵ His two volume work stands out in its details but was soon attacked by the veteran association's journal of revisionist interpretations as helping and implicitly justifying Quisling.⁶⁸⁶ One of the crucial questions for the understanding of Quisling and his impact on the Norwegian war is his influence on the Norwegian Holocaust. I will come back to this later. But also attempts to understand the effects of the NS-social policies in the context of the creation of the Norwegian welfare state met and still meet the same resistance.⁶⁸⁷

Probably the strongest expression of collaborationism is the dedication to serve in the enemy army. The notion of the enemy vanishes and the occupier becomes the comrade. In both Scandinavian countries young men volunteered for the German units. In both countries branches of the SS and Waffen-SS were established. The repercussions of the Finnish War with the Soviet Union resulted in a certain amount of young men determined to fight communism, wherever possible, although fighting alongside the German Reich was just regarded as a necessary prerequisite. Others felt more pro-German. Moreover in Norway, Quisling and the NS wanted to make a contribution to the German war effort to prove that the Germans could count on the NS and to counterbalance the fact that Norwegian ships sailing for the Allies were making an enormous effort to help to liberate the country and Europe. After the attack on the Soviet Union, Quisling called for a war on communism and tried to tempt volunteers with the promise of a post in the administration, or farmland and German citizenship. The first unit to be established in the Waffen-SS was the Legion Norge, followed by the SS-Skijägerbatallion. Both were meant for combat on the Eastern front. According to German data, 9,000 had registered for the SS by May 1944, and around 5,000 had enrolled.⁶⁸⁸ Already in 1941, Quisling had even promised Hitler 18,000 men. Some of the Norwegian SS soldiers were also among those who had to fight the lost battle of Berlin between March and May 1945.⁶⁸⁹

When the results of the recruiting campaigns did not meet German expectations, Legions were created to enable the soldiers to serve alongside their countrymen and where the physical

⁶⁸⁴ Høidal, Oddvar, Quisling. En studie i landssvik, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget 1988.

⁶⁸⁵ Dahl, Hans Fredrik, Vidkun Quisling (2 Volumes: Quisling - en fører blir til and Quisling - en fører for fall). Oslo: Aschehoug 1991-1992.

⁶⁸⁶ Eitinger Leo, Hans Fredrik Dahl: Vidkun Quisling. En fører for fall. Aschehoug, Oslo 1992, in: Krigsinvaliden 1993, 1, pp. 29-35.

⁶⁸⁷ Examples are Dahl, Hans Fredrik, 'Faktoren Quisling' i norsk historie. Det norske historiske forening - Innlegg på HIFO-konferansen på Sjusjøen: Nytt lys på okkupasjonshistorien, Oslo: Det norske historiske forening 1991; Sørensen, Øystein, Verdenskrig og velferd. Britiske, tyske og norske sosialpolitiske planer under Annen verdenskrig, Oslo: Cappelen 1993.

⁶⁸⁸ Andenæs, Det vanskelige oppgjøret, 37-38.

⁶⁸⁹ Jervell, "Nordmenn i Sluttkampane i Berlin 1945,

requirements of the SS were not applied. Reichskommissar Terboven ordered the foundation of Legion Norge in June 1941. In the first weeks a number of men volunteered (the majority coming from the ranks of the NS). In early summer 1943, the Legion was again merged with the Frikorps Danmark and other forces into the SS-Division Nordland.⁶⁹⁰ All units were meant for combat on the Eastern front. The Norwegian volunteers, however, often NS members, seem to have been in conflict with the German training personnel, more often than the Danish volunteers of the Frikorps Danmark, and internal dispute was also reported. The men were just not all Nazis; indeed, many were not entirely pro-German, but Norwegian nationalists. Even though their total number is relatively small, the volunteers represent probably the most clear and determined form of collaboration. The partaking of Norwegian personnel in the guard duties at German installations for POWs and the inhumane treatment there is just a side-story and was only told for the first time in 1972.⁶⁹¹

The Norwegian volunteers were as the members of the NS sentenced to imprisonment after the liberation and totally ostracized in public. In a history culture that focussed so strongly also on the military resistance, these fellow citizens who fought on the wrong side were difficult to deal with. The question is of course not to give them a voice at par with the Norwegian *gutter på skauen* but to understand why and how a part of the youth ended up fighting in the trenches in the east. During the first years after the liberation and while the trials were still going on there was no need to understand but a need for punishment. The first books on the volunteers logically came from the culprits themselves. Autobiographical reports about the front experience that were mere apologies by the veterans were given out in the 1960s. They often attacked the trials as justice at the hands of the victors.⁶⁹²

Some former NS members and other culprits founded the *Institutt for Norsk Okkupasjonshistorie* (The Norwegian Institute for the History of the Occupation, INO) in 1975 with the aim of promoting research that would help to pursue their whitewashing. The so-called research focussed on questions of legality or illegality of the landssvikoppgjøret and the role of the Quisling regime opposite the German authorities. The publications were obviously biased and the INO never seriously entered the Norwegian academia. All these efforts to clear the name of Quisling or the NS were in vain and most gave up at some point. Svein Blindheims *Nordmen under Hitlers fane* represents a surprise in this respect.⁶⁹³ Still for a lack of alternatives it is considered the only in-depth study of the matter in Norway although is written with

⁶⁹⁰ Christensen, Claus Bundgård, Poulsen, Nils Bo, Smith, Peter Scharff, Legion Norge. Forskelle og Ligheder med de øvrige 'germanske' legioner i Waffen SS, in: Historisk Tidsskrift (DK), no. 100, 2000, pp. 419- 447, p. 421.

⁶⁹¹ Christie, Nils, Fangevoktere i konsentrasjonsleire, Oslo: Pax 1972.

⁶⁹² Wiesener, Albert, Seierherrens justis, Oslo: Dreyer 1964.

sympathy for the volunteers, which is surprising because the author himself had been a fighter of the SOE-backed Norwegian sabotage group *Linge*. But even more surprising was the experience the audience at a seminar on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the liberation in Oslo had to go through. A striking difference to Denmark and a very confusing experience for most of the participants was the seminar that was held for almost an entire day on the 9th. The seminar was called *Å overkomme fortiden* (To overcome the past) and was organized by a working group of researchers around the three prominent names in the research on the occupation and its aftermath: Hans-Fredrik Dahl, Berit Nøkleby and Øystein Sørensen. Additionally younger researchers dealing with hitherto less well-researched aspects of the occupation gave speeches and presented their findings and two prominent Danish scholars, Claus Bryld and Ditlev Tamm were also invited. At the core of the seminar were the 'dark side' of the rettsoppgjøret, the veterans of the SS-units and children of NS members and of German soldiers were invited to speak to the public after the lectures that were given by members of the working group. In the case of the children, these people addressed their traumas in a very often highly emotional way, speaking of the experiences of mobbing and being outcasts. They also spoke about the long time it took the nation to acknowledge their existence and suffering. I will return to this in one of the following chapters. But the other 'lay' group that was invited consisted of veterans of the SS volunteer units. These elderly men used the forum to justify their engagement with the Germans, claiming they had wanted to defend their country against a communist threat. It was astonishing to see that a part of the audience accepted their presence and speeches as part of the seminar and that no opposition was voiced from inside the audience against these assertions. Just one of the organizers, Øystein Sørensen, at some point began to speak and adjusted the picture according to historical evidence. When assessing the seminar and the project one has to take into consideration that the topic of the rettsoppgjøret has been ever-present in Norwegian debate as well as historiography. It cropped up as a research topic time and time again in countless variations.⁶⁹⁴ It seems therefore only appropriate that the 60th anniversary brought about yet another treatment of the issue. New somehow was that the seminar had a distinct comparative edge this time with the overview on the nature of purges and the participants from Denmark. The newly-founded Holocaust center in Oslo will carry out a research project on the volunteers with the support of their Danish colleagues.

⁶⁹³ Blindheim, Svein, *Nordmenn Under Hitlers Fane. Dei norske frontkjempere*, Oslo: Noregs Boklag 1977.

⁶⁹⁴ Sørensen, Øystein, *Forskningen om krigen i Norge. Tradisjonelle og nye perspektiver*, in: *Nytt Norsk Tidsskrift*, vol. 6, no. 1, 1989, pp. 40-58, p. 50.

'Active' vs. 'Passive' Resistance

The unusual events of the invasion of Denmark resulted in the so-called peace-occupation, which sets the Danish case apart from any other European country under German control. The need for finding a working relationship with the factual occupant, which preserved territorial integrity and saved Danish lives, resulted in the specific Danish trajectory—a government at the mercy of the Germans. The contemporaries might not even have interpreted that in a critical way, since it seemed to work out fairly well. Later, when the German advance in Europe was turned into a retreat and victories were replaced by defeats, the same policy was often condemned. In France the term collaboration was coined by the collaborating regime of the Vichy state itself as a term to depict the new relationship with the German Reich. Consequently, it was not regarded as a pejorative term at the outset. It became one in the course of the events and the postwar perception of the regime itself. A similar confusion over terms can be observed in Denmark, where the democratic parties that had formed a coalition to meet the demands of the crisis labelled this cooperation or collaboration policy with the Danish term 'samarbejdspolitikken'.⁶⁹⁵ The term *samarbejdspolitikken*, however, was taken over by the clandestine press of the first resistance and turned into a swear word as the description of what they conceived as the willingness to help the Germans. In contrast to that, now the politicians often used terms like adjustment policy or policy of concessions (*tilpasningspolitikken* or *indrømmelsespolitikken*) in order to reflect the constraints they were under, and the defensive nature of the strategy they were applying. Erik Scavenius, the godfather of this policy, defensively called it, in 1948, a 'policy of negotiations' – '*forhandlingspolitikken*'.⁶⁹⁶ The words open for the notion of the Danish-German relations as of a relationship of equal partners negotiating agreements through situations of give and take. It induces the notion of elbow-room and an independent Danish government that tried its best to safeguard Danish interests on an equal basis with the Germans and is therefore the preferred term by the followers of the 'old parties'. The government itself continued to work and was subsequently converted into a coalition of the 'old parties', the *Venstre*, *Radikale Venstre*, *Social Democrats* and *Conservatives*. Over the following three years the newly formed government, backed by the parliamentary coalition, continued to administer Danish life despite the presence of German troops in the

⁶⁹⁵ For a description of the different terms see Lidegaard, Bo, 'Vi opnaaede da, at København ikke blev bombarderet...'. *Tilpasningspolitik, samarbejdspolitik og ikke-blokpolitik*, in: Dethlefsen, Henrik/ Lundbak, Henrik (eds.), *Fra mellemkrigstid til efterkrigstid. Festskrift til hans Kirchhoff og Henrik S. Nissen på 65-årsdagen oktober 1998*, København: Museum Tusulanums Forlag, Københavns Universitet 1998, pp. 673-691 and Lidegaard, Bo, *Kampen for normaliteten 1940-45*, in: Lidegaard, Bo (ed.), *Overleveren 1914-1945*, København: Gyldendal Leksikon/ Danmarks Nationalleksikon 2003, *Dansk Udenrigspolitikks Historie*, vol. 4.

country and was again confirmed by free elections in spring 1943. These elections were the only free and democratic elections held in German-occupied Europe; however, the Communist Party was not admitted as it had been already forbidden in 1941 when the Danish state, under German pressure, joined the Antikomintern-pact. The elections could be interpreted as a popular vote for the policy of the government, as a protest against Nazism (the Danish Nazi party, in absolute terms, lost votes from the electorate that was not part of the German minority), but also as a criticism of the cooperation with the Germans since they confirmed their support for the democratic parties but boosted the Conservatives who were the only ones in the coalition government who ever criticised the concessions.⁶⁹⁷ Relations with the Germans during the first years were officially conducted via the Foreign Ministry and the German Embassy in Copenhagen, where the ambassador had become a 'Reichsbevollmächtigter' (a Reichsplenipotentiary). The notion of the two countries as legally independent and equal partners was of course just fiction. The German army had enough soldiers in the country to pose a serious threat, and Germany was the ruling power in Europe. The Germans never intended keeping their hands off the country's wealth and administration— and proceeded to follow through with their intentions. Though always through the Reichsbevollmächtigten, and always in the elegant language of diplomacy, the Germans made demands right from the start. The government in Copenhagen tried to evade the worst of them by means of bargaining but had to give in more and more. It managed to keep the Germans away from the direct administration and the democratic system as a whole and even saved the judiciary from German intervention. And yet, considerable concessions were made: the Prime Minister Vilhelm Buhl and other leading politicians were forced to resign, and were replaced by others who were readier to give in; Buhl's successor, Erik Scavenius, also signed the Antikomintern-treaty in Berlin; the parliament passed legislation forbidding the Danish Communist Party. The government did not intervene when the Germans started recruiting Danish Volunteers to the Waffen-SS but encouraged Danish entrepreneurs to do business with them. Over the years all these concessions by the government put a constant strain on the coalition and more than once Scavenius had to deliver an ultimatum to his colleagues to push through his rather soft course in the face of the Germans.⁶⁹⁸ The wish to keep the ongoing fiction and theoretical independence seems to have outweighed the embarrassing concessions. The policy was not brought down by the

⁶⁹⁶ Kirchhoff, Hans, Forhandlings- og samarbejdspolitikken, in: Kirchhoff, Hans, Lauridsen, John T., Trommer, Aage, Gads Leksikon om dansk besættelsestid, København: Gad 2002, pp. 155-161, p. 155.

⁶⁹⁷ On the Conservative Party see: Birkelund, Peter, Samarbejde eller brud? Det Konservative Folkepartis store dilemma, in: Lund, Joachim (ed.), Partier under pres – demokratiet under besættelsen, København: Gyldendal 2003, pp. 95-129.

resistance of politicians but solely by the growing discontent of the population with ever more rising demands from the Germans that exceeded the scope covered by the fiction of negotiations.

The policy of the first three years proved a useful tool for Denmark. The country came out of the war in 1945 as the one that suffered the least destruction—the smallest number of casualties in proportion to the population and with the highest BNP in Europe. The moral price was of course higher. The Allies did not, until summer 1943, count Denmark as being an occupied country but rather as a collaborating enemy country, and it definitely was the merit of the active resistance that, in the end, enabled the country to be considered an ally and become a founding member of the United Nations. When the *Frihedsrådet* (Freedom Council), as the united representation of the Danish resistance, sought recognition of Denmark as an ally, the Soviet government refused and would only acknowledge the council as 'the fighting Denmark'. The politicians of the old parties actually called the policy of the first years a policy of "political resistance".⁶⁹⁹ After the liberation the politicians needed to justify the first three years in a climate where the resistance was the victorious party. It was Hans Kirchhoff who expressed, as the first leading historian, which today is agreed on by a lot of colleagues, that the *forhandlingspolitikken* was in fact a collaboration of the Danish state, which the Germans forced it into, comparable to that of Vichy France.⁷⁰⁰ The aim of the Danish politicians to involve themselves into a policy of cooperation and negotiations was to save the country from direct occupation and to keep the Danish, as well as the German Nazis, away from the government and the administration. Apart from the wish to spare the country from the destruction of war, the most important incentive for the politicians was to safeguard the existence of the political system not just from interference from the outside by a German occupier, but also the power of the ruling parties to dispose of an army and a police force to protect the system from possible foes from within.⁷⁰¹ All the different terms which were assigned to the war-government: (policy of negotiations, policy of cooperation/collaboration, each bearing its own connotations and interpretations. Policy of negotiation induces the notion of elbow-room and an independent Danish government that tried its best to safeguard Danish interests on an equal basis with the German and is therefore the preferred term

⁶⁹⁸ In-depth analyses on the conduct of the different political parties can be found in Lund, Joachim (ed.), *Partier under pres – demokratiet under besættelsen*, København: Gyldendal 2003.

⁶⁹⁹ See Pedersen, Oluf, *Den politiske modstand under besættelsen*, København: Gyldendal 1946, pp. 7-8.

⁷⁰⁰ The first time he used that term was in his 'Augustopprøret 1943', København: Udgiverselskap for danmarks nyeste historie, Gyldendal 1979. In 'Die dänische Staatskollaboration' of 1994 he calls the conduct of the Danish political system a 'Kollaboration' according to the 'collaboration d'état'. Kirchhoff Hans, *Die dänische Staatskollaboration*, in: Röhr, Werner, Bundesarchiv (editors), *Okkupation und Kollaboration (1938-1945). Beiträge zu Konzepten und Praxis der Kollaboration in der deutschen Besatzungspolitik*, Berlin, Heidelberg: Hüthig Verlagsgemeinschaft 1994, pp. 101-108.

⁷⁰¹ Kirchhoff, *Dänische Staatskollaboration*, p. 103.

by the followers of the 'old parties'.⁷⁰² Samarbejdspolitikken, however, can be interpreted as policy of cooperation, or even more pejoratively, as policy of collaboration. This term fits with the interpretation of the resistance movement that claimed that the government was in fact helping the Germans and their war in Europe.⁷⁰³ Henrik S. Nissen pleaded to use the word in the sense it originally was created as the joint effort of the legal parties to curb German influence through cooperation across party alignments.⁷⁰⁴ But in a lot of writings the pejorative use was prevalent – for example in the works of Kirchhoff – but it did not make its way into the public debate until the end of the 1990s when it became the main terminus technicus.

But one can see from the search for an appropriate term that the continuation of legal Danish governmental and parliamentary work posed and poses the most difficult chapter of the war. There was a need to merge both experiences into one narrative and the aforementioned compromise between the political parties and the Frihedsrådet was the solution. Certainly in the beginning both parties had almost the same gain from the compromise – the resistance got official acknowledgement and posts and the government was back in the game. The resistance fighters knew that the army would be loyal to the former administration since its groups had steadfastly refused to give ultimate authority to the Frihedsrådet and that parts of the population would not agree to a revolutionary force coming to power either. Additionally, some members of the Frihedsrådet actually came from the old parties or sympathized strongly with them and it is safe to assume that the alleged threat of a communist takeover from within the resistance movement was seen as a worse alternative than the compromise. The communists on the other hand had since 1943 at the latest strictly followed the people's front ideology and were not to give up this essential part of their propaganda, which was seen to be the 'entry ticket' into politics in the postwar period.⁷⁰⁵ The politicians, however, were keen to get an acknowledgement of their 'passive resistance' by the active fighters. But as described above, the superior political experience and the availability of large party apparatuses soon made the loose groups of the resistance redundant. On the tenth anniversary of the liberation the official logo of the celebrations showed a kid with a flag. It could be it as a symbol that the view of the resistance as a bunch of sometimes irresponsible adolescents had already gained public acceptance.⁷⁰⁶ The goal of the politicians was almost completed – once you understand the resistance as dubious the conduct of the politicians becomes the only 'correct' responsible

⁷⁰² The old parties were Venstre, Radikale Venstre, Social Democrats and Conservatives.

⁷⁰³ For a description of the different terms see Lidegaard, 'Vi opnaaede da, at København ikke blev bombarderet...!', and Lidegaard, Kampen for normaliteten.

⁷⁰⁴ Nissen, Henrik S., 1940. Studier i forhandlingspolitikken og samarbejdspolitikken, København: Gyldendal 1972, p. 12.

⁷⁰⁵ Bryld/Warring, Besættelsestid, p. 85.

behaviour. Thereby the label of collaboration loses its significance. But underneath the old conflict continued to boil and neither the veterans nor the population would be immediately convinced by the narrative of a united people. It needed to be embossed more strongly.

The anniversaries of the liberation proved to be a handy tool to do so, since those who delivered speeches or wrote editorials were mostly the old politicians or editors sympathising with them. The social-democrats especially flaunted the idea of the unity to safeguard their party's lead but all parties took great attention not to rock the fundament of the unity-ideology. As could be seen in the previous chapters, the planning committees were eager to perpetuate this compromise – whether through the guidelines like the 'spirit of harmony' as in 1970, or through the exclusion of representatives from the resistance movement which were likely to be critical. Only 'tame' veterans were admitted. In 1985 it felt safe to allow Jensen to speak on the Rådhuspladsen and in 1995 the theme of peace which is even more universal and needs less of an interpretation and narrative was promoted. For decades the liberation day proved as a tricky but manageable lieux de mémoire – something that was more difficult on another date. As I have mentioned above, 29 August 1943 was an important date in Danish occupation history, paradigmatic even, because it is regarded as the end of the samarbejdspolitikken and the beginning of widespread open and active resistance in Denmark. It was preceded by a series of strikes and riots in the smaller urban centres of Zealand and Jutland. Mainly Odense and Århus were the first cities to revolt against the government and the Germans. The uprising seems to have been of a certain spontaneous and uncontrolled character but soon enough the communists appear to have taken over and directed the political agenda of the strikes. The German military authorities feared, if not to lose control over the country, that the riots and strikes might put an end to the peaceful occupation of the 'Musterprotektorat' ('model-protectorate') and demanded the government to come down harshly on the protest, to hand over the ringleaders and to introduce the death penalty. The common interpretation of the events was, for a long time, that after these demands the government could not continue the cooperation with the Germans but had to resign. And – that it did so without hesitation because it had reckoned with the situation and was now ready to resist. Hans Kirchhoff and others had found out that this clear cut that the politicians made was in reality less straightforward than maintained after the war. It rather seems that the government had attempted to find a way out of this situation and had negotiated with Berlin and finally had hesitantly resigned after putting a great effort into soothing the situation. When the politicians left they had also taken care that a channel of negotiations was held open to the Germans via the heads of the departments that continued to work after the resignation and administratively continued the

⁷⁰⁶ Bryld, Warring, *Besættelsenstid*, pp. 75-84.

cooperation.⁷⁰⁷ On the day of the resignation, when the Germans called the curfew and declared the state of emergency, the Danish army was put under arrest and its positions and barracks were seized by the German army. At several places smaller fights developed when Danish units would not surrender voluntarily and there were casualties. The Danish fleet sank itself in the harbours in order not to be made use of by the Germans. The importance of the day for many Danes lies retrospectively in the change the break with the Germans brought for the reputation of the Danish people outside of Denmark, especially at the allied side. The sinking of the fleet and the military victims send a clear message out to the world, that the Danish army was not at the service of the Germans. In particular, the people's uprising that forced the resignation was of importance for the perception of Danmark in the world. Was the country seen before as collaborator to the Nazi cause or even as enemy, this changed now considerably. The fact that Denmark harboured on the allied side and was invited to join the United Nations still constitutes a source of national pride and is seen as a confirmation that the Danes were not after all that passive. It might be seen as a psychological relief from the notion of having stood on the wrong side as well as from the feeling of helplessness and trauma in the face of defeat. Still the day remained of a contradictory character, since the majority of the Danes had, as much as they deep within their hearts had felt for the resistance, supported the government and had in the elections in the spring of 1943 confirmed its policy of cooperation. Part of these psychological processes might also have been the view of the prime minister that was in office in 1943 – Erik Scavenius. He was the strongest supporter of the samarbejdspolitikken and, in order to safeguard it, had made concessions at times even ahead of the actual German demand. Swept to the top of the government by a diplomatic crisis in 1942, the former minister of foreign affairs Scavenius replaced Prime Minister Buhl on the demand of the Germans. It seems that in the end he got all the blame for the cooperation. It is very much his person that stands at the core of the discussion of cooperation and resistance.⁷⁰⁸ Since in a later chapter I will refer to this discourse in-depth, I will just make some preliminary remarks on the celebrations of the event.

⁷⁰⁷ For the works of Hans Kirchhoff and an overview of the current research please see: Kirchhoff, Hans, *Augustopprøret 1943*, København: Udgiverselskap for danmarks nyeste historie, Gyldendal 1979 (at the same time Kirchhoff's disputat); Kirchhoff, Hans, *Kamp eller tilpasning. Politikerne og modstanden 1940-45*, København: Gyldendal, Nordisk Forlag 1987; Kirchhoff, Hans, *Besættelsestidens historie - forsøg på en status*, *Historisk Tidsskrift (DK) 1* (2004); Kirchhoff, Hans, *Samarbejde og modstand under besættelsen. En politisk historie*, Odense: Odense Universitetsforlag 2001. A rather early and communist inspired work is: Nørlund, Ib, *Det knager i samfundets fuger og bånd*, København: Tiden 1959.

⁷⁰⁸ For the person of Scavenius see: Sjøqvist, Viggo, *Erik Scavenius. En biografie*, vol. I-II, København: Gyldendal 1973 and Kirchhoff, Hans, *Erik Scavenius - landsforræder eller patriot?*, in: Olesen, Niels Wium (ed.), *Mennesker, politik og besættelse*, Esbjerg: Historisk Samling fra Besættelsestiden 1940-1945 1996, pp. 10-49. On both Buhl and Scavenius: Mørk, Søren, *24 statsministre*, København: Gyldendal 2000.

Already in 1945, 29 August was celebrated – naturally enough by the resistance movement and the military. For the resistance the day was the expression of their breakthrough and at the same time their biggest success. The military could mourn those soldiers who would not hand over the barracks and at least feel in the position of a victim instead of a passive body at the hands of the government and the Germans. There is no concrete evidence that the day was specifically celebrated afterwards, except for local initiatives or within the frameworks of the separate resistance movements. It is very easy to imagine that the official Denmark – the government and the parties of the former cooperation government – despite the propagandistic efforts and success of the postwar period, had problems identifying themselves with this date. Moreover, they risked a credibility gap by getting too involved in celebrating something that back then they had fought against until the very last moment. The politicians usually kept a lower profile on this day and also the media dedicated less attention to the anniversary of the Augustoprøret. There were, however, some events staged since the day could not be totally ignored, since it was also the day when the Danish army was interned and suffered several casualties which deserved commemorative ceremonies. In 1968 a newspaper article expressed surprise of the fact that the government took part in the celebrations.⁷⁰⁹ According to the article, the prime minister took part in a ceremony at the memorial in Ryvangen and afterwards at the memorial for the fallen seamen in Nyhavn. The events in the evening were organised by the two mainstream veterans organisations who were loyal to the basic narrative *Frihedskampens Veteraner* and *Samenslutning af danske fanger fra frihedskampen 1940-1945*, Frode Jakobsen of the Frihedsråd and Jørgen Barfod spoke. The communists, whose merit the break-up was, did not take part in any celebration on that date though. They cancelled their planned gathering because of the Soviet intervention in the CSSR on the 21st of that month. In 1983 an almost identical set-up with almost the same persons involved was reported.⁷¹⁰ For the first time in 1993 a greater effort was made to include that day into the decade of celebrations that was very intensive all over Europe. The 50th anniversaries of the German attack, the riots and the liberation were all met with great interest by the general public and the administration alike. In 1995 conservative pro-NATO lobby groups spread information material. The package on the occasion of liberation day has already been discussed. But also in August 1993 several organisations compiled a *skolepakke* for teachers and students. The *Fred i Frihed - Skoleavis til 9. og 10. klasserne i Folkeskolen i anledning af 60 året for den 29. august 1943* contained several pamphlets and books smaller books and posters of the time of the occupation as teaching material. Ten years

⁷⁰⁹ Da 29. august mindedes, Politiken, 30 August 1968.

⁷¹⁰ 40 år efter det store brud, Politiken, 30 August 1983.

later the prime minister's planning committee once again allocated money to these Organisations like *Atlantersammenslutning* and *Folk og Forsvar* to print and distribute the *Skoleavis Fred I Frihed* – this time on top of the technical standard as CD-ROM with additional ready to print information and accounts by eye-witnesses, an introduction by the historian Bo Lidegaard and a foreword by the prime minister.⁷¹¹

There is reasonable doubt that the majority of Danes on 29 August 1943 supported the end of the cooperation policy though the percentage of those opposing clearly had grown in the previous weeks. However, in hindsight, almost every Dane in the immediate postwar period would have agreed that that break was entirely desired and it was the best that ever happened to Denmark during the war. The status as allied nation and the joy of the liberation were the main motives behind these psychological processes. Men like Scavenius who steadfastly held on to their original ideas and ideals had a hard time being heard. Scavenius until his end continued to defend the samarbejdspolitikken. His autobiographical account of the first three years of the occupation, however, did not become a bestseller in those days.⁷¹² As could be seen during the description of the befrielsesjubileer and the anniversaries of the 29th of August in Denmark, the question on the degree and the legitimation of cooperation and collaboration is a hotly debated topic in the southern country of this comparison. There are various forms of collaboration and the complicated interplay between the development of resistance and the degree of collaboration is a topic in its own right and yet, it seems important at this point to make some remarks about the two different trajectories of the cooperation between the occupiers and the occupant. Interaction and cooperation happen in all occupied countries and so it was made a subject of legal and moral scrutiny after the war as well – but the responses varied a great deal. In Norway, as we have seen the legal purge was immense and the lines between what was regarded legitimate cooperation and what was seen as unlawful and indecent collaboration were drawn at the level of the membership in the NS and its organisations. In Denmark the case was somehow more complicated. Certainly the Danish Nazis were without doubt collaborating on an ideological background but since they never made it to the government, no-one ever seriously claimed that they had worked as a shield for the population as was argued in Norway. They will be touched on in one of the following chapters on the liquidations of collaborators and those of this group who fought alongside the Germans will be treated in the chapter on the volunteers. The girlfriends and wives of German soldiers are going to be treated in a special chapter since their fate attracted a lot of attention and because of the complexity of the topic. But two other

⁷¹¹ I have accessed the material at the Statsministerens kontor and the Frihedsmuseum in 2004.

⁷¹² Scavenius, Erik, *Forhandlingspolitikken under besættelsen*, København:Hasselbalch 1948. The book was republished in 1995 with a preface by Henning Gottlieb at Spektrum publishing house.

groups in Denmark should be mentioned here: those who worked for the Germans inside and outside Germany and the German Minority in Southern Jutland.

In Denmark one of the problems that emerged for a while was the question of the tyskerarbejder (Workers for the Germans), those Danes who worked on German military bases or installations by building airfields and fortifications. The Germans built, all in all, around 10,000 bigger and smaller fortifications on the Danish coasts to repulse a possible Allied invasion. The estimated 10,000 Danish workers who were employed in the construction of these fortifications would have therefore mattered in a military confrontation on Danish shores. As with their countrymen who left for Germany, the reason to take up this voluntary work was to flee unemployment. Their contemporaries in the resistance undoubtedly called them collaborators. Their history is still widely unexplored and, there are both stories about their misbehaviours in the small coastal towns they were deployed in and of sabotage performed on a large scale by them as acts of resistance. The stories tell us that they had added sugar to the concrete mixture in order to weaken the erected fortifications in case of an Allied attack. But it seems highly unlikely that this had actually happened.⁷¹³ The amount of sugar that would have been needed was simply not available in times of scarcity and food rationing. The fact that these workers seem to have felt the need to generate such narrations, however, shows that their behaviour was not per se excused by all Danes. This ambiguity is reflected by the fact that in the exhibition *Spærretid* in 2005/2006 the *befæstningsarbejder* (workers on fortifications) were assigned the side of the collaborators within the exhibition set-up, albeit the text showed that despite the resistance attacks in the last months of the war on their role, for the Germans the majority of Danes saw their work "within the boundaries of acceptable cooperation."⁷¹⁴ It is in the last couple of years that some books have been published on this group of people, most of them in the field of local history since naturally the local historiography of the western coast is more interested in this topic because the population still shares a living memory of the masses of workers, and the fortifications are visible on the landscape.⁷¹⁵ Probably the most traumatic of these memories in connection with these German military projects is the displacement of the population of two entire villages and large destruction in the areas by the Germans in 1942 when the Wehrmacht drove out the people of Hansted in order to have better fields of fire for their canons and in 1944

⁷¹³ Christensen, Claus Bundgård, Poulsen, Nils Bo, Smith, Peter Scharff, Vestkystens bunkers - blot beton i strandkanten?, *Noter om historie og undervisning*, no.122, 1994, pp. 12-19.

⁷¹⁴ Nationalmuseet, exhibition *Spærretid*, "Befæstningsarbejder", the quote is from the English version called "Building fortifications". The article in the catalogue was written by Henrik Skov Kristensen: *Befæstningsarbejder*, in: Lundbak, Henrik (ed), *Spærretid. Hverdag under besættelsen 1940-1945*, København: Nationalmuseet 2005, pp. 122-125.

⁷¹⁵ Christensen, Claus Bundgård, Nils Bo Poulsen, Smith, Peter Scharff, *Dansk arbejde - tyske befæstigingsanlæg*, Varde: Blåvandshuk Egnsmuseum 1997.

when they started building an airfield near the Vandel community.⁷¹⁶ The trouble with this group of workers is also that the local economies despite some hardship and the above-mentioned crimes often also profited from the workers.

As in Norway the economic collaboration was not or just in a few cases prosecuted. The reason for this was, of course, that for the first three years the government had actually encouraged cooperation with the Germans in all economic fields. Not encouraged but at least endorsed or tolerated in order to reduce unemployment and to secure the deliveries of charcoal from Germany, was the migration of Danish workers to Germany. In 1940 the *Deutsche Arbeitsvermittlungsstelle* (German Agency for the Recruitment of Labour) was already opened in Germany. Throughout the war, Danes went on a voluntary basis to work in Germany. That sets Denmark apart from the other occupied countries, where the German occupier, with ever increasing brutality, recruited workers by force. The Danish workers migrated mostly voluntarily in order to flee massive unemployment. The Danish authorities did not, on the whole, make the entitlement to social benefits dependent on taking up of work in other countries, but the Ministry of Social Affairs encouraged the municipalities to threaten workers. Around 100,000 Danes took up work in Germany, and the average number of Danish workers in Germany from 1941-1943 was around 30,000. They got work within the Organisation Todt and in transport (Nationalsozialistisches Kraftfahrerkorps) and with the Legion Speer, at times, even on the Eastern front. The fact that discipline in the camps was of military strength, and at times even combined with guard-duties, and there were instances of forced labourers from other countries refusing to work, strikes and disobedience were most frequent amongst the Danish labour force in Germany.⁷¹⁷ It seems very clear, though, that only a most limited number of workers went to Germany on grounds of ideological identification with Nazi Germany. But the fact that for some 2,500 of these workers the job in Germany was just the first step to the Eastern Front as volunteers and because of the deployment with the Organisation Todt where the civil and military character of the work was somehow blurred and workers also performed guard duties in some of the cases, made them hesitant to speak about their often traumatic experiences. In *Spærretid* they are put on the collaborators side as well as the workers within Denmark.⁷¹⁸ This reflects the perception of one part – maybe the greater part – of the population during the war, but certainly not the self-perception of the labourers. In recent years more

⁷¹⁶ Kristensen, Henrik Skov, *Befæstningsarbejder*, in: Lundbak, Henrik (ed.), *Spærretid. Hverdag under besættelsen 1940-1945*. Catalogue, København: Nationalmuseet 2005, pp. 122-125, p. 125 and for Vandel specifically Schaiffel-Nielsen, Niels Martin, *De tog vore Hjem. Flyvestation Vandel 1943-1960*, Randbøl 1987.

⁷¹⁷ Stræde, Therkel, *Deutschlandarbeiter*, in: Herbert, Ulrich (ed.), *Europa und der "Reichseinsatz"*, Essen: Klartext 1991, pp. 140-171.

⁷¹⁸ Nationalmuseet, exhibition *Spærretid, "Tysklandsarbejdere"*.

information has been made available and studies and the workers were included in the large dictionary about the war that was recently republished.⁷¹⁹ It is accompanied by a wave of books that focus on the collaboration of all branches of the economy. These books now either written by journalists or young university graduates, often as PhD theses, flooded the book market in the recent years. The role of agriculture came under scrutiny⁷²⁰ as well as the willing cooperation of the industry.⁷²¹ The notion of Denmark being the 'larder of Hitler's Reich' was an unpleasant image that was addressed as well. Whereas Joachim Lund and Mogens Nissen affirmed that notion and accused vast parts of the economy with personal enrichment – with the cost of supporting the German army – did Ole Brandenburg Jensen partly dismiss the notion of the larder as myth created by Werner Best himself to back up his 'soft' policy of occupation. Jensen added to the understanding of the extent of economic collaboration through his focus on the hitherto neglected field of the penetration of the Danish economy by German capital and the price Danish-Jewish entrepreneurs had to pay for the maintenance of the fiction of economic and political autonomy.⁷²² A small scandal was triggered when the role of Denmark's biggest industrial entrepreneur A.P. Møller, the owner of Mærsk, was examined.⁷²³ During the war, Møller was a main shareholder of the *Dansk industrisyndikatet* or *Riffelsyndikatet* which in that time produced weapons for the Wehrmacht. The new information cast a shadow over the otherwise good reputation of Møller who had also helped to buy weapons for the resistance. It caused a considerable debate.⁷²⁴ The three journalists of *Berlingske Tidende* who had written about him certainly had touched on a sore point.⁷²⁵ The editors of *Berlingske* had, in the beginning, tried to keep the journalists in check in order not to trigger anger on the side of

⁷¹⁹ Stræde, Therkel, Tysklandsarbejder, in: Kirchhoff, Hans, Lauridsen, John T., Trommer, Aage (ed.), Gads leksikon om dansk besættelsesrid 1940-1945, København: Gads 2002, pp. 478-482, pp. 480-482.

⁷²⁰ Nissen, Mogens R., Til fælles bedste. Det danske landbrug under besættelsen, København: Lindhardt og Ringhof 2005.

⁷²¹ Andersen, Stehen, De gjorde Danmark større. Danske entreprenører i krise og krig 1919-1947, København: Lindhardt og Ringhof 2005.

⁷²² Lund, Joachim, Hitlers spisekammer. Danmark og den europæiske nyordning 1940-43, København: Gyldendal 2005; Nissen, Mogens Rostgaard, Til fælles bedste. Det danske landbrug under besættelsen, København: Lindhardt og Ringhof 2003 and Jensen, Ole Brandenburg, Besættelsestidens økonomiske og erhvervsmæssige forhold. Studier i de økonomiske relationer mellem Danmark og Tyskland 1940-1945, Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag 2005, University of Southern Denmark Studies in History and Social Sciences, vol. 309. In 2006 the University of Southern Denmark published a follow-up anthology in collaboration with the Copenhagen Business School edited by Joachim Lund. Working for the new order: European business under German domination, 1939-1945, Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark.

⁷²³ Jensen, Christian, Kristiansen, Tomas, Nielsen, Karl Erik, Krigens købmænd. det hemmelige opgør med Riffelsyndikatet, A.P. Møller og den øvrige storindustri efter anden verdenskrig, København: Gyldendal 2002.

⁷²⁴ In a programme of DR 2's *Deadline* the historians Hans Christian Bjerg og Henrik S. Nissen evaluated the dimension of the new information and the extent of the economic collaboration on 15 November 1999.

⁷²⁵ Jensen, Christian, Kristiansen, Tomas, Nielsen, Karl Erik, Krigens købmænd, in: *Berlingske Tidende*, 2 December 2000.

A.P.Møller's descendants who now owned shares of Berlingske Tidende but did not succeed. The enterprise Mærsk-McKinney-Møller consequently sold their shares.⁷²⁶

In Denmark too, the repercussions of the Finnish War with the Soviet Union and collaborationism resulted in a certain amount of young men determined to fight communism, wherever possible – even alongside the Germans. But when in June 1941, the Frikorps Denmark was created, around 50% of the young men who joined during the first weeks were members of the Nazi party, which clearly demonstrates their ideological proximity to the German Nazis. Some of these men additionally seem to have understood the Frikorps as a private army of the DNSAP. All in all over 12,000 Danes registered for the Waffen-SS, of which 6,000 were enrolled – around 2,000 fell. The volunteers served mostly in three already mentioned units: the Division Wiking, the Division Nordland and the Frikorps Denmark and all served at the Eastern front. The Division Nordland, into which the Frikorps was also merged, was one of the last units to fight in the battle of Berlin – Danes were also among the last to defend Hitler.⁷²⁷ As for the Norwegian SS-units, it is not yet proven that the Danish volunteers were directly involved in the war of extermination and the Holocaust, but it seems safe to assume that some were since some one hundred of them even served in concentration camps.⁷²⁸ The government – though it is frequently claimed – did not call on the population to join the SS but legitimized the enrolment by attending official ceremonies of the units. The Prime Minister, Vilhelm Buhl, for example, attended the memorial ceremony for the fallen SS-Sturmbannführer von Schalburg, and generously promised that officers enrolling would be able to rejoin the regular Danish forces afterwards. By financing the Frikorps partly, Denmark again left its fiction of neutrality and took sides – something that has just recently been openly discussed.⁷²⁹

A peculiar part of the history of the Danish volunteers is that of the Schalburgkorps. In February 1942 Obersturmbannführer Schalburg (a Baltic-German and veteran of the Division Wiking) took over the Frikorps Denmark, which after his untimely death in the East, was called Schalburgkorps.⁷³⁰ The corps was, as with the SS in general, divided into a civilian section and a military section, the first materially supporting the latter. After the imprisonment of the Danish police, the military unit of the Schalburgkorps performed police duties under the control of the

⁷²⁶ The story is referred to at <http://befrielsen1945.dk/temaer/efterkrigstiden/offentligdebat/index.html>.

⁷²⁷ An in-depth study for the matter is: Christensen, Poulsen, Smith, *Under hagekors og dannebrog*.

⁷²⁸ Hannes Heer claims that Danes were also partaking in massakers on Jews and so-called partisans. See Heer, Hannes, *Vom Verschwinden der Täter*, Berlin: Aufbau 2005.

⁷²⁹ Christensen, Vlaus Bundgård, Schalburg, Cristian Frederik von, in: Kirchhoff, Hans, Lauridsen, John T., Trommer, Aage (ed.), *Gads leksikon om dansk besættelsesrid 1940-1945*, København: Gads 2002, pp. 413-414, p. 413.

⁷³⁰ Christensen, Schalburg, p. 413.

Germans, which in fact resulted in unbounded terror against the Danish population, with the Hipo (Hilfspolizei) being the worst offenders.⁷³¹ The Schalburgkorps was responsible for acts of retaliation for Danish sabotage but for a greater part did not serve at the Eastern Front. These acts of terror included the shooting of hostages or passers-by and the bombing of buildings dear to the population.⁷³² These volunteers even committed crimes at the hands of the Germans in their own country against their own countrymen. Some of them were maybe just young but others were convinced. The most convinced political criminals certainly came from the Danish Nazi party. Danmarks Nationalsocialistiske Arbejderparti (DNSAP), never gained power and therefore never played a decisive role in the Danish trajectory.⁷³³ Except for a very brief attempt to seize power, which was greeted by a mass demonstration by the citizens of Copenhagen and the police, the party did not make any progress in the war years. The elections in 1943, which brought no gains for the DNSAP, can, as mentioned above, be also interpreted as a clear sign by the voters that they would not go for the 'Nazi-option' but had faith in the future of the parliamentary democracy the other parties stood for. That the party still kept its three seats was due to the German order to the minority members in Southern Jutland to vote for the DNSAP.⁷³⁴ The members of the party therefore never represented mainstream Denmark, but a considerable number of them volunteered for the SS or joined terror groups like the Schalburg-korps. The weakness of the DNSAP was also the reason that the Germans, unlike in Norway, did not try to rely on them as political factor but put it off until the 'final victory' (Endsieg).⁷³⁵ The party leader, Fritz Clausen, resigned and volunteered for duty on the Eastern front. A decisive extent of ideological collaboration, as in Norway, can, therefore, not be attributed to Denmark. But undoubtedly, the largest single group that came under the suspicion of organized ideological collaboration were the members of the German minority in southern Jutland.⁷³⁶ The large extent

⁷³¹ Ossendorf, Ingo, "Den Krieg kennen wir nur aus der Zeitung," *Zwischen Kollaboration und Widerstand - Dänemark im II. Weltkrieg; Studie zum fünfzigsten Jahrestag der Aktion "Weserübung"*, dem 9. April 1990, Frankfurt/Main, Bern, New York, Paris: Peter Lang, 1990, Europäische Hochschulschriften, Reihe III, Geschichte und ihre Hilfswissenschaften, no. 449, p. 79.

⁷³² A full account on the history of the Schalburgkorps in: Pedersen, Schalburgkorps et.

⁷³³ For one of the latest publications on the DNSAP please see: Lauridsen, John T., *En nazistisk genrejsning af Danmark? DNSAP som oppositionsparti 1940-45*, in: Lund, Joachim (ed.), *Partier under pres – demokratiet under besættelsen*, København: Gyldendal 2003, pp. 258-289, Lammers, Karl Christian, *Nazistisk styre i Danmark? De danske nazister og besættelsen 1940*, in: Kirchhoff, Hans (ed.), *1940 - da Danmark blev besat: historisk status på 50 års afstand*, København: Reitzel 1990, p. 51-59, Djursaa, Malene, *DNSAP. Danske nazister 1930-45*, København: Gyldendal 1981, More in depth: Lauridsen, John T., *Dansk Nazisme 1930-45 - og derefter*, København: Gyldendal 2002 and for an overview on the research until 1995 Lauridsen, John T., *Nazister i Danmark 1930-45. En forskningsoversigt*, in: *Historisk Tidsskrift (DK)*, 1995, vol. 95, pp. 99-142.

⁷³⁴ Petrick, Einleitung, p. 47.

⁷³⁵ Ossendorf, "Den Krieg kennen wir nur aus der Zeitung", p. 75.

⁷³⁶ For an in-depth description of that topic and further literature: Lammers, Karl Christian, *Den danske modstandsbevægelse og det tyske mindretal i Sønderjylland*, in: *Nationale mindretal i det dansk-tyske grænseland 1933-1945*. Edited by Robert Bohn, Uwe Danker, and Jørgen Kühl. Aabenraa: Institut for grænseregionsforskning, Institut für schleswig-holsteinische Zeit- und Regionalgeschichte 2001.

of the collaboration with the Germans during the attack as well as afterwards sent shock-waves through Danish society and put a heavy strain on the relationship between the majority and the minority populations.⁷³⁷ Members of the minority did not just help the attacking army by controlling traffic but also by guarding Danish POWs. They volunteered in extraordinary numbers for the Regiment Nordland, a SS-unit, and guarded factories against sabotage by the Danish resistance. The NSDAP Nordschleswig with its militia served as a reliable force for the occupier.⁷³⁸ Of the around 600 Danish citizens who served in the Wehrmacht (not in the Waffen-SS), most came from the German minority.⁷³⁹ Another around 1,500 volunteered for the SS-Division Totenkopf and the 1st SS-Brigade.⁷⁴⁰ In comparison to Norway, one could appoint the German minority in Denmark the same role as the Nasjonal Samling played in Norway, albeit on a smaller scale. Naturally the large extent of the treachery that the Danes witnessed would put a heavy strain on the relations with the minority. Such a situation is not only difficult in the region where the minority lives and where neighbours could come into conflict with each other but also creates problems on a national level. Administrations generally prefer not to have such problems with the national minorities. A sensible reaction therefore often is to ignore the experience after the main perpetrators are punished. There are indications that historical research and governmental agencies did exactly that. The relevant works on the war and the occupation mention it but stand-alone studies of the topic are missing. But the tide is turning and also these unpleasant memories can now, 50 years after the Bonn-Copenhagen treaties and good neighbourly relations with the Germans, be addressed without the danger of triggering awkwardness and hostility in southern Jutland. Research has opened for this chapter of the past and new publications will surely follow.⁷⁴¹ Even the mistreatment of the German refugees from Pommerania who ended up in Denmark has been subjected to a critical study recently.⁷⁴² The volunteers had come into the public eye in the middle of the 1980s when the first sober research

⁷³⁷ Becker-Christensen, NSDAPN – og Slesvigske Parti. Den tyske mindretals politiske virke under besættelsen, in: Lund, Joachim (ed.), *Partier under pres – demokratiet under besættelsen*, København: Gyldendal 2003, pp. 328-345.

⁷³⁸ Ossendorf, "Den Krieg kennen wir nur aus der Zeitung", p. 78-80.

⁷³⁹ Smith, Poul Scharff, Christensen, Claus Bundgård, *Tysk krigstjeneste, danskere i*, in: Kirchhoff, Hans, Lauridsen, John T., Trommer, Aage (eds.), *Gads leksikon om dansk besættelsesrid 1940-1945*, København: Gads 2002, pp. 471-472, p. 471.

⁷⁴⁰ Christensen, Claus Bundgård, Poulsen, Niels Bo, Smith, Poul Scharff, *The Danish Volunteers in the Waffen SS and their Contribution to the Holocaust and the Nazi War of Extermination*, in: Jensen, Mette Bastholm, Jensen, Steven L.B., *Denmark and the Holocaust*, Copenhagen 2003, Institute for International Studies, Department for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, pp. 62-101, p. 65.

⁷⁴¹ Lammers, Karl Christian, *Den danske modstandsbevægelse og det tyske mindretal i Sønderjylland*, in: Bohn Robert, Danker Uwe, Kühl Jørgen (eds.), *Nationale mindretal i det dansk-tyske grænseland 1933-1945*, Aabenraa: Institut for grænseregionsforskning, Institut für schleswig-holsteinische Zeit- und Regionalgeschichte 2001, pp. 169-180.

⁷⁴² Rünitz, Lone, *Af hensyn til konsekvenserne. Danmark og flygtningespørgsmålet 1933-1940*, Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag 2005, University of Southern Denmark Studies in History and Social Sciences, vol. 303.

was conducted. Since then several attempts have been made to understand who these young men were and what motivated them. The long-cherished notion that the volunteers were either criminals, army officers that were frustrated by the defeat, social 'scum' or people with lesser intellectual abilities could not be proven. But their own self-perception as patriots with a strong wish to defend the country against communism and the first pan-European champions was discarded as well. They came from all layers of society and from all backgrounds though with a centre of gravity in the cities and to the political right.⁷⁴³ In the last years it is mostly the work of a 'trio of authors' who over half a decade have done extensive research in this field. Claus Bundgård Christensen, Nils Bo Poulsen and Peter Scharff Smith have published extensively on the matter.⁷⁴⁴ Their studies distinguish themselves greatly from the autobiographical accounts of the members of the SS-units which have been published ever since the end of the war and the trials.⁷⁴⁵ These had dominated the printed literature because serious historians had neglected the field. Astonishing in this context is the decision of the publishing house of Odense University to publish the account of Oluf Krabbe, a veteran, as an historical document. Aage Trommer had endorsed the book in 1976 and supported the publication besides the difficult contents and conviction of the author. It would deserve a place in the literature as a "primary source."⁷⁴⁶ In 1980 Søren Schou published a book in which he tried to understand the motivation of the volunteers based on existing sociological studies and the autobiographical accounts of the volunteers.⁷⁴⁷ He also made use of the novel of Erik Aalneck Jensen about the SS men which had been published in five issues.⁷⁴⁸ There is a certain difficulty with the book – it is unclear whether Schou actually has a critical distance to the *Østfrontfrivillige*. But certainly his main point – that there were far more volunteers than the people like to believe and that the collaboration government to a certain extent backed the recruiting – was an interesting new insight for a lot of people. This was also a main argument in the interview with Schou that was included into the critical anthology *Dengang under besættelsen* which has been mentioned earlier and which tried, in the anniversary year of 1985, to engage in a broader discussion about the dark spots of the war history.⁷⁴⁹ An article in also Politiken made this story available for a

⁷⁴³ Christensen, Poulsen, Smith, *Under hagekors og dannebrog*, 31-52.

⁷⁴⁴ For a complete list of their main works please refer to the bibliography at the end of this thesis.

⁷⁴⁵ One example are the books by Erik Haaest: *Krigens vidner I-III*, *Frontsvin - Frikorps Danmark-folk om kamperne ved Ilmensøen*; *Frostknuder - Frikorps Danmark-folk om kampene ved Welikije Luki og korpsets endeligt*; *Forrædere - frikorps Danmark-folk om drømmen og virkeligheden*, Lyngø: Bogans Forlag 1975.

⁷⁴⁶ Aage Trommer and Torkil Olsen in the Foreword to: Krabbe, Oluf, *Danske soldater i kamp på Østfronten 1941-1945*, Odense: Odense Universitetsforlag 1976.

⁷⁴⁷ Schou, Søren, *De danske Østfront-frivillige - et essay*, København: Suenson 1980.

⁷⁴⁸ Jensen, Erik Aalneck, *Kridtstregen*, København: Gyldendal ⁵1998.

⁷⁴⁹ Møller Lars, *Danske soldater i krig på Østfronten - 4.000 faldt*, in: Møller, Lars, Wiborg Annette (eds.), *Dengang under besættelsen*, pp. 133-139.

broader audience.⁷⁵⁰ There seems to have occurred a swing in the perception of the volunteers from a notion of bloodthirsty Nazis to an idea of them as under-achievers. In the cartoon *Danmark besat* the role of the volunteer is taken over by young Svend, a rather slow boy from the small town who because of his character as a petty criminal is rejected by the oppositional sports club and then turns for comradeship to the other side. He and his friends are described as a group of actually quite cowardly youngsters.⁷⁵¹ The fact that Svend features as an integral part of the war history is remarkable though. The existence of the volunteers has made it into the narrative. In the new exhibition of the FM the volunteers are now represented with a dummy wearing the SS uniform in the display on the attack of the Soviet Union. Thus the collaboration of Danes during the war against the allies becomes represented.

However, not the volunteers, nor the economic collaboration represent the most remarkable change in the discourse on the war and a newly-lit debate in Denmark but the most important object for politics of remembrance since the end of the war – the cooperation of the administration and the history of the first three years of the occupation. The political dimension of the question of collaboration was not forgotten. Throughout the whole postwar period there had been voices that the collaboration government had saved the country. Although not popular in a public that either hailed the active resistance or supported the notion of the politicians shielding the resistance, an understanding of the collaboration as truly smart and commendable existed between the lines of some works. The debate has been going on for several years but cumulated around the 60th anniversary of the liberation. But it is not just one side of the historical divide between resistance and old parties raising its voice, the whole complex field seems to be in a state of a 're-consideration' or re-evaluation – from both sides.

The 60th Anniversary of the Liberation

The newly-elected young Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen, born after the war, who heads a right populist-conservative government, brought the question of the collaboration up again – and in an unusual manner when compared to the previous caution the topic was treated with by official Denmark. His very outspoken comments on the resistance and the old parties triggered an intensive debate which started after his speech on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Augustoprøret. His statement is very interesting in its implications and therefore deserves to be cited extensively here. He said that 29 August 1943 was a day:

"[...] we all should remember – and be proud of. That day Denmark's honour was saved; the government stopped the long-lasting collaboration and resigned. After

⁷⁵⁰ Den pinlige historie om danskerne på Østfronten, Politiken, 3 May 1985.

⁷⁵¹ Hesseldahl, Morten, Roland, Niels, Rehr, Henrik, Hjemsøgt. Bind 5 – 1945, København: Carlsen Comics 1994.

three years of collaboration with the Germans a clean sweep was made. It was not one single day too early. [He then referred to the sinking of the Danish Fleet.] The events were noticed by the allies and there is no doubt that the sinking of the fleet improved the image of Denmark. It was neither the government's nor the establishment's merit that the collaboration ended. On the contrary, they had complied with the Germans on all levels and even asked their citizen to do the same. Not only did they follow a passive line – the government even chose to actively act together with the Germans in the hope that would save the country's sovereignty, as latest historical research shows."

Then he continued:

"Danes were spared the worst destruction and the agriculture and the industry profited from that policy. Seen from that angle, some might therefore call that collaboration policy adequate, necessary and smart. But that would be a dangerous conclusion. If all had thought like Danish collaboration politicians, Hitler might have won the war. Dissatisfaction of the people made the politicians retreat and we should be proud of that. We owe the resistance, [...] that safeguarded Denmark a seat on the right side of the struggle gratitude."

Referring to critics he said:

"Of course one should be careful not to judge the past in hindsight with today's premises. Today we know that the Nazis lost the war. [...] But even judged with the knowledge of those days the policy of active adjustment could be seen as reprehensible. In a fight between democracy and dictatorship no-one can remain neutral; everybody has to stand up for democracy and against dictatorship. Its here that the policy of adjustment became a sell-out."

The most important point of the message was in the last lines:

"Too many times, we Danes have just, for the sake of our own comfort, remained passive and have other fight for our peace and freedom. The lesson of 29th of August is: if we are serious about our values, about peace, democracy and human rights, we have to make an active contribution for that – even if that includes very un-popular decisions."⁷⁵²

Nobody denies that the prime minister's plain words were heartfelt and honest; however they should also be seen in the light of the political events unfolding at the same time. Fogh Rasmussen was among those European heads of government who actively supported the US-position with regards to a potential war in Iraq and have sent troops into combat alongside the US-led coalition. This decision has not been very popular in Denmark. It should not easily be dismissed that Rasmussen was simply using the war narrative of the resistance as a tool to legitimate his foreign policy. It certainly was seen this way by historians and veterans.⁷⁵³ In a

⁷⁵² Statsminister Anders Fogh Rasmussen, 60 året for 29.august 1943, Statsministeriet, <http://www.stm.dk/Index/dokumenter.asp?o=2&n=0&d=1588&s=1>

⁷⁵³ Besides the numerous commentaries in the newspapers also by veterans that accused the prime minister of making use of the history of the resistance historians like Nils Arne Sørensen have supported that view of an

preface to a special issue of the veteran's association Frihedskampens Veteraner magazine on the same occasion he directly referred to the Danish engagement in Afghanistan and the Gulf. The epilogue written by Jørgen Barfod indirectly nodded in approval to these words by comparing Denmark in 1945 to Iraq of 2003.⁷⁵⁴ In 2005 the Danish troops were still in combat and the calls to bring them home were not silenced and Fogh Rasmussen's office, the Statsministeriet was again the main body responsible for the celebrations in 2005 and in contrast to Norway, yet another planning committee of the celebrations was assembled. This time, however, historians were also asked to partake to a greater extent. The committee was chaired by the prime minister's secretary and the chairmen of the veteran's association Frihedskampens Veteraner Jørgen Barfod, who had himself also been in the conservative resistance movement Dansk Samling. Its files have not yet been released. The main task of the committee this time seems to have been the preparation not only of the usual ceremonies but also of the main medium of communication – a governmental webpage that was, as mentioned before, meant to serve as a portal to the educational offers and the festivities. The page is well-made and besides a timeline and background information also offers small films and soundfiles for download, a section for teachers to get stimulation for dealing with the topic in teaching. All topics were edited both for the primary and the secondary schools. The page was seen to scientifically by Hans Kirchhoff. The choice of Kirchhoff was not illogical, since he was not only one of the most prominent historians on the matter but his work on the August Uprising was a critical examination also of the cooperation-policy. In yet another welcome to this webpage Fogh Rasmussen repeated his point of view of 2003, albeit more carefully. He stated in 2005 that:

*"Under the Nazi-occupation many Danes were forced to make a decision between doing the right thing and take a clear stance and expose themselves to great risks or to bend to the threat, [...] and prioritize their own well-being and safety. This is a question that is equally important today and the emotions can rise high if it is addressed."*⁷⁵⁵

The reactions to these words in both years were very complex. The veterans of the resistance and their organizations of course warmly welcomed the prime minister's words and saw them as a necessary but late acknowledgement of their deeds in a time of relativation.⁷⁵⁶ They were even

instrumentalisation. Sørensen, Nils Arne, Narrating the Second World War in Denmark since 1945, in: Contemporary European History, vol. 14, no. 3, 2005, pp. 295-315, p. 295.

⁷⁵⁴ Rasmussen, Anders Fogh, Forord, pp. 2-3 and Barfod, Jørgen H, Efterskrift – har vi lært af historien?, pp. 126-127 in: FV Mindeutgave 29. August 1943. København: Frihedskampens Veteraner 2003.

⁷⁵⁵ The URL of the webpage is <http://www.befrielsen1945.dk>

⁷⁵⁶ Interview with Jørgen H.P. Barfod in Frihedsmuseet on 6 May 2005. He is one of the few surviving members of the resistance leadership and head of the veteran's association.

more satisfied when Fogh Rasmussen delivered his speech on the evening of the 5th at a reception for 400 veterans and victims of the war. He said:

*"You made a choice and did not do, what might have paid off but what you thought was right. [...] Most of you present here made a choice on the basis of the premises then and without any knowledge about what that choice might cause. [...] I was criticised for rationalizing in hindsight but I reject that accusation."*⁷⁵⁷

The second topic where Rasmussen was calling historian's opposition was his speech on the evening of the 4th when he spoke in Mindelunden. In his speech he surprised those present and the press by asking for forgiveness on behalf of the Danish people for the fact that the Danish authorities had sent 21 Jews back to Germany before the war. Most historians like Trommer and Nissen thought that this was useless and would just cement the black-and-white picture Fogh was creating of the war.⁷⁵⁸ And indeed by bringing up the subject of the deportations of Jews, a topic so loaded with emotions and connotations to the vast iconic repertoire of the Holocaust, the samarbejdspolitikken must be left looking as the most evil choice. However, it is interesting to note that a report about a discussion meeting in wake of the whole debate where veterans and historians met to discuss the evaluation or re-evaluation of the resistance also shows that not all veterans necessarily agreed with Fogh Rasmussen. Indeed some said that they preferred a Scavenius standing to what he thought was right to a "history-romantic" prime minister.⁷⁵⁹ Historian Palle Roslyng-Jensen though expresses in an article on the historiography of the war between 2001 and 2006, which is a follow-up to an earlier one dealing with the literature between 1996 and 2001, that the prime minister has rendered outstanding services to the historical research on the occupation since no book published in 2004 and 2005 failed to mention his points of view as part of an ongoing struggle on values and evaluations. Fogh Rasmussen's remarks had stimulated and updated the debate and served as a challenge to historians to oppose the top-level of the political sphere, postulated Roslyng-Jensen.⁷⁶⁰

These historians had been quite productive around the anniversaries in the first years after the turn of the millennium and contributed to the debate in their own – scholarly – way. Hans Kirchhoff was one of the first to comment. He wrote in a long essay that was published on two consecutive days in *Information* in October 2003 a very reflected and sober criticism of the speeches in August 2003. Kirchhoff who can be called the most important historian in the field of the conflict between the politicians and the resistance, started with a short description of the

⁷⁵⁷ Elisabeth Lumby and Annette Hagerup, "Det er alltid et valg," *Berlingske Tidende*, 6 May 2005.

⁷⁵⁸ Line Holm Nielsen, "Historikere: Undskyldning er vrøvl," *Berlingske Tidende*, 6 May 2005.

⁷⁵⁹ Winther, Henrik, Runen, in: *Weekendavisen*, 3 June 2005.

⁷⁶⁰ Roslyng-Jensen, Palle, *Besættelseslitteraturen 2001-2006. Postmodernistisk variation og fortsat hausse*, in: *Historisk Tidsskrift (DK)*, no. 106, 2006, pp. 198-242, p. 199.

importance the myth of the whole Danish people resisting the Germans had for the mental hygiene after the war and the national self-respect and the subsequent cementation by the politicians until the break-through of the critical research in the 1990s. Today he claimed that the same party press that for decades had supported the notion of the resistant administration now turns against the collaboration policy and condemns the inevitable economic collaboration. Today, he said, everybody embraces the resistance – while condemning the 'bloodlust' of the liberation days, the liquidations as if there had not been a war going on. A whole generation comes under attack as German-friendly, materialistic and cowardly.⁷⁶¹ But as he added in his second part, all this and the speeches of the prime minister were "crude misuse" of the history of the occupation and called them the "provisional climax of the crusade of new-moralism with respect to the history of the occupation."⁷⁶² It had been a good tradition that official Denmark hailed the resistance on 'their' ceremonies as the saviours of the Danish honour but now a new moment had been introduced by Fogh – for the first time the collaboration government has been described as a moral treachery and the construction of a direct linkage with a new activist foreign policy. But Fogh was, according to Kirchhoff, following the wrong path in his interpretation and instrumentalization since he did not seem to be aware that those who broke the collaboration were not democrats but, back then, called terrorists. There was a very important reflection missing in the prime ministers speech, which is a consideration of the difference between being responsible for a group of people or just for one self. It was not astonishing that few functionaries joined the resistance and that the Frihedsrådet was comprised mostly of professors and intellectuals. Considering all this, Kirchhoff concluded that he could full-heartedly support the tribute to the resistance but could not join the demonisation of the collaboration-government – that would be too cheap and a-historical.

Kirchhoff's commentary represents not only a clear rejection of the prime minister's use of history but should be seen as expression of a general trend in Danish historical research in that decade. Fogh's comments fell in a period when for the first time since the end of the war leading and new historians now openly defended the collaboration of the administration and even Scavenius himself who seems to have have been given all the blame for the 'disreputable' sides of the collaboration. Scavenius had been made the scapegoat and the only one responsible for what had been viewed as excesses in the complaisance with the German demands, when the rest of the administration had been integrated into the ranks of the resistance. The smell of being the German puppet after his promotion from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the post of Prime

⁷⁶¹ Kirchhoff, Hans, Når Selvrespekten Skal Rettes Op, Information, 15 October 2003. This is the first of the two parts of the dobbeltkronikk.

⁷⁶² Kirchhoff, Hans, Fogh dæmoniserer historien, Information, 16 October 2003.

Minister, which was made due to heavy pressure from the Germans who expected a smooth cooperation from Scavenius, was strong during the war and remained strong after its end. The pictures of him next to Werner Best became the icons of the collaboration by those who had always opposed the compromise of the liberation days. Thirty years earlier that had been very unpopular and Viggo Sjøqvist's biography of Scavenius was not met with favour outside a relatively small circle of academics because of his too explicit defence of the samarbejdspolitikken.⁷⁶³ In 1995, when the anniversary celebrations also showed a beginning of reflection of old narratives, the floor was open for discussion. On the one hand, a very precise study on a rather small and hitherto neglected part of the economic collaboration, the so-called Eastern Territory Committee where businessmen met to plan the economic conquer of Eastern Europe in the wake of the German armies, showed how much officials in the government were involved⁷⁶⁴ and, on the other hand, Kristian Hvidt published his book on the Danish Prime Ministers and Scavenius got at least a favourable description of his motives combined with a criticism of his inability to understand the population's feelings.⁷⁶⁵ The same was the tone of the next book on the Prime Ministers by Søren Mørk in 2000.⁷⁶⁶ The same year that Fogh held his first speech a rather clear tribute to the policy of the collaboration government and the persons involved was published in a series by the distinguished *Danmarks Nationalleksikon*. In *Overleveren*, Bo Lidegaard delivered a sequence to his previous studies on the matter⁷⁶⁷ and did in fact accept the policy of a compliance with the Germans as the guarantee of Denmark's democracy and wealth even when the moral consequences are taken into account.⁷⁶⁸ The book which was designed as the main handbook of Danish foreign policy history and – ironically enough – the author was the head of the Foreign Ministry's department on the Middle East and Latin-America and therefore an employee of Fogh. His conclusions support Kirchhoff's earlier comments, that both the collaboration and the resistance were necessary to make Denmark an allied nation and a democratic and relatively wealthy country by the summer of 1945. *Weekendavisen*, certainly one of the most important forums for book reviews in the Danish cultural landscape, did in fact understand it that way and made recommended the book, albeit it called it a "Statue for Scavenius."⁷⁶⁹ It is hard to assess the force of the Fogh's speeches with the

⁷⁶³ Sjøqvist, Viggo, Erik Scavenius. En biografie, 2 Vols, København: Gyldendal 1973.

⁷⁶⁴ Lund Joachim, Den danske østindsats 1941-43. Østrumudvalget i den politiske og økonomiske kollaboration. In: Historisk Tidsskrift (DK), no. 1, 1995, pp. 35-74.

⁷⁶⁵ Hvidt, Kristian, Statsministre i Danmark fra 1913-1995, København: Nyt Nordisk Forlag 1995. Scavenius is described on pp. 43-46.

⁷⁶⁶ Mørk, Søren, 24 statsministre, København: Gyldendal 2000.

⁷⁶⁷ Lidegaard Bo, Nils Svenningsens anfægtelse, in: Historisk Tidsskrift (DK), no. 95, 1995, pp. 184-194 and Lidegaard, 'Vi opnaaede da, at København ikke blev bombarderet...!', pp. 673-691.

⁷⁶⁸ Lidegaard, Kampen for normaliteten, pp. 399-406.

⁷⁶⁹ Hardis, Arne, En statue til Scavenius, in: Weekendavisen, 31 October 2003.

'common Dane', that the veterans were pleased does not surprise. Even if parts of the war generation had stood truthfully to the basic narrative a tribute that strong was like a warm shower and was probably not reflected in the light of politics of remembrance but simply savoured. The academia and the cultural elites were sceptic at the best or rejected them plainly at the worst. In 2005 the excitement had ebbed out but the anniversary year and the renewed allegations by Fogh against the collaboration government were able to stoke the controversy up again. Aage Trommer reviewed Lidegaard's *Overleveren* again in April 2005 shortly before the anniversary.⁷⁷⁰ And Anita Brask Rasmussen asked in *Information* whether Denmark was getting "her own Historikerstreit?"⁷⁷¹ She used the current debate for a review of the older and newer historiography on the war and its general trends and concluded that the picture had become more intricate with a mixture of traditional views and a new revisionism that is criticising the collaboration on all levels and thereby challenges the older notion of a country unified in resistance. The whole divide between consensus and a conflict view of the war history that had already been undermined had now been added another component.

It is important to add that all the above-mentioned challenges to the narrative were actually referred to on the webpage of the celebrations. A discussion of the debate around the statements of the Prime Minister including the critical comments by Hans Kirchhoff was to be found online.⁷⁷² In this sense the web-portal showed a great sense of openness to the current debates and also conflicting views. Certainly it profited from the involvement of such an outstanding personality of the historical research on the occupation like Hans Kirchhoff.

On the official level of the celebrations, however, nothing was remarkably different despite of the Prime Minister's comments. Once again this year the celebrations were following the well-established structures. On May 4th a celebration with the Queen and the Prime Minister (the former was laying a wreath, the latter delivered a speech) happened on Mindelunden. Next morning there was another ceremony at Mindelunden – albeit in a more ceremonial setting with guards of honour by the military and the veterans. The solemn ceremony without speeches took not more than 15 minutes and again the Queen and the Prime Minister laid wreaths.

⁷⁷⁰ Trommer, Aage, Modstanden gjorde samarbejds-politikken gangbar, in: Kristeligt Dagblad, 21 April 2005.

⁷⁷¹ Rasmussen, Anita Brask, Er Danmark Ved at Få Sin Egen Historikerstrid?, *Information*, 16 April 2005.

⁷⁷² Danmarks undervisningsportal, Danmarks befrielse 5. maj 1945, Besættelsen i efterkrigstiden, Besættelsestiden i den offentlige debat . Samarbejdspolitikken: Koralsk svigt? (The Occupation in the Public Debate – The Policy of Collaboration: Moral Treason?), <http://www.befrielsen1945.dk/temaer/efterkrigstiden/offentligdebat/index.html#indhold0>.



The Queen greeting the veterans on 9 May 2005 at Mindelunden

Astonishingly, even 60 years after the liberation with almost nobody left who had memories of the origin of the tradition of the living lights in the windows, the government and media again put stress on the symbol. Most newspapers, either on their covers or on other prominent spaces, had the call to put lights in the windows on the 4th.⁷⁷³ *Information*, the newspaper that originated in the communist resistance reported, on the 6th of May under a photo of the well-lit editorial offices that it had celebrated "as the rest of the country" with lights and colour and a party.⁷⁷⁴ That *Information* was labouring under a misapprehension can be seen from *Jyllandsposten* where inside the Copenhagen supplement beneath the call for lighting candles on May 4th the tradition and its origin were actually explained – not everybody necessarily knew the story. The development that was visible already in 1995 was reinforced in 2005. The tradition of the living lights is about to die out. Personally, I could see in Copenhagen on both days that it is a very small minority that still lights the candles. As I have shown, the 60th anniversary did not stir too much attention in the Norwegian newspapers, in Denmark on the other hand, *Politiken* and *Berlingske Tidende* published voluminous special editions on May 5th. *Politiken* had it in the feuilleton, *Berlingske* published an extra supplement with the original front-page of 5 May 1945 and *Information* came out the 4th with an extensive part on the liberation and a front page decorated with the symbol of the resistance, the coloured armband and the words "happy liberation day" (glædelig befrielse) and a dozen pages on the topic and a discussion on the history and the future of this former resistance newspaper.

⁷⁷³ Examples are *Information*, 4 May 2005, *Berlingske Tidende*, 4 May 2005.

⁷⁷⁴ Mørklægningen ophørt - fuldt blus på, *Information*, 6 May 2005.

Summary

Norwegians and Danes have, as shown, collaborated on different levels with the power that had taken over their country. Some forms evolved out of disorientation, others were motivated by ideology and greed. When Quisling was made the ruler, he claimed that Norway was standing on the German side. And yet most Norwegians did not agree with that but felt much more sympathy with the resistance, the King, and first and foremost the allies of the anti-Hitler coalition. It is true that as many people were members of the NS as were members of the clandestine resistance army – yet going underground and risking ones live still takes more courage than signing a form. The Danish Nazis remained a very small movement and never reached any significance. Here the cooperation of the rightful administration is a bigger trauma. The Danish case is characterised by a good deal of ambiguity – both during and after the war. The administrative collaboration and the encouragement of all parts of society received to follow the example of the main political parties certainly saved lives and especially economic power. And yet, without the resistance Denmark would have ended up on the side of the losers of that war and not on the allied side. It is as if there are two hearts beating in the Danish chest. Whereas in Norway the transitional justice worked as a clear guideline for the subsequent memory politics, the Danes were lacking such a clear cut but had to deal with a rather complex spider web. The question remains: Erik Scavenius – traitor or patriot?⁷⁷⁵

Both countries experienced in the context of a new interest in the dark spots of the war history a wave of critical research into all forms of collaboration but especially in Denmark this went deep down into every aspect of cooperation with the enemy and of all parts of society. At some point it seemed as if every new PhD thesis or first work of young historians had to be a description of the unpatriotic behaviour of yet another branch of the industry. But the attacks came from within mainstream Danish academia, which guaranteed two things, a certain sobriety in the analysis and that the findings could not that easily be dismissed anymore. In Norway the case was very different for a while. Besides some historical examinations of aspects of the collaboration, a legion of attacks on the landssvikoppgjøret, the legal purge, came from the side of those who had been sentenced. Because of the formalisation and classification of the label collaboration in the Norwegian transitional justice a re-evaluation of the label had to be done through the criticism of the same transitional justice. Critical research in collaboration outside this rather small group had not attracted too much attention. Also the very early end to the

⁷⁷⁵ Kirchhoff, Hans, Erik Scavenius – landsforræder eller patriot?, in: Olesen, Niels Wium (ed.), *Mennesker, politik og besættelse*, Esbjerg: Historisk Samling fra Besættelsestiden 1940-1945 1996, pp. 10-49.

cooperation of the lawful authorities was according to Ole Kristian Grimnes a reason for the "national consensus about the occupation history" which had been "stronger in Norway than in other countries."⁷⁷⁶

In Denmark the 60th anniversary was an occasion to re-discuss issues that had been at the heart of the national basic narrative ever since the end of the war. Here the label 'collaboration' had not been consolidated by the courts but continued to be an underlying albeit suppressed theme throughout the postwar years. This debate did not end in a victory of either a conflict-oriented or a consensus-oriented interpretation but rather in a new acceptance of the complexity of the trajectory and a broadening of the academic spectrum of interpretations combined with an effort on the side of the Prime Minister to use it for foreign policy purposes.

⁷⁷⁶ Grimnes, Ole Kristian, Kollaborasjon Og Oppgjør, in: Larsen, Stein Ugelvik (ed.), I Krigens Kjølvann. Nye Sider Ved Norsk Krigshistorie Og Etterkrigstid, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1999 pp. 47-57, p. 51.

2. TROUBLESOME RESISTANCE – BLACK STAINS AND THE COMMUNISTS

As I have demonstrated in the first part, the resistance had served as the prime point of reference for politicians and the majority of the population throughout most of the postwar era. But what happens if historians or interest groups spoil the hitherto flawless and immaculate story of the resistance? A war is a war and that there necessarily exist difficult decisions, malicious situations within a context of anyway terrible nature seems obvious – but the population is still always shocked to learn that also the heroes are flesh and blood and therefore must be subdued to the spitefulness of the context of war. A war divides into parties and into good and evil, grey zones are usually not provided for and if they crop up, they represent threats to the totality of the image – at least sometimes. On the following pages I will describe two – on first sight very different – 'problems' for the basic narratives in Denmark and Norway: Liquidations of the resistance movements and communist resistance. Liquidation is the term normally used to describe executions of informants by clandestine groups. They represent for later generations often a moral challenge to the memory of the resistance. Communist resistance in the Second World War was, in a lot of occupied countries, in hindsight seen as something awkward since – though united in the struggle against the oppressor – the groups had very different aims for the postwar system. The emerging Cold War has often added to a view of the Communist resistance as being as evil as the dictatorial occupier. Therefore I have combined these two topics within one chapter, since they represent challenges within the story of the resistance. Both examples also allow for a cross-country comparison that sheds light on the historical preconditions in Scandinavia for varying memories and challenges, if they are combined, because they have attracted different attention and reactions in both countries. The first part will deal with a 'dark chapter' of the resistance – the liquidations.

2.1. LIQUIDATIONS OF THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENTS

The attack and brutal occupation of a country and its following development of a resistance, be it civil or military, always result in struggles and fights, a cat and mouse game between the resistance and the occupant. This game will inevitably also be deadly since the occupant will use all the means available to it to keep order. A particular threat to the resistance in this respect is – besides information extorted from captured partisans by torture – always that of informers or

denouncers. Without having a proof of it, it is a very safe guess to assume that therefore the elimination of this threat to the existence of the organisation and life of the resistance fighters led everywhere in the world to actions of liquidations of informers or people who were believed to pose a threat to the resistance for different reasons. These homicides brought misery and grief to families. Therefore they better had to be carefully thought through, in order not to execute the wrong person. But most important of course has always been the question of the legitimacy of these acts, since they were not based on any existing legal structures or rules but emerged from the very special situation of the occupation. In the occupied Scandinavian countries, the resistance movements felt the vital need for this kind of action. The extent of this phenomenon seems to have been larger in Denmark than in Norway. The estimate for Denmark is about 400⁷⁷⁷ whereas for Norway the total can be assumed to be 82.⁷⁷⁸ The victims of the liquidations had of course families and for them the liquidation did not only bring the loss of a family member but due to the circumstances also a social exclusion and public judgement as traitors. The assumption that all the victims killed had been collaborators destroyed the social processes of support for the mourning and made coping with the loss more difficult. This is also because the social verdict continued into the postwar period. All incidents were during and shortly after the war sub-summed under the category of killings of *stikker* or *angiver* which meant of people who for money or because other base motives had reported clandestine activities and resistance fighters to the Gestapo – they were seen as a threat to the resistance. This term is still in use. But not only is the name of the victims in itself difficult – the word used for the action itself is also loaded with multiple meanings. What were these killings – murders, executions or liquidations? Were those who did it murderers, executors or soldiers? Calling the actions executions gives them the notion of an outcome of a lawful process; calling them murder means they were all wrong and arbitrary; calling them liquidations as the resistance did, strips them of all the dirty connotations and lets them look like necessary surgical interventions. If one calls the men and women who made the executions, soldiers, one has to assume that all killings were acts of war. All terms used had and have influence not only on the debate but more importantly on the people involved. Also the task itself was, as we can assume, difficult, since those involved were under great stress and subject to great doubts. Evidence suggests that a considerable number of them became traumatized in the course of the years and still suffer from

⁷⁷⁷ Øvig Knudsen, Peter, Etter drapet. Beretninger om den danske motstandskampens likvideringer, Oslo: Forlaget Press 2003, p. 8.

⁷⁷⁸ Moland, Arnfinn, Over grensen? Hjemmefrontens likvidasjoner under den tyske okkupasjonen av Norge 1940-1945, Oslo: Orion 1999, p. 343.

psychological problems. Some committed suicide. A part of the debate on the liquidations has to be seen on this background of mutual injuries.

Besides the implications for those who were directly involved in them, the liquidations held in themselves a problematic core – were they rightful acts of war and thereby legitimate or did they also provoke retaliation and could be seen as a danger to the population. Most people in the immediate postwar period probably tended towards the first interpretation. But another problem was that they did not fit into the scheme of an open face-to-face, one man against another fight as soldiers might encounter each other on the battlefield. The liquidations were often ambushes assaults from behind sometimes even with explosives. No noble fights but the dirty work of dedicated men and women.

The 'Right to Kill'

It is reasonable to assume that in order to execute people in a clandestine war one needs certain preconditions like a strong organisational structure, ways of communication and fighters who are willing and mentally strong enough to execute the task. All these preconditions were developed late in Denmark during the course of the war. The cooperation policy had prevented the emergence of bigger and determined resistance groups and kept the few very active ones at bay for some time. The registered liquidations therefore also came into swing rather late. Of the official number of 385, the first mission was carried out in May 1943. From then on the numbers increased unevenly per month until the climax of a total of 106 official liquidations in April 1945, shortly before the liberation.⁷⁷⁹ The fact that the resistance had killed people they perceived as a threat for the clandestine organization was not a secret after the war – in fact the killings had been meant to spread fear among potential denouncers and to serve as a warning. The Freedom Council had 'officially' announced a war against *stikker* (informers) around New Year 1944 with direct references to the state of war it saw itself in and authorized the liquidations. It stressed though that neither retaliation nor punishment were the reasons for the liquidations but the defence of the resistance groups.⁷⁸⁰ The German response to the selective executions were random killings of civilians and the random destruction of buildings and facilities dear to the Danes. Most liquidations were committed in the area of greater Copenhagen by the two big resistance groups *Holger Danske* and *BOPA*, the first one being conservative, the latter communist dominated. On Jutland, two squads were stationed in Ålborg and Århus. Not only informers were killed but as in Norway also Danes that worked for the Gestapo, which had

⁷⁷⁹ Kirchhoff, Hans, Likvideringer, in: Kirchhoff, Hans, Lauridsen, John T., Trommer, Aage (eds.), Gads Leksikon Om Dansk Besættelsestid 1940-45. København: Gads Forlag, 2002, pp. 317-318, p. 317.

after August 1943 become the main threat to the resistance. Before 1943, the jurisdiction and thus the fight against sabotage and the illegal press had been handled by Danish authorities but now the Gestapo took over. Another step towards the total rule of terror was the disarmament and imprisonment of the Danish police in September 1944 and their deportation into Concentration Camps within Germany. The Gestapo-hired Danish henchmen, a lot of them from the Østfrontfrivillige (the volunteers to the Eastern-Front) and the Schalburgkorps and founded the Hipokorpset (short Hipo from German Hilfspolizei). These men and other individuals in German service not only shot random or prominent Danes on the street and blew up buildings in retaliation for actions of the resistance but also tortured resistance fighters. Retribution killings with the aim of threatening them and killings in order to protect the fighters were performed by all resistance groups. The communist resistance of course did not restrain itself in this respect either since it had been underground earlier and also had been active and therefore hunted earlier and on a higher scale.⁷⁸¹ The veterans and Frode Jakobsen never made a distinction between killings performed by the individual groups. The Frihedsrådet justified the liquidations that had occurred already in January 1944 with the danger the victims had posed to the resistance and stressed that revenge had in no case been the motive.⁷⁸² This interpretation – officially authorised by the highest body of the resistance – became the ruling paradigm for the time to come. It was also reflected in the chapter written by Martin Hansen a very prominent Danish author for an illegal book that was after the war re-published. In *Dialog om Drab og Ansvar* (Dialogue about Murder and responsibility) Hansen describes a fictive dialogue between Socrates and his friend Simius about the conduct of war. Socrates gives in his replies a justification for the killing of denouncers who represent a danger for the life of resistance fighters. The essay seems to have been influential but haunted the author for several years afterwards with its moral implications.⁷⁸³

There have been rumours after the war about the existence of a *liquidation-committee* that had deliberated on all executions. This committee is referred to in several memoirs of resistance fighters after the war, even by leaders of the different groups. It seems though that this committee never existed since no written contemporary source refers to it and Frode Jakobsen himself denied its existence.⁷⁸⁴ Such a committee surely would have helped to once-and-for-all legitimise the liquidations and dispel doubts about the total number of liquidations after the war.

⁷⁸⁰ Gade, Sven Ove, Frode Jakobsen - En Biografi, København: Gyldendal, 2004, p. 338.

⁷⁸¹ Kommunistene stod sterkt. Dag og Tid, 25 October 2003.

⁷⁸² Knudsen, Peter Øvig. Etter drapet. Beretninger om den danske motstandskampens likvideringer. Oslo: Forlaget Press, 2003, p. 39.

⁷⁸³ Knudsen, Etter drapet, p. 32-34.

⁷⁸⁴ Knudsen, Etter drapet, p. 41.

Maybe that is why veterans wanted to believe in its existence and cling to the myths. But since it probably was just fiction and the liquidations were also executed without the immediate consent of the resistance's leadership due to the requirements of the war, they were open to discussion. Hence, it became clear that the liquidations were not undisputed during the summer of the liberation – even that they could be used in the political struggle too. The political struggle in Denmark immediately after the liberation was first and foremost a memory-political one. The question was how the events of the occupation were to be interpreted and what was to be remembered in the years to come to give political legitimization. If all liquidations were legitimate acts of war in the struggle for the liberation of the country, a struggle that was publicly, politically and morally acknowledged with the inclusion of the resistance into the government, there was no way for the families to get information on the accusations and the identities of those who had accused, prosecuted, sentenced and killed. The probability that such a way of dealing with the liquidations could cause not only great grievance with the affected families but also the basis of mistrust around the operations was either not seen or ignored. That the liquidations also offered a political lever for the cooperation-politicians with regards to the resistance could be observed in the early postwar months. Already in the summer of 1945, politicians of the old parties raised criticism against the liquidations. Prominent liberal and social democratic politicians started criticising the killings and made themselves mouthpieces of those families who claimed that their relatives had been innocent of treason against the resistance. This criticism should be understood though not only as a support for those families but in the wider context of the struggle for power and the interpretation of the war – of resistance and cooperation. If some of the liquidations had been carried out by mistake or without proper investigations, the whole resistance that was now claiming part of the political power fell into disrepute. Their actions got a taste of being rash, not well prepared and led by youthful abandon – short: how could they be entrusted the government now? Hartmut Frisch, one of the most important social democratic politicians, publicly called the operations murder and claimed that, had he been in a decisive position, he would not have ordered the executions.⁷⁸⁵ The most prominent representative of the Frihedsrådet in the postwar period and another member of the liberation government – Frode Jakobsen and Per Federspiel – took upon themselves the task of defending the actions. Frode Jakobsen as minister of the liberation government without portfolio and Per Federspiel as Minister for Special Affairs of the first elected government opposed any examination of the liquidations with reference to the fighters who had carried out the liquidations. They had to be protected. Frode Jakobsen wrote in August

⁷⁸⁵ Gade, Frode Jakobsen, pp. 239-240.

1945 to the resistance's leadership on Zealand that there should not be any examination of the liquidations because one or another raises doubt about the victim's guilt and that it goes without saying that no resistance should be punished. The cases were not to be made the object of police investigations. He acknowledged though that out of consideration for those families who disputed the allegations that their family member had been an informer some cases should be looked at again. Precisely because the resistance "was forced to – literally – make short work of some cases, and there is the risk of mistakes."⁷⁸⁶ In those cases the families should get compensation and clarification but that further consequences were out of the question. Jakobsen had been the Freedom Council's head of operations (forman for kommandoudvalg) and therefore been directly involved in the operations itself. He knew what he was talking about. In his position he also claimed the sole and full responsibility for all liquidations – thereby making an inquiry very difficult, although in parts of the clandestine press voices had been raised that those partisans who executed the tasks would have their actions examined after the war and that they were ready for that⁷⁸⁷ Even though that was prevented by Jakobsen, he acknowledged the need for some examinations. Families should get some information at least and erroneously killed resistance fighters should be cleared of any suspicion of treason. Implicitly this acknowledgement included the confession of mistakes – but nothing was changed in the broad approach to the killings. Jakobsen personally prevented any examination of the killings by any impartial authority. During his time in government and then under the successor of Mogens Fog as Minister for Special Affairs Per Federspiel, with whom he had excellent contact, all cases were controlled by him. Shortly after the liberation the police tried to examine those criminal cases that had occurred in the last months of the war, the reign of terror, when the police had been arrested. Lists of unsolved murder cases were drawn up. But in September 1945, Jakobsen, the police and the Minister of Justice Busch-Jensen (himself a resistance man) agreed that any inquiry was to be stopped and that the lists of unsolved murder cases from the occupation time were to be handed over to Jakobsen, who in turn contacted the different resistance groups to ask which ones they would claim as liquidations. These were then consequently crossed out. Jakobsen functioned as the sole contact of the Ministry to the different groups also under his successor Federspiel. Since all family inquiries to the police were forwarded to the Ministry of Special Affairs, Jakobsen was again at the end of the chain.⁷⁸⁸ Some of the critics from the liberation summer were not willing to be gagged and fobbed off with general statements by Jakobsen. In March 1947, Karl Kristian Steincke posed a question to parliament on the

⁷⁸⁶ Cited according to Gade, Sven Ove. Frode Jakobsen - En Biografi. København: Gyldendal, 2004, p. 233.

⁷⁸⁷ Gade, Frode jakobsen, p. 342-343.

⁷⁸⁸ Knudsen, Etter drapet, p. 44-48.

liquidations and as an outcome of the deliberations a committee was appointed to examine the cases. The committee though was not, as usual parliamentary tradition, set down by the representation itself but it was actually appointed by the Ministry of Special Affairs. So the representatives of the liquidators were made their own prosecutors. It met two times before the veterans' Ministry for Special Affairs was dissolved. At the end of the whole process and in the 1940s around 125 cases were officially examined of which in nine cases the families and the victims were acquitted of the allegations of treason and mistakes were conceded. Throughout the period, the central figure in the whole process was Jakobsen who prevented an impartial examination and with his statements made the public nevertheless feel that all cases had been examined but no more mistakes had been found. "The murders were put under a taboo, the liquidators got muzzled and many committed suicide."⁷⁸⁹

But the politicians were not too keen on an in-depth inquiry either, since it was the cooperation-government that in the person of Prime Minister Vilhelm Buhl had actually called on the population to report illegal activities. For most veterans the case was clear cut – it was one means of fighting the war they had fought. The first exhibition of the Danish Freedom Council *Det kæmpende Danmark* actually already had a display dedicated to those killings that were understood as the rightful act of self-defence and as a security precursion albeit a pre-emptive one. That part was called *Kampen mod Gestapo* (Fighting the Gestapo); in the Swedish version *Nødverge* (Self-defence). The exhibition was expressive in the inclusion of those killings into the context of armed resistance – a notion that clearly reflected the common opinion and the legal processes already begun in the transitional justice. One might even argue that the makers of the exhibition, the veterans – could not possibly have left the executions out since as very violent acts they underlined the determination of the fighters as well as their willingness to sacrifice themselves in the struggle, both physically and psychologically. The story was told with a certain pride, a pride of having been strong enough to carry out these otherwise sad and difficult tasks. The executions also reflected the danger and seriousness of the struggle and were suitable as a response to voices that in Denmark described the resistance fighters as irresponsible and immature – as 'weekend soldiers' – putting the lives of their fellow citizen at risk. The executions of denouncers shed light on the risks that the resistance was faced with. The catalogue of the exhibition in Sweden contained an essay on the executions as well.⁷⁹⁰ That also the version that travelled to Sweden included information on the liquidations is telling. It either reflects the fact that the killings had been on such a high scale and widely known that excluding

⁷⁸⁹ Emkjær, Stefan. *Stikkerdrab. Modstandsbevægelsernes Likvidering Af Danskere Under Besættelsen*. Aschehoug, 2000, p. 161.

⁷⁹⁰ *Det kämpande Danmark*, Stockholm, Frihedsmuseets Bibliotek, 37a.

them from the exhibition was not regarded possible or – more likely – that the makers as the resistance on a whole regarded them not only as morally justifiable but as in the context of armed struggle inside and outside of Denmark as something unpleasant but quite honourable in the military sense. Even though the tone was fairly muted, the operations itself continued to be part of the description of the resistance fight. In the exhibition of in the Nationalmuseet the liquidations were found as point no. 15 on the tour. The work of the informers was represented by letters and reports of the informers themselves followed by the "operations of self-defence."⁷⁹¹

Also in the old exhibition of the FM, as can be seen from photos, the liquidations were represented in a rather big display with maps of Denmark showing dots for the locations of the acts of the Nazi-inspired terror of the Schalburgkorps as well as the liquidations and pamphlets of the resistance warning against traitors and denouncers and pieces of the clandestine press on the matter. The terror of the Nazis and the liquidations were intrinsically linked and the liquidations got a certain legitimisation through the presentation alone. Since the two displays before dealt with the Danish SS volunteers and Danish Nazis, the liquidations became a logic result – an appropriate response – as the veterans will have seen it. The Frihedsmuseum's current exhibition does not deal with the liquidations in a separate display. They are integrated into the display on the Gestapo with a rather large painting depicting an actual liquidation in the open street and a gun used for liquidation in front of it. The representational yet modern painting shows a man in a grey suit aiming his hand gun at close range at a person in a white coat lying on the road with his head raised. Other men are keeping a lookout. A gun used in operations against informers is also on display.⁷⁹² The mode of representation is in one way rather drastic but with the embedding in the chapter on the Gestapo, the liquidations get their explanation and context. The two threats to the resistance, the Gestapo's brutal torture and the informers are two violent expressions of the enemy strategies in the game. Through a video screen the story of a liquidation is told. The same arrangement was found in the last exhibition on the daily life under the occupation. The problem here was that due to the structure of the exhibition the whole topic had to be fitted in one of the three paths through the exhibition. The curators decided to put it on the path of the collaboration.⁷⁹³ By not splitting the topic up, the linkage between the problem of the informers and the liquidations is strengthened. The programme of speeches and discussions that was arranged by the Nationalmuseet also included for example an invitation to an open

⁷⁹¹ Kortfattet Oversigt over Afdelingen "Danmarks Frihedskamp" paa Nationalmuseet, FM Arkiv, 37A-5, p. 2.

⁷⁹² Frihedsmuseet exhibition, "Gestapo".

⁷⁹³ Nationalmuseet, exhibition Spærretid, "Gestapo og likvideringer".

forum in March 2006 where Peter Øvig Knudsen spoke about *Med ret til at dræbe* and a subsequent discussion.⁷⁹⁴

The displays show that the liquidations were a topic that besides the early discussions and some minor discussions remained nothing to be ashamed of for the veterans. Svenning Rytter, one of the most vigorous critics in the liberation summer brought the topic up again in a book on the transitional justice which he published in 1953 but also that did not rock either the veteran's or the public's opinion.⁷⁹⁵ The burden that the killing of a person – also of that of a denouncer – meant for those who had to do it was described by veterans in their memoirs.⁷⁹⁶ The liquidations were again discussed when Ditlev Tamm defended his aforementioned thesis on the Danish transitional justice in 1984 where the liquidations are treated in part three.⁷⁹⁷ As with other comparable defences on topics connected to the war history the veterans came and sat in the audience, out of interest or as solicitors of the all veterans and the narrative they had agreed on. Both Frode Jakobsen and Per Federspiel who had been involved in the 'administration' of the liquidations during the legal purge, as well as other prominent partisans like Jørgen Røjel opposed Tamm and called the liquidations necessary security precautions. Jakobsen's opposition was published later in the renowned journal *Historie*.⁷⁹⁸ After some introductory comments on the transitional justice in Denmark, which he called the best and most sober legal purge in the whole of Europe after the last war, he concentrated for the rest of his comment on the liquidations. Tamm had quoted him extensively so Jakobsen probably felt entitled to answer the challenge. His main accusations against Tamm focussed on his missing empathy for the time and the agents. "You have tried to put yourself in our place. But – I do not think you succeeded."⁷⁹⁹ Thus the accusation against all younger historians and researchers by the veterans was again produced. The second criticism was connected to this assumption of a missing empathy. Tamm – Jakobsen claimed – had not understood that it was war, and not about law.⁸⁰⁰ The liquidations therefore were logically not part of the legal purge – would not belong in a book on the transitional justice. Jakobsen ranked Tamm in this respect in the same class as Svenning Rytter which he also referred to on the same page as having made the same mistake. As can be seen, Jakobsen was at both times furious and probably felt personally affronted.

⁷⁹⁴ Nationalmuseet, Spærretid – Hverdag under besættelsen 1940-45, brochure Film aktiviteter 08 oktober 2005 – 17 april 2006. Nationalmuseet 2005.

⁷⁹⁵ Rytter, Svenning, *Retsoppgøret under og efter besættelsen*, København 1953.

⁷⁹⁶ A good example are the memoirs of Hugo Horwitz. Horwitz, Hugo, Rasmussen, Knud, *En sabotørs erindringer*, København: Fremad 1964.

⁷⁹⁷ Tamm, *Retsoppgøret*.

⁷⁹⁸ Poulsen, Henning, *Oppgør Om Retsoppgøret i 1945*, in: *Historie (DK)*, vol. 15, no. 4, 1985, pp. 553-96. The opinion of Frode Jakobsen can be found on pp. 565-574.

⁷⁹⁹ Jakobsen, in: Poulsen, *Oppgør*, p. 565.

⁸⁰⁰ Jakobsen, in: Poulsen, *Oppgør*, p. 566.

Others had fewer troubles with it. Some of the veterans mentioned them in their memoirs and some even described them in minute detail.⁸⁰¹ Jakobsen himself justified his actions again in his own account of the war, which he wrote in the 1970s.⁸⁰² His position had not changed – it was about war and not law. It took some time before the liquidations again found an interest in the public. They were not really mentioned nor discussed during the anniversaries – and if rather as the necessity and a difficult task for those who executed them. In 1985, the anniversary of doubts and challenges – they were mentioned in the newspapers and Frode Jakobsen again was interviewed for a documentary. In the programme *Frihedsrådet* he scolded the critics and reiterated his old claim that just nine out of 350 were mistakes and that the others were done in self-defence.⁸⁰³

In 1985 the discussion of the stikkerlikvideringer got some unexpected topicality again. The trigger was a Swedish TV programme about the so-called Jane Horney case. Jane Horney had been a Swedish national with the name Ebba Charlotta Horney Granberg. She had allegedly been a spy for the Germans. After threats were published in the clandestine press in the fall of 1944, Horney was killed on a vessel in international waters between Sweden and Denmark on 20 January 1944 by the Danish resistance, accused of spying for the Germans. At the beginning of 1946 Swedish authorities made an inquiry in Denmark about the case that involved a Swedish national. The answer came from Frode Jakobsen who went to Stockholm and claimed again full responsibility for the killing, stating that Horney had been a spy and that the killing had been an act of war committed outside Swedish territory.⁸⁰⁴ There were and are, however, people who believe that Horney in fact had been the exiled military intelligence services double agent. The intelligence service (Efterretningstjeneste), so it was claimed, had started dealing with the Germans about safe routes of over the Sound. The Germans would not bother the transportation of weapons that would go primarily to the resistance groups of the army officers in return for the assurance of safe passage for officers and loot after they had surrendered. Such allegations were of course dangerous to the resistance narrative since they claimed that the resistance was not as united as the narrative claimed but that the different groups might for the sake of their own political agenda have sabotaged each other and that the conservative army officer corps might have plotted against the communist part of the resistance to prepare for the postwar period. The fear of a communist takeover after the liberation was high in parts of the conservative camp. The

⁸⁰¹ Horwitz, *En Sabotørs Erindringer*.

⁸⁰² Jakobsen, Frode. *I Danmarks Frihedsråd*. 1975.

⁸⁰³ Warring, *40 år etter*, p. 75.

⁸⁰⁴ Ahnefeldt-Møllerup, Eline, *Historien som nyhed - den offentlige debat om Jane Horney-serien*. in: Ladegaard, Claus (ed.), *Når medierne spinder historiens tråd*, København: Akademisk Forlag 1993, pp. 65-85, p. 67.

suspicion that they would or had even collaborated with the Germans was not far-fetched for people on the other side of the political spectrum.

The case seemed closed for decades besides some minor debates until the Swedish and the Danish State Television Channels (Sveriges Television, Danmarks Radio) produced a series about the whole affair.⁸⁰⁵ The series was broadcasted in Sweden in October and November 1985 but produced an outcry in Denmark by members of the public and the veterans. This "storm of indignation and rage" consisted of letters of protest written to the Danish Radio, demanding that the screening should be stopped.⁸⁰⁶ The spokesman of the protesters was again Frode Jakobsen and veterans who had been involved in the military intelligence service. Their criticism of the programme was that it wrongly painted a picture of discord within the resistance, to be exact between the military wing and the 'civil' resistance. The whole discussion resembled strongly of the debate around the Hjalff-affair in 1960 and for the veterans the whole narrative of unity was endangered. Jane Horney – so they claimed – had been a danger to the whole resistance and the programme was a mere Swedish attack on the Danes.⁸⁰⁷ In the series the 'old ghosts' were revived and Jane Horney was actually described as the link between the Danish intelligence which was located in Stockholm and German officers and that she actually was a double agent. Bryld and Warring claim that this was the main reason for the outcry. Despite the anonymisation of the protagonists there was a possibility of identifying leading persons in the police and the intelligence community. So it does not surprise that among the signatories of the letters a high percentage came from that milieu. The newspapers were divided in their approach to the affair, some taking the side of the veterans others that of the freedom of press.⁸⁰⁸ All of a sudden the old discord that had been prevalent in all of occupied Europe between the nationalistic-conservative and the communist resistance was given a face also in Denmark. Thus the whole well-tended notion of a united Danish people, or at least resistance, was at risk. But of course the liquidations as such were also at the core of the debate. Was Jane Horney killed because she was an informer according to the parameters of the resistance or was her double game the actual reason for it and then the killing was to be seen in a different, maybe more critical, light? The programme was seen as an attempt to besmirch the resistance – and that of all times in the year of the 40th anniversary of the liberation. Jakobsen even contacted the Ministry of Justice to have the programme cancelled, evoking the threat of legal consequences for either the veterans, if the allegations against the intelligence service were true, or against the authors and the Channels if

⁸⁰⁵ Jane Horney, Bert Sundberg, Stellan Olsson, 1985.

⁸⁰⁶ Bryld, Claus, *Er Vi Selv Historie? Kampen Om Samfundets Legitime Erindring*, at: Det 24. Nordiske Historikermøde Århus 9.-14. August 2001/2001, p.6.

⁸⁰⁷ Ahnefeldt-Møllerup, *Historien som nyhed*, pp. 69-72.

that was not the case. Both would have been of course a major scandal. The Minister referred the whole matter to the Media Ethics Council. In the end Danmarks Radio was forced to apologize for the programme, claiming that the allegations made in the last two episodes of the programme were unfounded.⁸⁰⁹ Thereby not only the narrative of unity was officially re-established but also the liquidation was again included into the parameter of rightful acts of war, since Jane Horney was still seen as a spy. Other critics, among them Jørgen Kieler, himself a veteran and a doctor who had been involved in the treatment of survivors of the camps and veterans, warned that the programme would create trauma and strain for the veterans and especially for those involved in the liquidations.⁸¹⁰ In the end the veterans got half a victory. The programme was not broadcasted around the liberation day and the State Channel had to apologize, but the series was in fact broadcasted and the debate had been short but hard – and public. It died out with the apology of the DR but again mirrored the old conflicts and produced the same reactions that the earlier discussions had shown. The veterans' stance had not changed and every new attempt to deal with aspects of the liquidations was greeted with anger and determination. The other side was taken by some historians and parts of the public who demanded a free debate. But in this case the political or moral power of the veterans won – at least for a short period of time. Alternative versions had been available all the time but so far they had been missing public or scientific credibility. Now the linkage with the anniversary and the use of the quasi state monopoly of the DR supplied this credibility and its potential damage was higher, which explains the organised and swift response by the veterans. It represented the most powerful and most extensive public discussion on history that hitherto had rocked the Danish society. The threats against those responsible at DR – they were threatened with 'liquidation' (which probably meant the loss of their position) and waves of suicides among veterans – might have kept others from launching critical programmes.⁸¹¹

But besides the Jane Horney debate there was not much criticism or doubts on the liquidations visible throughout most of the 1980s and 1990s. The already-mentioned comic strip series *Danmark besat* picked up a particular episode of the context of stikker and liquidations in its 1993 book *Skumring*.⁸¹² After the death of his brother during a train sabotage mission one of the protagonists turns into an informer and reports an arms transfer.⁸¹³ Another protagonist decides to join the voluntary work force to Germany and is liquidated. In this context the infamous

⁸⁰⁸ Bryld, Warring, *Besættelsestiden*, p. 210-212.

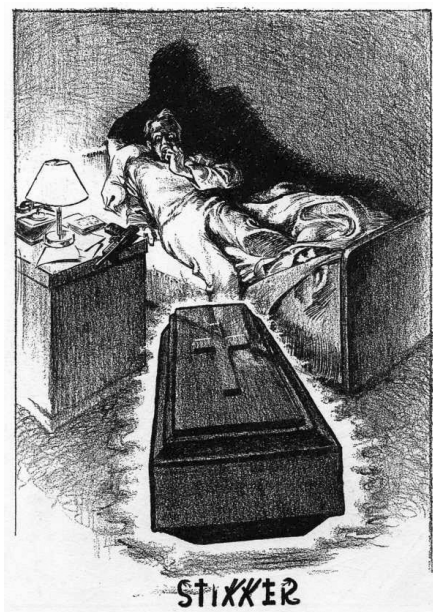
⁸⁰⁹ Bryld, *Er vi selv historie*, p. 7.

⁸¹⁰ Ahnefeldt-Møllerup, *Historien som nyhed*, pp. 74.

⁸¹¹ Bryld, Warring, *Besættelsestiden*, p. 218-219.

⁸¹² *Skumring*. Bind 4 - 1944 Morten Hesseldahl, Niels Roland, and Henrik Rehr. *Danmark Besat*, København: Carlsen Comics, 1993.

warning issued to informers and collaborators is also shown.⁸¹⁴ The picture came to stand out as a synonym for the liquidations.



The stikker-warning, (1944), first printed in, 'Besættelse. Tegninger 1940-45' af Østerberg, København: Samlerens Forlag, 1945

The most impressive detail of the cartoon with regard to the liquidations though is that it took up one of the most dubious and debated cases that had earlier caused discussion and embarrassment – the liquidation of lieutenant Knud Skov. Skov had spread weapons that were clandestinely brought to Denmark by the so-called small General staff – the leadership of the army officers' resistance group – and that were meant to be reserved for the army's clandestine groups to civilian resistance groups. He was executed by order of the captains Schjødt-Eriksen og Hjalff. Later Hjalff came as mentioned earlier under pressure because of this 'skew distribution of weapons' and had to resign in the 1960s from his position in the armed forces. In the cartoon Skov is represented by an army lieutenant called Rode. The conservative reserve-officer who had fought on the day of the German attack comes back from the German internment and starts, frustrated by the early surrender and the light resistance to the occupation, a clandestine group connected to the military intelligence. When he starts cooperation with communist groups and shares weapons entrusted to him, the leadership plans his liquidation.⁸¹⁵ It is not entirely clear whether the Frihedsrådet is meant here. The execution itself fails at first but is carried out in the

⁸¹³ Hesseldahl, Roland, Rehr, Skumring, p. 15-21.

⁸¹⁴ Hesseldahl, Roland, Rehr, Skumring, p. 30-31.

⁸¹⁵ Hesseldahl, Roland, Rehr, Skumring, p. 23.

next book published in 1994.⁸¹⁶ The popular cartoon referred to the executions in a twofold way: on the one hand they are seen as an integral and regular part or strategy of the fight for freedom but on the other hand the killing of one of the protagonists who had before been portrayed with sympathy by the leaders of the resistance represents the doubts on the legitimacy that had been raised before. Here it is just the other angle – not the partisans but their leaders are portrayed as ruthless and irresponsible.

On the celebrations of the 60th anniversary the situation had changed. The web-portal <http://www.befrielsen1945.dk> offered under the headliner *Sider af modstandskampen* (Facets of the resistance) a chapter on the liquidations with a long explanatory text by Bjørn Pedersen and links to an abundance of further information and sources like pictures and further texts.⁸¹⁷ The latter included a report of a liquidation by the then nineteen year old Hans Edvard Teglers, the criticism by Hartmut Frisch, the response by the resistance group Holger Danske and a clipping of Frode Jakobsen's account of 1975. Pedersen's text is sober and represents the commonly agreed facts as well as a part on transitional justice and the aftermath. He mentions the missing examinations after the war and concludes that the liquidations generally had not caused a great deal of debate until recently when executors and the families of those killed came forward and brought the topic up. It still is one of the most traumatic aspects of the war and the resistance – for both sides. The recent discussion Pedersen refers to here is the one that arose some time after the publication of two books around the turn of the millennium. Stefan Emkjær's *Stikkerdrab* and Peter Øvig Knudsen's *Etter drabet* were the first books published and also the first profound approaches into the topic.⁸¹⁸ Both books found intensive resonance in the media. It was around the same time as the discussion flared up in Norway. In contrast to the Norwegian discussion the Danish studies used the veterans themselves for their accounts. Both Emkjær and Knudsen had used veterans – liquidators – as witnesses for their reports. Knudsen's rather journalistic account was about a selection of cases for which he had interviewed those involved. Emkjær had worked more scientifically and his book was a revised version of his M.A. thesis at Århus University of 1998 under the guidance of Henning Poulsen, a prominent historian of the occupation history, and Claus Bryld of Roskilde. He had been allowed access to the archives of the Ministry of Special Affairs. One of his conclusions was that a considerable amount of the supposedly 'proper' liquidations might in fact have been executions performed by individuals or by local

⁸¹⁶ Hjemsøgt. Bind 5 - 1945 Morten Hesseldahl, Niels Roland, and Henrik RehrKøbenhavn: Carlsen Comics, 1994, p. 35-41.

⁸¹⁷ Danmarks Underbiseningsportal, Danmarks befrielse 5. maj 1945, Pedersen, Bjørn, Likvideringer, <http://www.befrielsen1945.dk/temaer/modstandskamp/stikkerlikvidering/index.html>

criminals. Emkjær referred to veterans who claimed that by the end of the war, people were settling scores with pistols. The topic made its way into the media and in 1998 Dansk Radio broadcasted a programme in which Jørgen Jespersen a former resistance fighter described liquidations for a group of high-school students.⁸¹⁹ Three years later, in 2001, Uffe Horwitz, another resistance fighter involved in liquidations was interviewed for *Deadline*, the news report of the second state-channel.⁸²⁰

Where the interviews and media coverage focused on the actual acts of killing, the books also included descriptions of the postwar processes in Denmark and the role of Jakobsen, but the prime agent himself was dead by then and a worthy opponent or partner of a debate was not found. Certainly not all veterans agreed with the way the books were written but the protest was at a rather low level compared to what happened in Norway. As could be expected the announcements and reviews in the veteran's magazine FV-bladet were at the best neutral but certainly not positive. The curator of Norges Hjemmefrontmuseet Arnfinn Moland, however, actually reviewed the book for the magazine very positively. He greeted the book of Knudsen as a sober account and an honest attempt by the author to place himself in the shoes of the war time protagonists.⁸²¹ He compared Knudsen and *Efter drabet* with the Norwegian revisionist author Egil Ulateig and his – to put it mildly – imprecise account of the Norwegian liquidations.⁸²² As we will see later, Moland and Ulateig were at the centre of an intensive debate in Norway on the liquidations. Moland continued with a comparison between the two countries war trajectories and the character of the liquidations and the subsequent reception history. Referring for example to the thesis of Ditlev Tamm, Denmark, he claims has always been more open to discuss the liquidations. "This is why it is downright natural that you [Denmark] now also got a book in which many of those who executed those tasks [the liquidations] tell in detail about what had happened. This would not have been possible in Norway [...]."⁸²³ As reasons, Moland points at the more centralized structure of the Norwegian liquidations and the "clear acceptance" of the liquidations because of the involvement of the leadership of the resistance in each and every case and the missing mistakes. The Danish cases were more difficult, he says because, of a missing consensus on the resistance's legitimacy. Before concluding that no so-called black stain on the resistance's record will ever be able to overshadow its glorious objective, he rejects the

⁸¹⁸ Emkjær, Stefan. *Stikkerdrab. Modstandsbevægelsernes Likvidering Af Danskere Under Besættelsen*. Aschehoug, 2000; Knudsen, Peter Øvig. *Etter Drapet. Beretninger Om Motstandskampens Likvideringer*. København: Gyldendal, 2001.

⁸¹⁹ Der var engang en krig, Dansk Radio 1998.

⁸²⁰ *Deadline*, DR 2, 25 March 2001.

⁸²¹ Moland, Arnfinn, Den nye bog om stikkerlikvideringerne set med norsk historiker-forfatters øjne, FV-bladet, no. 175, 2001, pp. 43-47.

⁸²² Ulateig, Egil. *Med Rett Til å Drepe*. Oslo: Tiden Norsk Forlag, 1996.

criticism of Jørgen Røjel saying that if the story of the liquidations has to be written and if veterans are interviewed he would rather it done by Knudsen than anybody else.

Of course, one reason for the low level of protest was also that the 'revisionism' of both authors was not explicit. Their merits were rather to bring the topic up and introduce it to a wider public. The reviews were generally positive; an actual debate was not triggered. On the contrary the interested public did embrace the new insights and mode of presentation. A number of newspaper critics on the Knudsen book, however, remarked that the topic had been hitherto neglected. Some of those critics were the leading historians and also their reviews were very warm. After the publication, the Royal Library hosted a discussion forum on the liquidations on April 9 2002.⁸²⁴ Knudsen's more accessible account was even made into a very successful movie or documentary. The title was changed – now it read *Med ret til at dræbe* (With the permission to kill).⁸²⁵ The same title was used five years earlier by Ulateig in Norway.



The poster of Med ret til at dræbe by Øvig Knudsen, courtesy Magic Hour Films.

The two-hour-long documentary which contained filmed interviews with the veterans and which was presented in the fall of 2003 was a co-production of the Danish State Channel and the Danish Film Institute and co-financed by the Danish Ministry of Education. The following year, the documentary won two prestigious prizes one being the award as *The Documentary of the Year* (Årets dokumentarserie 2004). The entire programme and a shortened version were shown

⁸²³ Moland, *Den nye bog om stikkerlikvideringerne*, p. 43.

⁸²⁴ The Copenhagen Post, 04-26-2002, <http://www.cphpost.dk/get/63675.html>.

⁸²⁵ *Med Ret Til at Dræbe. En Dokumentarfilm of Modstandsbevægelsens Likvideringer*. Det Danske Filminstitut DR. Peter Øvig Knudsen, and Morten Henriksen. København: Magic Hour Films 2003. documentary.

several times on TV and also in a sample of movie theatres. The author of the book and the co-director of the movie made it clear that both were meant to get away with some of the myths of the occupation time and the notion of the resistance as a well-disciplined army. The presentation of the liquidations would clearly show the improvised character of most of the clandestine work in Denmark. Also this did not trigger much headwind by the veterans. This is a rather astonishing fact, if compared to what the publication of the Ulateig-book in Norway caused. In the press release, everybody could read about the arrangement of the movie into four parts of which all contained enough dynamite for a discussion. In the first part that dealt with the informers in general and the way the resistance groups passed the judgement, the question of legitimacy and the possibility of errors was raised. The second part dealt with one of the most prominent heroes of the resistance – Bent Fauerschou-Hviid, codename *Flammen*. This very active saboteur had also taken part in several liquidations. In the movie and the book *Flammen's* role as possible odd-job man for a double-agent, albeit without being aware of it, is discussed. The third section is even harder. Called *The Grey Zone*, it deals with the allegations that criminals might have used the resistance and the liquidations for their own benefit and that some of the cases were rather murder and robbery instead of a 'proper' liquidation of an informer. Such allegations challenge the main narrative of the liquidations at its core. The description of how Jakobsen had prevented any police inquiry after the war and how therefore criminal acts of plunder stayed un-punished was an account of the liquidations hitherto unknown. It was followed by the last section that dealt with the transitional justice, the role of Jakobsen and the politicians and the effects of the liquidations on the liquidators and the families of those who were killed. So as could be seen, there was enough in stock in the movie to cause serious resistance by the old veterans, especially if one thinks about the reactions to the Jane Horney programme. But, astonishingly enough, the critical mass does not seem to have been reached. It needed the impulse of the statements of Prime Minister Fogh Rasmussen about the war and the collaboration policy and the resulting debate about the war history and its interpretation to become a greater issue. In the wake of the debate about the collaboration the liquidations were perceived as a yet unsolved problem among the other dark sides of the occupation history.

As described earlier, Fogh Rasmussen used the anniversary of the end of the collaboration for statements in which he took a stand against the policy of the wartime government and praised the resistance. He repeated his interpretation of the collaboration again in 2005 during the celebrations of the 60th anniversary of the liberation. His words, as could be seen, woke an interesting debate about the interpretation of the war history. In the following debate that was

lead by historians and veterans, all aspects of the story came up. Veterans who might have felt around the turn of the millennium that their opinions and experiences were not valued anymore now dared to make themselves heard again. As an example, might serve the response of a veteran to an article of Knudsen in *Politiken* published some days before the anniversary, called *Hævn på dansk* (Revenge, the Danish Way).⁸²⁶ Eli Fischer-Jørgensen, who had herself, worked with the Frihedsrådet on the list of collaborators who were to be arrested after the liberation ('Centralkartotek'), described in her letter to the editor why she felt Knudsen was wrong and why, compared to France, the Danish legal purge has been relatively orderly. She also delivered an explanation as to why informers had to be killed.⁸²⁷ On the same page Bent Koch, another former veteran, called Knudsen "obsessed"⁸²⁸ Knudsen, Koch claimed, had according to his own words just tried to document but that there is no such thing as objective journalism. He accused Knudsen of describing the liquidations and – referring to a later book of Knudsen – the torturers without asking for what they stood for and what they fought for. Like many young historians, Knudsen according to Koch had a tendency to look at the history through a supposedly neutral lens, without values to judge from and to apply on the agents. Seen in such a perspective, nobody fought for anything and nobody against anything. And all would present the story as if the earlier generations had silenced the truth to prevent the myths from being destroyed. The veterans, Koch concludes, are offended by such ways of describing the war.

A literary answer to Knudsen and Emkjær was also published some time later. When in 2004 Sven Ove Gade's already quoted *Frode Jakobsen – en biografi* came out, the veterans had found a loyal advocate for the grand resistance leader who was not around anymore to defend their cause.⁸²⁹ Gade's biography approaches Jakobsen with a great deal of empathy. The book was not reviewed too positively by Emkjær in *Berlingske Tidende* which triggered an angry response by Gade. As the grand old Jakobsen has done with Tamm in the 1980s, Gade blamed Emkjær in harsh words with missing empathy with the subject and the time.⁸³⁰ A Bent Sørensen went even further in the *FV-bladet* and referring to the mistakes claimed that on every front there was collateral damage and that with regard to the mild verdicts during the legal purge there "should have been more liquidations in this war that Emkjær and other have not understood."⁸³¹ Besides the positive reviews by journalists and part of the historical profession, Emkjær and Knudsen were also seen by some historians and laymen as forerunners of a revisionist and dangerously

⁸²⁶ *Politiken*, 30 April 2005.

⁸²⁷ Fischer-Jørgensen, Eli, *Derfor Undgik Vo Borgerkrig*, *Politiken*, 6 May 2005.

⁸²⁸ Koch, Bent A., *Peter Øvigs Besættelse*, *Politiken*, 6 May 2005

⁸²⁹ Gade, Sven Ove. *Frode Jakobsen - En Biografi*. København: Gyldendal, 2004.

⁸³⁰ Gade, Sven Ove, *Kronik: Historiker Uden Fantasi Og Indlevelse*, in: *Berlingske Tidende*, 14 February 2005.

⁸³¹ Sørensen, Bent, *Für få blev likvideret*, *FV-bladet*, no. 180, 2005, p. 12.

arbitrary observation of the war history. Hans Kirchhoff summarized this development in an article that was mentioned earlier in the leftist newspaper *Information*. Everything was under fire and everything was criticised. "Of course, everyone nowadays endorses the resistance without any reservation, but attacks at the same time the resistance for excesses during the liberation days, for the 'bloodlust during the legal purge' and for the mistaken liquidations as if there had not been a war."⁸³²

Over Grensen?

The situation in Norway shows besides the obvious similarities great dissimilarities in the last decades. As in Denmark, there does not seem to have been much thinking about whether these liquidations were legitimate or not in the postwar years. A commission was set up after the war to investigate the cases, but generally the populations seems to have regarded them as an inevitable part of the national fight for freedom against the aggressor. The harsh action of the occupiers and the very different nature of the occupation with the Quisling regime persecuting the resistance hard produced different points of departure for both the resistance and the judgement of its action. The government in exile and its army chief of staff had acknowledged the Hjemmefront as part of the armed forces which offered other preconditions for the legitimization of the liquidations. The victims were regarded as traitors of the worst kind that had endangered the security of those who were courageous enough to take up the fight. Their death was seen as a necessary, albeit hard, precondition for the hjemmefront and the killings as acts of war. For a long time the only study that dealt with it was the paper of Johannes Andenæs who also wrote the still acclaimed book *Det vanskelige oppgjøret* about the legal purge.⁸³³ In *Okkupasjonstidens likvidasjoner i retslig belysning* Andenæs strictly legally argues not only against a persecution of the killings but comes to the conclusion that they indeed have been "legitimate acts of war". He also refers to Denmark and the aforementioned examinations of some cases at the Ministry for Special affairs and concludes that such was not necessary in Norway. It is interesting that the 60-year-old text by Johannes Andenæs, the official justification of the Norwegian liquidations has been made available by the Hjemmefrontmuseum in Oslo on its webpage today.⁸³⁴ The document was hard to obtain before but can now be downloaded as re-typed file from 1998. The most obvious interpretation is of course, that it is regarded as the still valid legitimation of all incidents and as a safeguard against even the late criticism. Arnfinn

⁸³² Kirchhoff, Hans, Når Selvrespekten Skal Rettes Op, *Information*, 15 October 2003.

⁸³³ Andenæs, Johannes. *Det Vanskelige Oppgjøret*. Rettsoppgjøret Etter Okkupasjonen. Oslo: Tanum-Norli, 1979.

Moland, the curator of Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, wrote an in-depth study in which he tried to lay out the rules and the modes by which the killings were legitimised and performed. He states that generally the government in London was supposed to decide on the liquidation of a person. The initiative could theoretically come from the government itself, the Special Operations Executive, the Hjemmefrontledelse or the smaller district organisations.⁸³⁵ However, he describes a set of situations in which the usual process might have been impossible to follow or was definitely not followed, such as when a group of resistance fighters who was living in hiding was in danger of being spotted or when a group unconnected to the Hjemmefront took action. Interestingly enough, he rules out the possibility of mistakes being made, something he grants to Denmark.⁸³⁶ But it is exactly this point where public debate, criticism on the acts of killing or doubts and the need to justify comes into being.

It is unpleasant because it does not deal with what the general public would connect with pictures of heroic fight, seeing the enemy straight into the eyes and facing him. As a matter of fact, these acts of killing include attacks from behind, sometimes against unarmed individuals. The military quality is hard to see for the common person. That a war and the fight of a resistance ultimately and quite logically contain these methods is better pushed aside as it only brings grief to the family. In addition such extra-legal acts always leave the taste of illegitimacy. But maybe there were also other mechanisms at work that made this chapter of war history less visible and which can be blamed for making it harder to talk about it later. In a very similar mechanism as in Denmark, the leader of the resistance movement (here the Milorg) Jens Christian Hauge, who in 1945 became Secretary of Defence and later Secretary of Justice, took the wholesale responsibility for the killings and made it thereby hard for the prosecution to investigate the incidents by claiming that they had all been committed on their orders after thorough scrutiny. As mentioned before, Johannes Andenæs, a prominent lawyer, examined the phenomenon as early as 1947 and classified the incidents as being rightful acts of war. Since Norway had been at war with Germany and the Hjemmefront had been part of the armed forces the actions of their members had to be understood the same way as any military action. Consequently the policy regarding these cases right after the war was that if it became clear in a wartime homicide case, which was only now brought to the attention of the prosecutor, that the killing had any connection to the Hjemmefront, the inquiry would be stopped.⁸³⁷ The senior public prosecutor had ordered this procedure and was in total agreement with the Milorg-leader

⁸³⁴ The URL is http://www.mil.no/felles/nhm/start/Publikasjoner/Annen_litteratur/

⁸³⁵ Moland, *Over grensen?*, p. 52.

⁸³⁶ Moland, *Over grensen?*, p. 53.

⁸³⁷ Moland, *Over grensen*, pp. 288-294.

Jens Christian Hauge who in turn delivered a written assessment and justification in 1947 and refused to talk about the liquidations ever after. He also from the start refused to talk about the single cases in public, because "these men and women, who were soldiers and who executed these extremely dangerous, difficult and revolting operations and their families have a right to remain unknown."⁸³⁸ But it proved hard to forget about them completely. Certainly the families of the killed could not forget. But also other points raised some doubts. In 1982 a book was published on an incident that had occurred in 1942 when the two Hjemmefront men, who were supposed to bring the Jewish couple Jacob and Rakel Feldmann over the border to Sweden, killed both of them in the woods, took the money they had and a golden watch and sank the bodies in a small lake. The bodies turned up a year later and the incident was examined. After the war the two men were charged with murder. The central question in the trial was whether they had acted for greed of the money or, like they claimed had acted because their frailty jeopardized the safety of the border pilots, the local Hjemmefront network and the route to Sweden. They were acquitted and in a later trial sentenced for the suppression of the money and the watch, but not for the killings. Sigurd Senje`s book not only told the dramatic story of the flight and the murder but also the story of the postwar trials.⁸³⁹ The same year a movie based on the book was produced in which a young journalist tries to prove, that the Feldmanns were murdered not only for the cash they carried, but also because they were Jewish.⁸⁴⁰ Anti-Semitism on the side of the Hjemmefront people was assumed. The journalist enlists the aid of a police detective (himself a former resistance fighter). Together they head to the tiny border village where the killings happened. Despite meeting a collective silence and aggressive rejection of their inquiries, they collect enough evidence for a trial. A courtroom battle ensues, and whether or not justice is served at the end is largely left to the viewer's discretion. The movie was popular but also controversial. The so-called Feldmann case is not directly a liquidation since the victims were not collaborating with the Germans but could be classified as belonging to the complex of liquidations because of the assumed danger for the Hjemmefront. The producers were aware of the controversial character of their topic and decided to hold a press-conference even before the film was shot. The two border pilots were still alive and there was a risk that the production or the screening would be stopped even though the movie was not strictly documentary.

⁸³⁸ Jens Christian Hauge, in: Hauge letter ikke på sløret, Aftenposten 5 October 1996.

⁸³⁹ Senje, Sigurd Ekko fra Skriktjenn: en dokumentarroman basert på "Feldmann-saken" 1942-47, Oslo: Pax 1982.

⁸⁴⁰ Erichsen, Bente, Feldmann saken, 1987. The movie became also known under the title *Over grensen* (Across the border).

The assumption that aspects of the Hjemmefronten's actions in the course of the war and the transitional justice might give opportunity to criticism or was, as I will show later in the chapter on the Holocaust, mostly brought up by artists – historical research was rather sticking to the once traded explanations. In one of the standard works on the resistance published in the same year, Ivar Kraglund and Arnfinn Moland wrote with respect to the liquidations that the London government always had to order the killings and that this process was followed throughout the war.⁸⁴¹ The series *Norge I krig* was widely popular because of its very comprehensible style. First in 1995, an entry in the *Norsk krigslexikon* which was devoted to the liquidations and written by historian Nils Johan Ringdal stated that mistakes had occurred as if it was the most natural thing in the world.⁸⁴² As far as I know, this never triggered any dispute. The first book which seems to have aroused a debate and was bound to reach a wider circle of readers was the book *Med rett til å drepe* of Egil Ulateig.⁸⁴³ This book was not just debated, it was even withdrawn and today it is hard to obtain a copy. Ulateig who had published some other controversial books before attacked the liquidations on three fronts.⁸⁴⁴ He accused the Hjemmefront of random killings without a legal base and procedure, he counted a much higher number of victims and he accused the Hjemmefront of unnecessary brutality, torture and cruelty. All these accusations were identical with those brought forward since the end of the war by the sympathizers or the Quisling regime and those tried in the legal purge. Especially the first charge was a repeated theme of the former NS members. Norway had not been at war, the government in exile was not legitimate and any action taken in Norway by either the government or the Hjemmefront therefore a crime was the recurring mantra that was claimed with a prayer-wheel-like quality. For the NS members this credo was essential to their self-perception and all of their claims. Now Ulateig put himself at their assistance. He failed to bring proof of the massively higher number of liquidations which he claimed (around 200) and the last charge was equally dubious, since the witnesses he produced in his book could easily be unmasked as fake or lying, if he indeed had one at all. The stories of men innocently tortured and one even being crucified to a wooden floor by the resistance were all nonsense. What was

⁸⁴¹ Kraglund, Ivar, and Arnfinn Moland. Hjemmefront. Norge i Krig, editor. Magne Skodvin, 6. Oslo: Aschehoug, 1987, p.255.

⁸⁴² Ringdal, Nils Johan, 'likvideringer', in: Norsk krigslexikon/ web issue, <http://www.norgeslexi.com/krigslex/krigslex.html>

⁸⁴³ Ulateig, Egil, *Med rett til å drepe*, Oslo: Tiden Norsk Forlag 1996. The title means "with the right to kill".

⁸⁴⁴ Ulateig became known for books on the Second World War and groups that harboured on the Nazi-side like the SS-volunteers and the nurses on the German front. The quality does not usually live up to standards and the books are written in a rather journalistic style, claiming that hitherto unknown scandals are treated. Ulateig, Egil. *Dagbok Fra En Rotnorsk Nazist*. Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget, 1987; Ulateig, Egil. *Veien Mot Undergangen. Historien Om De Norske Frontkjemperne*. 3 ed. Forlaget Reportasje, 2003; Ulateig, Egil. *Fordømte Engler. Norske Kvinner På Østfronten*. Oslo: Forlaget Reportasje, 2004.

interesting though was that he had rightfully pointed out that any debate or inquiry on the issue as a whole had hitherto been prevented by interest groups and politics.

The veterans and their advocates became very angry and *Gyldendal* and *Tiden* the publishing houses were put under serious pressure. The debate unfurled mainly in the newspapers *Aftenposten* and *Dagbladet* with a considerable number of historians and journalists taking part in it. The tone did not always remain polite and allegations were ready at hand that one side (mostly represented in *Dagbladet*) would support revision for the sake of revision only and debate for the sake of debate only. Arnfinn Moland suggested that *Tiden* publishing house might as well save spending for editors if the outcome of the editing were books like Ulateig's.⁸⁴⁵ In *Dagbladet* on the other hand, a journalist spoke about a "Fatwa" (in the sense of a religious expertise against 'infidels') against Ulateig. He also thought of the headwind against Ulateig as a planned action and a 'muzzle' by Moland and "the dark persons" which allegedly stood behind "discreet warnings" to the publisher before the publication of the book.⁸⁴⁶ The whole debate became at some point a struggle between two camps – one represented by the publisher, *Dagbladet*, Ulateig (allegedly Hans Fredrik Dahl in the background) and the NHM and Moland representing the other one. Several layers were involved in that debate and very different values invoked for both the defence of and the attack of the book. Freedom of press and opinion was invoked on one side, whereas the other criticised adulteration of history and forgery. One camp saw Moland as the angry 'bailee of the truth' and the other not without reason suggested sensation mongering and a media scoop.

In the end the opponents of the book did not slack and in 1998 *Tiden* saw itself forced to stop the sale and to withdraw the copies from the store. The well-known public figures and veterans Johan Hjort and Gunnar Sønsteby and the curator of the Hjemmefrontmuseum Arnfinn Moland had now written an open letter to the publishers in *Aftenposten*. They also threatened to bring an action against them and the author again. In the open letter they stated that if the publishers would not withdraw the book they would be remembered "in all future to have – in the war-generation's last year – to have mixed up questions on democracy and dictatorship, to have denied a people its right to resist occupation, to have obscured the difference between Nazi-hangers-on and resistance and to be responsible that old Nazi allegations [...] will be acceptable among Norwegian publishers."⁸⁴⁷ Ulateig had to publish on his own now. The book was given

⁸⁴⁵ Moland, Arnfinn, Boka til Ulateig – Eit forlag i krise?, *Aftenposten* 8 December 1996.

⁸⁴⁶ Rømming, Nils, Fatwaen mot Ulateig, *Dagbladet*, 18 December 1996. The story of the "discreet advice" against the book originated in an article ten days earlier by the editor of *Tiden*: Bangsund, Per, Moland i krigen, *Dagbladet*, 8 December 1996.

⁸⁴⁷ Hjort, Johan, Moland, Arnfinn, Sønsteby, Gunnar, *Aftenposten*, 3 February 1998.

another title and some of the cases he had earlier included were now missing.⁸⁴⁸ The core of his theme and his accusations were not changed and a renewed debate came up in which the veterans now called for a study to defend them against the allegations. Moland, himself being a prominent historian on the history of the occupation, heard the call and seems to have felt compelled to write the 'anti-Ulateig' – a book that analysed the liquidations in a great detail. He came to a different conclusion and his careful study will, for the time being, set some benchmarks for the research on the liquidations. The scientific thoroughness has, as far as I can see, never been doubted from within the academic milieu. Still it is noteworthy that a man of his standing, who is sitting in one of the most influential positions within the Norwegian historical sciences felt compelled to react that way. What had happened? This work is by all means a very revealing and in-depth study of the phenomenon and enriches the research on the occupation time a great deal. The question is why Moland was so bothered that he wrote this study – which does not just treat the subject as such, but is, in every aspect a reaction to Ulateig's book. Ulateig is quoted and afterwards refuted. As an outsider one gets the feeling that either a very delicate point was touched here or that Ulateig was telling lies that endangered certain agreement or one might think that there is a deeper truth in it. Moland gives some hints in his own introduction. For example does he explain the title of the book: He thinks that there are three possible interpretations of the title *Over grensen?*: 1) that it refers to the question of whether the liquidations did cross a line that was morally unjustifiable, 2) it touches on the accusation that instead of killing the informers, they should have been deported by the resistance over the border to Sweden and 3) he makes clear that the Erichsen movie of 1987 was according to his definition not a liquidation.⁸⁴⁹ Hence, these three questions and debates had persuaded veterans and Moland to write an "anti-book" (motbok).⁸⁵⁰ The gallery of people mentioned in the acknowledgements reads like the 'Who's Who?' of war-research and the veteran's interest groups. He pays respect not only to Gunnar Sønsteby and Johannes Andenæs but also to Magne Skodvin and his own collaborators at the NHM Ivar Kraglund and Frode Færøy. The most important agent in this respect, Jens Christian Hauge, is however missing. As mentioned earlier, he would not discuss the liquidations.

That Ulateig at least was right to claim that the topic had hitherto been neglected by research is conceded by Moland himself already in the first sentences of *Over grensen?*. Besides the

⁸⁴⁸ Ulateig, Egil. *De Gode Mot De Onde. Verdenskrig, Partisanrig, Likvidasjoner Og Folkerett*. Lesja: Forlaget Reportasje, 1999.

⁸⁴⁹ Moland, *Over grensen?*, pp. 10-11.

⁸⁵⁰ Moland, *Over grensen?*, p. 8. He also mentions that well-known veterans had publicly asked for one referring to an article in *Aftenposten* on 22 June 1997 - with the title *Angiverne og deres ofre – en motbok bør komme* – by Erik Ræstad.

problem of missing primary sources (destroyed originals, data protection and access to archives), he says, this was due to a "disapproval" among the veterans.⁸⁵¹ Also Thomas Christian Wyller, a scholar of war history and resistance veteran, admitted in his review on both books that the liquidations had been "a taboo: historically, legally and ethically."⁸⁵² Wyller acknowledges the need for a sober and thorough historical examination, shares Moland's assessment, and admires even his accuracy as well as he dismisses Ulateig's premises – but, he also questions Moland's point of departure. "Does he analyse or does he act as spokesman for those he should actually study?" Maybe, Wyller asks, did Ulateig touch on points that feel "awkward for the conventional monopolists of the truth" for the "victors that again try to write history"?⁸⁵³ It is hard to interpret the almost violent reaction to Ulateig's book differently. The problem with Ulateig's book is first of all that it contained numerous mistakes and that the author gave the impression that he was rather driven by the wish to destroy 'myths' and create scandals. A certain political agenda on his side could also be assumed. His inexact and journalistic style was doing harm to the endeavour and the book sounded rather gory. But maybe the fact that Moland is in some ways the 'keeper of the grail' of the memory on the resistance and on one of the leaders, Jens Christian Hauge who has also been a member of the advisory board of the museum for years, made him feel committed to write this book.

During the last year this debate experienced a sequel. When in 2003, Knud P. Øvig published the above-mentioned book *Etter drapet*, dealing with the Danish liquidations, his book was translated and published in Norway as well.⁸⁵⁴ The foreword explicitly pointed out that this book was also an important contribution to the Norwegian debate. The already often mentioned historian Tore Pryser wrote a review on the book in *Morgenbladet*. In this review he writes that now it comes to light how many mistakes have been made and how wrong the assertion might have been that the decisions were always made by a responsible authority and how much had been covered up after the war by the leaders of the Danish resistance movement. He asks the question of whether the same was true for the Norwegian case, and stated that Moland, in his book, had limited himself to the sources of the resistance and, for example not taken German sources into account. This aroused the vehement protest of Arnfinn Moland, who, in a follow-up article stated that the circumstances in Norway were different from those in Denmark and

⁸⁵¹ Moland, *Over grensen?*, p. 7.

⁸⁵² Wyller, Thomas Chr., *To Talsmenn - to Verdener*, in: *Dagbladet*, 14 December 1999.

⁸⁵³ All quotations: Wyller, *To talsmenn*.

⁸⁵⁴ Knudsen, Peter Øvig. *Etter Drapet. Beretninger Om Den Danske Motstandskampens Likvideringer*. Oslo: Forlaget Press, 2003.

referred to his book in which he had already analysed every case.⁸⁵⁵ Pryser afterwards felt insulted and aggressively attacked and replied with another article which went in more depth into his critique on Moland's methodology. The whole story became an ironic sideswipe when Pryser in the title hinted that Moland had been a little bit carried away in his critique using Moland's own book title for his play on words (*Over grensen – Over the border*).⁸⁵⁶ But certainly Pryser had already before proven that he would advocate any attack against the veterans and the narrative.

Apart from this academic discussion, a semi-fictional book was published in 2003 that had delicate contents. Torunn Ystaas book *Livstid* is the story of a Soviet soldier who flees German captivity and is hidden on a farm in the Hardanger area by Norwegians who are active in the Hjemmefront. The traumatic experiences of the soldier cause extreme changes in his behaviour and make him a risk to the whole organisation in that area. Consequently he is killed by his hosts.⁸⁵⁷ The book also describes the effects the killing of an allied soldier in the struggle against the Nazis had upon those who were involved in it, the resistance fighters and what scars it had left on their soul. Some weeks after the above described debate a former resistance member reviewed this book in a very positive light because it shows the moral and the personal problems that the killing of a person even in times of war implies.⁸⁵⁸ Clearly the way books which touched difficult memories were written and the background of the authors are decisive for their perception. Ystaad did neither doubt the legitimacy of the liquidations nor was she accusing the resistance of abuse and bloodlust. In an interview for a review she expresses doubts about the way the liquidations were handled after the war and makes the point that all cases should have been disclosed after the war but she accepted the necessity of the action as such.⁸⁵⁹ There are possibilities to add to a more complex understanding of the Hjemmefront's liquidations – just as long as the general understanding of their necessity and legality is not altogether doubted. It becomes clear that the question of whether the Hjemmefront might have 'stains' on its otherwise immaculate history is still something that arouses debates. The feeling that certain criticism might have its origin in either a revisionist or a simply ostentatious background is still strong. There might also be a personal interest to defend longstanding traditions or friends or the fear that giving in to some accusations might lead to a deconstruction of the whole picture or the values connected to the resistance. On the other hand, it is equally feasible that debaters, out of a

⁸⁵⁵ Moland, Arnfinn, Revisjonistisk vår av Tore Pryser, in: *Morgenbladet*, 16 January 2004, http://www.morgenbladet.no/index.php?cmd=print&show_article=1007896.

⁸⁵⁶ Pryser's article was called "Moland 'over grensen'. Pryser, Tore, Moland 'over grensen', in: *Morgenbladet* 23 January 2004.

⁸⁵⁷ Ystaas, Torunn, *Livstid*, Oslo: Aschehoug 2003.

⁸⁵⁸ Berner, Mia, Fiksjon som faksjon - og vice versa, *Morgenbladet*, 23 January 2003.

feeling that things are withheld, thoughtlessly applaud others just for bringing up topics regardless of their motivations. Hans Fredrik Dahl's testimonial for Ulateig seems to be a reflection of such a perspective as is Prysers reaction.⁸⁶⁰

Summary

Liquidations of the resistance movement occurred in both countries and were seen as acts of war by those who had to perform the sad and dangerous task and as illegal acts of crime by those families affected. The 'explosion' of the Danish resistance and the period of terror in particular caused an incomparable higher number of victims than the Norwegian tightly organised Hjemmefront. The more militant character of the struggle lead to more liquidations. The depth and extent of treason and the amount of real or assumed informers in both countries is impossible to measure. At first glance it is even reasonable to assume that the number of members of the NS in Norway compared to the membership of the DNSAP could have lead to a higher number of informers in Norway. Astonishingly though, this does not seem to be the case. It would also be reasonable to assume that the Danish cooperation and the reluctance to fight the Germans until 1943 resulted in a wider extent of snoop – since even the prime minister had encouraged it on the radio. The fact that the liquidations, however, only began for real towards the end of the official collaboration thwarts this assumption. The different numbers will have to be left unexplained.

Common to both countries is, that the immediate postwar governments suppressed any real effort to examine the killings – not in order to subdue any truth or criticism but also because the common interpretation was the one of the resistance and because the fighters had to be protected. But as in Norway doubt was cast over the legitimacy of single acts in Denmark as well and over the whole system. As in Norway leading figures of the resistance who became ministers in the liberation government took over the responsibility by claiming that all cases had been thoroughly investigated before the executions and that all were acts of warfare. The position of Jens Christian Hauge in Norway was in Denmark occupied by Frode Jakobsen, member of the Frihedsrådet. Both men threw in their moral weight and reputation to curb criticism not only in the immediate postwar years and during the transitional justice but also later in their lifetime whenever criticism of these killings was uttered. The legitimacy of the whole resistance, not only of their own clandestine work, was threatened by the criticism or new inquiries. It seemed as if doubts over the liquidations were seen as just the beginning of an

⁸⁵⁹ Fyllingsnes, Ottar, Likvideringa – og livet etterpå, Dag og Tid, 22 November 2003.

overall revision of the war history. This had certainly been true in Denmark in the first months after the liberation when Hartmut Frisch and other leading historians tried to degrade the resistance with the so-called counter-movement, the *modbevægelse*, but it is hard to see the new discussion in the 1980s and 1990s in Denmark. The criticism that was raised later or the attempts to examine this part of the war history were different in the two countries – especially the nature of the critics. Here the first attempts to understand the story of the killings came from a side that was not affiliated to any political agenda and the method used was the method of interviews with the actual perpetrators. In Norway though the story goes the other way around. After a period of almost no challenge to the legitimacy of the liquidations, the books published in Norway in the 1990s came from the camp of the political revisionists in the sphere of influence of the old NS members. In contrast to Denmark, the former Nazis managed to organise institutional structures in Norway where they made their own 'research' and published their version. These alternative versions of the war always included allegations against the resistance as being brutal, irresponsible and random killers. They supplied 'information and sources' to willing journalists and historians. Combined with the claim that the country had not been at war with Germany after the surrender of the Norwegian army groups in the North in June 1940 these allegations were meant to present the Hjemmefront as illegitimate. This political agenda was visible in their publications which made their claims and allegations easier to devaluate. It is clear that the question of the origin of certain challenges plays a significant role not only in the interpretation of the alternative versions but it also effected the historiographical landscape to an extent where any sober examination of the liquidation could too easily be interpreted as yet another attempt to revise the whole story. That the media also encouraged this with headlines made it even more complicated. In the case of the debates on the liquidations the mechanisms of struggle about the memory of the resistance are very clear. The memory-political agendas of the veterans are clearly visible. The entanglement between direct private fears and the overall memory are exceptionally strong. The veterans involved felt personally challenged and their struggle attacked. The story of the communist resistance however, offers very different challenges to the basic narrative. Here the individual is not concerned as much as are political agendas and political work in the postwar years. The inclusion or exclusion of communist resistance or the presentation of the same is rather a political struggle than a struggle on personal offences.

⁸⁶⁰ As mentioned before, Dahl had certified as consultant for the publisher the academic quality of Ulateig's first book.

2.2. THE TROUBLESOME COMMUNISTS⁸⁶¹

In most of the occupied European countries the communist movements played an important role in the resistance movements, sometimes even the decisive one. Former Yugoslavia, France and Italy can be used as examples of very active communist resistance. After the war this was acknowledged in the liberated societies to varying degrees. Sometimes without examining the cases, a lot of historians have stated that the communists performed no active acts of resistance before the German attack on the Soviet Union, because of the so-called Hitler-Stalin pact.⁸⁶² The tactical and ideological struggles that the SU and the communist parties all over Europe went through before the war on the SU pose challenges to the interpretation of the communist war history and to the basic narratives in the different countries as much as they did to the people in the resistance during the war. Were the communists to be trusted? What would they do after the war? The Cold War subsequently made the narrative of communists as liberators of their country very difficult since the Soviet Union with the interventions in several states in Eastern Europe came to be an occupier and oppressor itself. A Nordic problem was also that a majority of the inhabitants were biased against the Soviet Union because of the attack on Finland. Most Nordics regarded the Finns as cousins and reacted strongly to the war. The internal struggles in the varying communist parties and splinter groups about their degree of dependence on the Soviet Union made it very difficult to bring forth a united narrative. Moreover, most of the communist literature and accounts was so openly ideological – more than that of their opponents – that it never became appreciated by wider circles. The veterans who did indeed sacrifice friends and health and risked their lives though were faced with a certain silence on their sacrifices and felt left out of the narrative. Subsequently alternative narratives developed in often marginal circles. With the end of the Cold War these narratives were either challenged by the end of communism as viable political options or in some cases they could now get a wider acknowledgement due to the ceasing hostility. Denmark and Norway are on the whole no exception of these general trends; their differing war histories though host some interesting differences.

⁸⁶¹ Halvorsen, Terje, *Okkupasjonshistorien og de besværlige kommunistene*, in: Ugelvik Larsen, Stein (ed.) *I krigens kjølvann. Nye sider ved norsk krigshistorie og etterkrigstid*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget; 1999; pp. 59-75. The translation of the title is: *Occupation history and the troublesome communists*.

⁸⁶² One example is the Danish historian, Jørgen Hæstrup, *Den 4. våbenart. Hovedtræk af de europæiske modstandsbevægelsers historie 1939-1945*, Odense: Universitetsforlaget 1976, p. 58.

Pioneers or a Risk for the Civilian Population?

Communist resistance was a Soviet-controlled risk for the population. It seems as if this dictum had prevailed and had been 'proven' as a 'fact' particularly in Norway for most of the postwar history. Evidence of this can be found, for example, in the complete lack of monuments erected for the members of the resistance that had been communist and the fact that the big compendiums on war history for a long time did not mention communist fighters at all. The Norwegian historiography and public seemed to be very reluctant to acknowledge that communists were active fighters for the liberation of their country. The first detailed work on the war simply did not mention the leader of the communist resistance, Peder Furubotn.⁸⁶³ There is still no overall work on communist resistance published. In his book about the liquidations of NS-informers at the hand of the Norwegian resistance, Arnfinn Moland mentions Asbjørn Sunde as one of the first to fulfil this sad duty. He refers to him as a trained partisan of the Spanish Civil War but forgets to mention that he was a communist.⁸⁶⁴ At best the communist struggle is referred to as being late, and, even worse, as hampering the 'real resistance'. The common interpretation agreed upon by most historians – and, as mentioned above, not only in Norway – has been that the Hitler-Stalin-pact prevented communists from active resistance until the attack on the Soviet Union in September 1941. The French or Swedish cases of an active communist line were interpreted as exceptions from the rule of strict adherence to the Komintern-line of low profile. It is the last years that have seen a slight correction of that dogma in the direction of a re-interpretation of the Komintern orders and more importantly of a recognition of the different national communist parties independent lines.⁸⁶⁵ Slowly a new focus is directed towards groups of independent communists that quickly started clandestine actions and the clandestine work of the communist parties after their ban is re-evaluated.⁸⁶⁶

Another recurring feature in the literature is that communist acts of resistance and especially acts of sabotage are often described as being thoughtless, putting the whole population at the risk of German retaliation. Moreover, two of the prominent leaders and war heroes whose books have gained a wide popularity confirm the official version. Tore Gjelsvik, one of the leaders of the civil resistance stated that the attack on the Soviet Union was the 'signal' for the Norwegian

⁸⁶³ Halvorsen, *Okkupasjonshistorien*, p. 59. He refers to Sverre (ed.) *Norges krig*, 3 vols, Oslo: Gyldendal 1947-1950.

⁸⁶⁴ Moland, *Over grensen?*, p. 51.

⁸⁶⁵ Halvorsen, Terje, "Kommunistpartiene og Stalin-Hitler-Pakten. Et kritisk oppgjør med tradisjonelle oppfatninger," *Historisk Tidskrift* (N) 4: 441-464 (1995), p. 441.

⁸⁶⁶ Halvorsen refers to Ole Kristian Grimnes own definition of resistance and his article: "Sosialdemokratiet og den norske motstanden," in: *Arbeiderhistorie. Årbok for Arbeiderbevegelsens Arkiv og Bibliothek* (1995).

communists to join the ranks of the resistance.⁸⁶⁷ Jens Christian Hauge writes in *Frigjøringen*, that Hjemmefront was designed across party boundaries and that individuals with communist background joined it from the beginning but that the official communist party line was different. He describes attempts by the communist party to obtain influence in the resistance leadership and to put itself into a good position for the days after the liberation. He also justifies that the Hjemmefront would be hesitant to allow the communists into the organisation as long as there was no guarantee of subordination on the communist side.⁸⁶⁸ What was the reason for this? Certainly one of the reasons for it was the very special trajectory of the Norwegian resistance which was one of a long non-violent struggle that became a military endeavour very late and in which the question of whether or not to use violent and military means was intensively debated and a final decision on it in favour for the building up of a military organization was made late and was also influenced by a row of other developments. As late as November 1943, the leaders of the Hjemmefront wrote a letter to the government in London and protested against sabotage acts and distanced themselves from some of the events of the previous months. The 'official' military resistance of the Milorg had been instructed not to use under any circumstances arms at German soldiers – even in self-defence – in order not to provoke retaliations. Most parts of the resistance movement wished to concentrate on the holdningskampen and on civil-disobedience as a weapon.⁸⁶⁹ The reason was that they did not feel strong enough to face the German army which had an immense amount of soldiers in the country and they feared retaliation by the Germans. Liquidations of the Hjemmefront hit mainly Norwegian henchmen and not German personnel to avoid brutal reactions from the occupier on the defenceless population. The communists, on the other hand, favoured a guerrilla war like the partisans in Yugoslavia were fighting. So most of the sabotage acts were either committed by communists or inspired by their policy. Retaliations of the German occupant were a brutal reality and much feared among the resistance who did not wish to put the civilian population at risk. How much this was a real threat shows the protest of citizens in Drammen in which they condemned an attack on a German train nearby, asked for moderation and assured that it was not the deed of the Hjemmefront. The Germans nevertheless shot five hostages. Conflicts existed not only between the parties but also along a more activist line, lead also by the SOE and a rather cautious strategy of a mainly civil disobedience struggle continued until the very last weeks of the occupation. The strictly violent strategy of parts of the communist resistance with its examples in the

⁸⁶⁷ Gjelsvik, Tore, *Hjemmefronten. Den sivile motstand under okkupasjonen 1940-1945*, Oslo: Cappelen ²1977, p. 55.

⁸⁶⁸ Hauge, *Frigjøringen*, pp. 49-52.

guerrilla warfare of the occupied countries in Eastern Europe, however, was totally at odds with the strategy chosen by a major part of the Hjemmefront men that first started organised sabotage as late as 1944.

It is obvious that this conflict was continued into peace time and the Cold War and the narratives traded on the resistance.⁸⁷⁰ It is also reflected in the museum that was set up by the former opponents. Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum mentions the communists in five showcases out of a total of 48 topics and even more showcases. The treatment of the communists follows the above-mentioned lines: they entered the resistance late and their acts are criticized for putting the public at risk of retaliations and endangering the unity of the resistance movement. One showcase-text says that the communists founded their own resistance group only after the attack on the Soviet Union and only their illegal newspapers are described as a success.⁸⁷¹ They are also shown in the topic of the illegal press. The *guideboken* dedicates chapter 38 to the *Kommunistorganisasjoner*.⁸⁷² Here the basic narrative of late but activist resistance is repeated but a "certain degree of cooperation" with the Hjemmefront is mentioned. Their sabotage acts are not described except for those that triggered off German retaliations. One very brutal one in which 60 hostages were shot is explained in the exhibition in full.⁸⁷³ In another the internal disagreements in the Hjemmefront and the initial distrust of the London government are mentioned. In 1943, an agreement was reached on the guidelines of the struggle, only the communists are not included. The text nevertheless mentions a certain degree of practical co-operation. The heading is "Our policy" – it signifies the exclusion of the communists.⁸⁷⁴ Strangely enough, the communist sabotage is not mentioned in topic 46 that is dedicated only to sabotage – even though they are otherwise described as 'activist'.⁸⁷⁵ In another showcase the actions against the communists by the Gestapo are explained. As a result of this, even Hjemmefront members came under fire.⁸⁷⁶ The display is about the *Operation Almenrausch*, the massive German attack on the clandestine communist headquarter in the mountains around Valdres in June 1944 in which 500 soldiers and Gestapo men captured several leading communists and a in which accidentally a Milorg group also came under. The exhibition does

⁸⁶⁹ Grimnes, Ole Kristian, *Sabotasjen i norsk og dansk motstandsbevegelse*, in: *Motstandskamp, strategi og marinepolitikk*, Oslo, Bergen, Tromsø: Universitetsforlaget, 1972, pp. 9-36.

⁸⁷⁰ Halvorsen, *Okkupasjonstiden*, p. 63 with reference to some books and a TV-documentary.

⁸⁷¹ Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, exhibition, "Kamp i Hemsedal".

⁸⁷² Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, *Guideboken*, Oslo: Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum ²1983, tema 38. *Kommunistorganisasjoner*.

⁸⁷³ Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, exhibition, "En omstridt sabotageaksjon".

⁸⁷⁴ Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, exhibition, "Hjemmefronten slutter rekkene – går mot kommunistenes linie". The heading is in Norwegian "Vår linje".

⁸⁷⁵ Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, *Guideboken*, tema 46. Sabotasje.

⁸⁷⁶ Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, exhibition, "1944 – Operasjon Almenrausch I Valdres".

mention both the party and the sabotage groups albeit it clearly reflects the disapproval and antagonism of the leading Hjemmefront men to the communist policy and strategy. They appear again when towards the end of the war and the exhibition the conscription of labour (Norw. Arbeidstjeneste) which was intended to serve as a means to conscribe young Norwegian men to Hitler's armies is treated. "With authority of the military council a sabotage group led by communists blew the office of the conscription service in Oslo up."⁸⁷⁷ The guide-book remains silent on that point though.⁸⁷⁸ In the documentary on the exhibition, the word 'communist' is also evaded – in both ways. Neither the tragic consequences of a communist sabotage action is mentioned nor does Tore Gjelsvik refer to the communist help in the sabotage on the conscriptions or does Jens Christian Hauge make mention of the communist share in the biggest single sabotage act of the whole war against German vessels in the harbour of Oslo, although both are explaining the actions. This way, the story of unity is perpetuated.

The communist newspaper *Friheten* that originates in an illegal communist newspaper thus regarded the Hjemmefrontmuseum on the day of its opening with critical eyes.⁸⁷⁹ The author Ole Monsen was pleased that Norway got a resistance museum but asked which resistance had gotten it? He argued that the museum was a monument to the work of the Hjemmefrontledelsen, the 'Kretsen'⁸⁸⁰ He describes the museum as being censured and a museum for the 'May-heroes'.⁸⁸¹ Monsen claims that the communists were completely forgotten and that the only mention of their resistance is the letter of the Hjemmefront leaders to London in which they complained about the irresponsible sabotage. But this was to be expected. It should be mentioned, though, that given the way in which the exhibition was set up, changes are very difficult and expensive. At the time of the opening the people behind the exhibition were influenced by the Cold War and were the so-called May heroes, for example, Jens Christian Hauge. Frode Færøy explained in his book on the museum's history this observation also with the fact that none of the 120 people that were at times members of the museum's council was a member of the NKP and that most of the museum's leading figures belonged to the conservative establishment.⁸⁸² The fear of a communist takeover after the liberation had been quite strong during the war. In a booklet about the Milorg available at the Hjemmefrontmuseum, Jens Christian Hauge stated that without the unity of the Hjemmefront and its strong troops in the

⁸⁷⁷ Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, exhibition, "NS mobiliseringsforsøk".

⁸⁷⁸ Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, Guideboken, tema 41. NS mobiliseringsforsøk.

⁸⁷⁹ Monsen, Ole., Hjemmefrontmuseet, in: *Friheten*, 11 May 1970.

⁸⁸⁰ 'Kretsen' (Circle) was the term used to refer to the circle of influential people around Paal Berg who gathered and contacted the London government and became very influential in the hjemmefront. Later they merged with other structures to the leadership of the organisation – hjemmefrontledelsen.

⁸⁸¹ The ones that in May 1945 appeared as the leaders of the resistance. He probably refers to Paal Berg, Jens Christian Hauge and another very small group of people who became influential after May 1945.

liberation phase, the communist would have had a chance to direct the strong and young Norwegian patriotism in their favour.⁸⁸³ This perception was translated into a general fear of a Soviet attack; something that contributed to Norway's decision to join NATO. The communist perception of the war history is, however, not more objective. On the other hand the idea of a conspiracy against the people by the old elites is raised. In *Friheten* and in other communist based publications the thought is raised that there had been plans by the conservative wings of the resistance not to convene the parliament again after the liberation but to introduce an authoritarian regime based on the king and the elites. It was the king, so they say who, in the end, prevented this because of his strong commitment to parliamentary rule and his dislike of foolish experiments, especially as it was clear that the communists would have fought such an attempt. The government in London had just accepted the Hjemmefront to avoid a united people's movement in order to save the capitalist order.⁸⁸⁴ In the eyes of the communists, the leader of the civilian Hjemmefront, Paal Berg, had discredited himself by an open letter to Quisling on the day of his dismissal in April 1940, in which he expressed gratitude to the traitor because he had stepped in in times of need.⁸⁸⁵ That this might have been a trick to safeguard the transition to a not entirely NS-dominated rule of the administrative council that followed, and to avoid Quisling becoming Prime Minister is not considered.

Again, the above-described development of a set of 'truths' through a canon of books and attitudes might have contributed to the findings. The first authors of the occupation history were agents of the resistance and therefore were likely to ignore their rivals. What was discussed in the chapter on the canon applies here as well. The communists got 12% in the first postwar elections, and, in Oslo, where Pelle-gruppen and Osvald-gruppen had been most active the vote went up to 16%. The Social Democratic government and their supporters might have had reason to play down the communist resistance – especially since some of them had been active resistance leaders of the *Hjemmefront*. The most probable reason for the disregard was the Cold War. The history of the war became for most Norwegians a lesson never to ignore the necessity of a strong defence again and the new 'enemy' was the Soviet Union in the east. The war was used as a reference for entry into NATO. The majority of Norwegians thought that the NKP might make itself available to the Soviet invaders as the NS had made itself available for the Germans. This led to a widespread monitoring of members of the party by the secret service, something that had come out in the 1970s and was the subject of an inquiry commission in the

⁸⁸² Færøy, Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, p. 94-95.

⁸⁸³ Hauge, Jens Christian, *Milorg under okkupasjonen 1940-1945*, pamphlet, Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, p. 19.

⁸⁸⁴ Jørgensen, Arne, *Kongen sa nei til Kretsens 'politiske kannestøperier'*, *Friheten*, June 15th 1970, p. 5.

⁸⁸⁵ *Norges Kommunistiske Parti, Hvitboka om 1940*, Oslo: Ny Dag 1975.

mid-1990s.⁸⁸⁶ Another problem has been the lack of a communist 'contra-propaganda'. Instead of relying on the leaders that emerged in the resistance during the war, like Peder Furubotn, after internal struggles the party expelled them.⁸⁸⁷ In this way, the party lost an ace in the competition on memory. The leadership even helped to spread the rumours that communist resistance fighters had been informers of the Gestapo. In such a climate, Haakon Lie, the former secretary of the Social Democrats could ask in a book the question 'Who can we trust?' and connected the occupation of Norway with the treason of the communists who had refused to resist because of the Hitler-Stalin-pact. The title page of the book showed a swastika and the hammer-and-sickle entangled.⁸⁸⁸

So it is not surprising that the first time communist resistance was treated within the framework of a portrait of the military resistance was as late as 1987. Ivar Kraglund and Arnfinn Moland devote some out of almost 200 pages of their popular book *Hjemmefront*, in which they describe all military resistance in Norway, to the communist resistance.⁸⁸⁹ Even 42 years after the end of the war this was something extraordinary.⁸⁹⁰ Research has been done before but that had been either unpublished theses or publications affiliated to or ideologically close to the left or the NKP.⁸⁹¹ In 1974, Hans Fredrik Dahl published a book where in one of the chapters he interviewed a leader of the communist resistance.⁸⁹² In the 1970s, Torgrim Titlestad was given the assignment and funding by the Norwegian research Council to arrange the war archive of Peder Furubotn. The outcome was a three-volume biography of Furubotn with two volumes covering the war.⁸⁹³ Some of the fruits of such research are bordering on the obscure though as the example of Terje Valen's *De tjente på krigen* shows. His conclusions, published in 1974 were not only emphasizing the communist contribution but even accusing the leaders of the resistance movement to have played into the hands of the occupier and the 'capital' by their policy of passive resistance and the "surrogate" for resistance, the civil disobedience, trying to

⁸⁸⁶ Titlestad, Torgrim, Politisk press og vitenskapelig integritet. Peder Furubotn i den kalde krigens historieskrivning, in: Nytt Norsk Tidsskrift, vol. 2, no. 14, 1997, pp. 146-160, p. 149.

⁸⁸⁷ Halvorsen, Okkupasjonstiden, pp. 74-75.

⁸⁸⁸ Lie, Haakon, Hvem kan vi stole på. En dokumentasjon om Norges Kommunistiske Parti under den tysk-russiske alliansen 1939-1941, Oslo: Tiden ²1974.

⁸⁸⁹ Kraglund, Ivar, Moland, Arnfinn, Hjemmefront, vol. 6 of Skodvin, Magne (ed.), Norge i krig. Fremmedåk og frihetskamp 1940-1945, Oslo: Aschehoug 1987, p. 123-124.

⁸⁹⁰ Birkenes, Jon, Ivar Kraglund og Arnfinn Moland: Norge i krig, bind 6 – Hjemmefront, Aschehoug 1987, review in: Historisk Tidsskrift (N), vol. 67, 1988, p.109-113, p. 111.

⁸⁹¹ Two theses on special parts of the history of the communist resistance are: Færøy, Frode (today historian at Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum), Den kommunistiske motstandsbevegelsen i Bergensdistrikt 1940-45, uttrykt hovedoppgave, Universitetet i Bergen 1991 and Borgersrud, Lars (today lecturer at the University of Oslo), Wollweberorganisasjonen i Norge, uttrykt hovedoppgave, Universitetet i Oslo 1994.

⁸⁹² Dahl, Hans Fredrik, Kommunistane og krigen. Ein samtale med Torolv Solheim, in: Dahl, Hans Fredrik (ed.), Krigen i Norge Oslo: Pax 1974, pp.155-174.

⁸⁹³ See Titlestad, Torgrim, Stalin midt imot, Peder Furubotn 1938-1941; I kamp i krig. Peder Furubotn 1942-1945, Oslo: Gyldendal 1977.

save the material goods of the capital.⁸⁹⁴ The book was published by Forlaget Oktober, a leftist publishing house that also published some of the books of Lars Borgersrud. If parts of official Norway did silence the communist contribution other for the exact opposite agenda stressed it and tried to delegitimize the efforts of the 'majority's resistance'. A common basis to assess the war history was not to be found.

Historiography can be a forerunner and pull the public opinion along, it can also prove itself to be sluggish and hesitant to changes. When Peder Furubotn died in 1975, Jens Christian Hauge sent out a last salutation on behalf of the resistance. The same Hauge was present when in 1995 a memorial plaque for the members of the 'Osvald-gruppen' a communist resistance group in Oslo was unveiled in Oslo Central Station next to the one of the Norwegian state railways'.⁸⁹⁵ The plaque does not contain the word 'communist' nor any sign denoting the origin of the group of saboteurs. The text is on behalf of the 'labour unions comrades'. The veterans associations' journal reported the unveiling with a reproduction of another newspaper article. It is reported that several hundred people were present.⁸⁹⁶ The initiative and funding for this plaque seems to have come from the Oslo detachment of the labour unions *Landsorganisasjonen i Oslo* and to be based on the research of the scholar Lars Borgersrud. In a foreword to a book of Borgersrud in which he describes the history of the group, albeit under the assumption that it was them who 'created' the active resistance, the head of the Oslo labour union detachment claims that the Cold War and the fact that "some of the members have been active in the communist movement [...] has been a reason that their story has been hitherto untold". She continues that those people were first and foremost "our girls and our boys" – Oslo workers."⁸⁹⁷ One should note the peculiar way of expressing their background: maybe also the labour union with its strong social democratic backbone was ambivalent to these men and women.

The other events of the Frigjøringsjubileet were without any recognition of the communist struggle, the book *Fritt Norge* and the commented bibliography on the war did not name Furubotn.⁸⁹⁸ An indication of how difficult this aspect of the war history is can be found in Anders Johansen's book *Særoppgave Livssyn*, which by telling the story of a father who tries to help his son write an assignment on the history of his family and has to realise how difficult it is to find out more about the two communist uncles who were murdered by the Gestapo because

⁸⁹⁴ Valen, Terje. *De tjente på krigen. Hjemmefronten og kapitalen*. 74. Oslo, Oktober.

⁸⁹⁵ Halvorsen, *Okkupasjonstiden*, p. 61.

⁸⁹⁶ Knoph, Bjørn, *Osvaldgruppas falne hedret med minneplate*, in: *Krigsinvaliden*, no. 3, 1995, pp. 62-63.

⁸⁹⁷ Nybakk, Marit, *Forord*, in: Borgersrud, Lars, *Nødvendig innsats. Sabotørene som skapte den aktive motstanden*, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget 1997, p. 5-6, p. 5.

⁸⁹⁸ That was also criticised by one of the leading historians of the 'younger generation' Bernt Hagtvet in an interview on the evening of the celebrations. Stokke, Olga, *Fornøyd publikum etter festen i Spektrum*, *Aftenposten*, 8 May 1995.

of their communist affiliation. The whole family stays silent because they are used to it, for it had not been appropriate to talk about such things for years.⁸⁹⁹ The academic research, community on the other hand, agrees today on the fact that the communists were in opposition in the summer/ autumn of 1940, no later than the rest of the population, that they contributed to the resistance with illegal publications and that branches of it, like the one of western Norway with Peder Furubotn, were actively and militarily resisting the Germans.

As late as 2002, a monument was unveiled in Valdres on the side of a fire fight between the Gestapo and some members of the communist leadership that is also shown in Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum.⁹⁰⁰ One of the newspaper articles covering the story is headlined "Occupation history becomes complete".⁹⁰¹ Another article in *Oppland Arbeiderbladet* on the same event argues that the communist resistance had been suppressed in the postwar years' historiography.⁹⁰² The article in *Friheten*⁹⁰³ explained that the whole idea and the money for the memorial came from a book that was written in time for the 75th anniversary of the Norwegian Communist Party.⁹⁰⁴ Halvorsen calls it in quotation marks the 'official' communist war history.⁹⁰⁵ Plans were developed to make a film on the basis of the book but the NRK was not interested and refused financing. After Arnfinn Moland of Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum recommended the plan, the media department of the Norwegian Forces agreed to make the documentary in May 2002.⁹⁰⁶ This can be seen as a further move to the public recognition of the communist contribution to the resistance struggle. *Krigsinvaliden*, the major veterans' organisation's magazine which usually follows the line of the basic narrative, consequently followed up then and published the Robøle article and another one on the film.⁹⁰⁷ But it certainly also shows that nowadays the divide between the veterans and the NHM on one side, and the communists on the other one, does not exist anymore.

It should also be mentioned that the communists as well as the Soviet Union themselves tried to monopolize the resistance and the memory of it, claiming that they had been the first or only ones that (ever) resisted. Whilst in some countries such a claim could be reconciled with other

⁸⁹⁹ Johansen, Anders, *Særoppgave, Livssyn*, Oslo: Spartacus 1999.

⁹⁰⁰ Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, exhibition, "1944 – Operasjon Almenrausch I Valdres".

⁹⁰¹ Robøle, Olav, Mot ei komplett krigshistorie. Okkupasjonshistorie ble komplettert, in: Valdres, 10 September 2002, p. 4-5.

⁹⁰² Norling, Geir, Kommunistisk motstandsbevegelse fikk sitt minnesmerke, in: Oppland Arbeiderbladet, 11 September 2002.

⁹⁰³ Fjeld, Åge, Strålende minnehøytideligheter for strålende menesker, in: Friheten, 13 September 2002.

⁹⁰⁴ See Bakken, Birger, Larsen, Reidar T., Jørgensen, Arne, Fjeld, Åge, *Død over de tyske okkupanter. De norske kommunistenes motstandskamp 1940-1945*, Moss: Informasjonsforlaget 1998.

⁹⁰⁵ Halvorsen, *Okkupasjonstiden*, p. 64.

⁹⁰⁶ , Åge, Strålende minnehøytideligheter for strålende menesker, in: Friheten, 13 September 2002.

⁹⁰⁷ Robøle Okkupasjonshistoria blir komplettert, and Finn Pettersen, Den tyske aksjonen "Almenrausch" og film fra Forsvarets mediesenter, in: *Krigsinvaliden*, no. 2, 2003, pp. 21-24 and 17-20.

claims or endured a parallel but not challenging position, it became a provocation in other countries. It was first with the decline of the communist parties in the western world and later with the fall of the Soviet Empire that the communist memory was permitted to the narrative and could be incorporated – the reason being that it was not deemed threatening anymore.⁹⁰⁸ Jens Christian Hauge, the former defence minister during the Cold War was willing to acknowledge a communist resistance group's contribution as seen on the occasion of their leader's death and the memorial, the labour union itself though had to keep a certain distance and balance since it was still facing other leftist movements. The Hjemmefrontmuseum's current curator does so too, the museum's set-up works against such acknowledgements though.

Spanish Civil War Fighters Pioneer the Resistance

In Denmark neither the questions of the communist share in the resistance nor the one on the timing of it are the most problematic questions – indeed both are not questioned at all. There are other difficult parts of the story. Rather the role of the police and the state agents is examined with scrutiny. One dilemma in Denmark is about the fact that the Danish collaboration government actually – under breach of the democratic constitution – arrested and interned all communists they could get a hold on in waves starting on June 22 1941, the day of the German attack on the Soviet Union. Most of them were interned in the Horserød camp. Later the parliament passed the *Kommunistloven* (Law on Communists) which forbade the Danish Communist Party (Danmarks Kommunistisk Parti, DKP) and other associations as well as any communist activity. The political argumentation of the law-makers circled around the alleged threat of a violent takeover by the communists referring to statements made years ago by representatives of the DKP in parliament but the truth was German pressure. A register of active communists of the Copenhagen Police political branch had earlier been handed over not only to the officers who carried out the arrests – but even the Germans. The Germans had demanded the arrest of all leading communists and citizens of the Soviet Union.⁹⁰⁹ The arrests and the subsequent legislation in which the DKP could not vote anymore not only were an example of how far-reaching the concessions were that the Danish government was willing to make but also posed major problems for the relations between the communist resistance groups and the politicians. When in November of the same year the government signed the Antikomintern pact, the population, especially the students, reacted with a demonstration against the collaboration.

⁹⁰⁸ Interview with Kim Salomon at Lund University on 13 September 2005.

The Danish communists were as can be seen, forced into the resistance and their early activism can be explained also with the fact that they had an illegal organisation already available from the first day of the ban. Most of those interned in 1941 in Horserød were in August 1943, when the Germans took over the camp, deported to the concentration camp of Stutthof. The illegal camp organisation later claimed that they had been promised an early warning of a German takeover by the Ministry of Justice but were forsaken.⁹¹⁰ The communist afterwards started an active clandestine press and in 1942 also sabotage groups. The widespread anti-communist sentiment that among other reasons originated in the short-lived Hitler-Stalin pact and limited resources offered no real basis for immediate sabotage activity so that the main focus in the beginning was to influence public opinion and to gather people in the opposition against the collaboration. Step by step the communist organisations were able or forced to open up and later the people's front ideology, that was also decreed by Moscow, resulted in the clandestine paper *Frit Danmark* and the *Borgerlige Partisaner* (BOPA - originally Kommunistiske Partisaner, KOPA) two groups that were at the start communist but reached out over the narrow circle of communists and included also people from the Social Democrats and even conservatives. Besides the famous Churchill-klubben – a group of adolescents who started spreading leaflets and paper and even started sabotage as early as the spring of 1942 – the communists were the first organised resistance group. BOPA stayed under communist leadership besides extended recruiting. The leading people on the side of the DKP were Børge Houmann and Mogens Fog - the first was also involved in publishing the purely communist *Land og Folk*. In the joint efforts and organisations of communists and non-communists lies the reason for a lot of the complexities that make the Danish case so different from the Norwegian. But not only the events around the beginning of clandestine communist organisation and resistance were and are complex and pose challenges to a unified interpretation of the war history – also the question of how the communists were viewed by leading politicians during the last phase of the war – and afterwards. Also the communist role in the riots and strikes that eventually lead to the official end of the collaboration policy proved to bear enough potential to cause debate.

For most Danes right after the war it was a well-known fact that the communist party never had been part of the cooperation government and therefore could not be accused of taking part in the collaboration with the Germans. The opposite was true – the communists could claim that they in fact were the only party that never supported the collaboration. Because of that they were also

⁹⁰⁹ Koch, Henning, 'Kommunistinterneringen', in: Kirchhoff, Hans, Lauridsen, John T., Trommer, Aage (eds.), Gads leksikon om dansk besættelsesrid 1940-1945, København: Gads 2002, pp. 273-374, p. 274.

⁹¹⁰ Kirchhoff, Hans, 'Horserøddlejren' in: Kirchhoff, Hans, Lauridsen, John T., Trommer, Aage (eds.), Gads leksikon om dansk besættelsesrid 1940-1945, København: Gads 2002, pp.215-216.

the ones that were hunted by the administration and the police. On the other hand the accusations that were produced in Norway – that the communists had not fought the Nazis during the existence of the Hitler-Stalin-pact also existed in Denmark and were put forward by the old parties to discredit the communist effort. There lay, however, a difficulty in that notion since it was fairly clear for all that among the first to start the active resistance, the communists played an important role. The former fighters of the Spanish Civil War International Brigades together with the volunteers of the Finnish Winter War were the first real clandestine sabotage groups. This early and determined effort brought the DKP the highest results in their entire history in the first postwar elections. They increased their representation by 15 from three to 18 seats in the new parliament and most of the new mandates were won at the expense of the Social Democracy. But behind the scenes the other parties were playing a game to limit the influence of the communists, a game they had already begun in the Frihedsrådet. Despite the membership of the BOPA and the communists in the Frihedsrådet, the fear of a communist takeover or coup d'état was widespread among the other parts of the resistance movement, especially those parts that had their origin in the old parties.

The politicians and the partisans who supported the parties of the war governments had difficulties acknowledging that the former enemies of the parliamentary system from the left and the right actually had started the struggle. The de-legitimizing effect of this idea had to be avoided, and therefore no effort was made to include that in the parties' own books and publications. The communists, on the other hand, rapidly lost any significant basis for their story. The fame of the war years was short-lived. The DKP lost seats with every election that came and in the 1960s started missing the threshold and eventually dropped out of the parliament entirely. Their influence in the labour unions also vanished and the splits in the party that were already obvious in 1956 in the discussion on the Soviet intervention in Hungary, became too heavy and the party fell apart. The war leader Aksel Larsen founded the later marginally more successful leftist Socialistisk Folkepartiet and offered a left but not Soviet-dependent alternative. There was, however, no real support in parliament nor in the public for a narrative that included the communists' struggle for the liberation of the country. The Social Democrats that were most threatened by a communist version of the war history did their best to agitate a different, more 'fitting' story.⁹¹¹

The first works on the war did not in the spirit of a united people in resistance, differentiate much in the identities and backgrounds of the partisans. The names of the different groups were

⁹¹¹ Halvorsen, Terje, Kampen Mot Kommunistene i De Skandinaviske Land Etter Krigen, Arbeiderhistorie. Årbok for Arbeiderbevegelsens Arkiv Og Bibliotek Krigens følger for arbeiderbevegelsen (1995): 19-38.

mentioned but the question of who joined when and with which objectives, the struggle against the collaboration and the occupation was not regarded as as important as the emphasis on the unity. Jørgen Hæstrup saw the reasons for resistance in the spontaneity of the youth and the Danish people and maybe in individual backgrounds.⁹¹² First Aage Trommer described in detail how important the political and organisational backgrounds were for the paths into the clandestine work. His transition-milieus (gennemgangsmiljøer) are still today the one of the key notions to understand the rise of the resistance.⁹¹³ And Hans Kirchhoff added in his analysis of the August riots of 1943 how much these better-organised illegal structures and determined opposition of the communists was transferred into a leading role during the strikes and riots.⁹¹⁴ During Hæstrups time it was still the whole people that spontaneously joined the fight. But that is what the question of the communist share is about in the end – to understand how opposition and resistance come into being under the conditions of an occupation. The first postwar decades after such differentiations were not made. However, as will be visible later, this notion now is widely accepted and understood. Back then, only the DKP and leftist authors had their own narrative, which they cultivated. However, it seems that most of their products never gained a wider acceptance and reception than within smaller groups of people. The DKP published their own books on the history of the party during the war in which the course of action was justified and explained as a logic and linear development with its origin in the prewar political agenda.⁹¹⁵ Around the 40th anniversary of the liberation a series of articles in the party's newspaper Land of Folk – which is not accidentally called after a communist clandestine paper during the occupation – stressed the party's notion of being the first and lone fighter against the German occupation.⁹¹⁶ Their contributions to the historiography of the war are like the works of the other parties which have been mentioned in the chapter on the establishment of the canon permeated with ideology. The books of Ib Nørlund have been called the quasi-official DKP accounts of the war.⁹¹⁷ But also the BOPA-veteran Børge Houmann's account on his activities *Kommunist under besættelsen* figured as a basic narrative of the communists. The party itself published a 43(!) volume book on the party history and the war.⁹¹⁸ But some of the leftist narratives became more

⁹¹² Hæstrup, Jørgen, *Hemmelig Alliance*, vols. 1-2, København: Thaning og Appel 1959.

⁹¹³ Trommer, Aage, *Modstandsarbejde i nærbillede. Det illegale arbejde i Syd- og Sønderjylland under den tyske besættelse af Danmark 1940-1945*, Odense University Studies in History and Social Sciences, 7. Odense: Odense University Press, 1973.

⁹¹⁴ Kirchhoff, Hans. *Augustoprøret 1943*. København: Udgiverselskap for danmarks nyeste historie, Gyldendal, 1979.

⁹¹⁵ Warring, 40 år efter, p. 56.

⁹¹⁶ An in-depth account on the narratives in Land of Folk and other communist media can be found in Nielsen, Flemming, *En Besættelse - De Danske Kommunisters Historieskrivning Om Besættelsestiden*, speciale, RUC, 1996, pp. 95-98.

⁹¹⁷ Nørlund, Ib, *Det Knager i samfundets fuger og bånd*, København: Tiden ³1972.

⁹¹⁸ DKP Og Frihedskampen, København: Danmarks Komunistiske Partiet, 1996-1999.

popular, due to their better 'packing'. Memoirs of communist resistance men were read by the common Dane and the fictitious account of the war and occupation by Hans Scherfig especially won widespread popularity.⁹¹⁹ In *Frydenholm* the Germans hunt the communists – together with the Danish police and the war brings not only conflicts between countries to the surface but also between different economic interests within Denmark. The book was and is acknowledged as an account of the war and was published in several editions. Of course, such a 'documentary novel' is easier to access and easier to swallow.

As for the historical research it is not before the 1980s that a remarkable display of alternative narratives came up, but then they increasingly included the communists as well. Young historians and social scientists with a background in leftist thought started to publish books that grappled with new aspects of the war that had hitherto not been included even in the revisionist wave of the 1970s. One example was the aforementioned anthology *Dengang under besættelsen – ubekvemme historier om en splitted nation* by Lars Møller and Anette Wiborg.⁹²⁰ The title could be translated as 'In those days during the occupation – awkward stories about a torn country' and showed the 'route of march' of the book, which besides accounts on the SS volunteers also included several articles on communist resistance and the treatment of communists by the collaborating administration. The notion of discord was prevailing here over the idea of a unified country and a united resistance. Although the book in general was very much advocating a resistance view and some of the articles were hard to read due to a clear ideological agenda that was visible between the lines, it represents a new view on the complexity of the war history – and it included the communists. Claus Bryld contributed with an article on the historiography.⁹²¹ Also Anette Warring's thesis from 1987 could be seen as an expression for this movement towards an alternative narrative and more importantly an attempt to reflect on the way the war was remembered and the interests of agents of history politics.⁹²² Certainly a political agenda was also visible here. Today a re-newed interest in the identities of those who resisted has also brought more light to the communist resistance's efforts. The last years saw a wave of books on the different groups and the different parties. The communists were now always included in the examinations. The research institute *Historisk Samling fra Besættelsestiden 1940-1945* in Esbjerg has, in the last decade, contributed two books describing

⁹¹⁹ Scherfig, Hans. *Frydenholm*. 5 ed. København: Gyldendal, 1994. First issue 1962.

⁹²⁰ Møller, Wiborg, *Dengang under besættelsen*.

⁹²¹ Bryld, Claus, *Besættelsestiden, politikerne og historieskrivningen*, in: Møller, Wiborg, *Dengang under besættelsen*, pp. 155-172.

⁹²² Warring, Anette, "40 År Efter. Historiebevidsthedens Og Historieformidlingens Samfundsmæssige Betydning Belyst Gennem En Analyse Af Iscenesættelsen Af 40 Årsjubilæet for Danmarks Befrielse Og Dets Manifestation i Massekulturen, speciale, RUC, 1987.

personalities and leaders from the resistance in which the communists were represented by Børge Thing.⁹²³

Det kæmpende Danmark, as exhibition by the Frihedsråd, was certainly not inclined to stress on party or group at the cost of the others and therefore also refrained from downgrading any member group. The exhibition was anonymous on the side of the resistance, no group should get more honour than the others and no individual should stand out. The question of party affiliation did not play a role – also because the exhibition was put up during the time of the liberation government that lasted on the foundations of the compromise between the Frihedsråd and the parties. The notion of a whole country in resistance was therefore important. The communists had in the last year of the war also stressed the people's front notion and toned down the competition. The Prime Minister of the liberation government, Wilhelm Buhl, who had also been in office during the first months of the collaboration and had called to report sabotage to the police, was now sitting in the first row during the opening. Although I could not review all texts from the original exhibition, it is fair to assume that it neither described the identity of the first clandestine groups nor referred to the number of sabotage acts or liquidations done by the different groups. The same applies for the time when the Nationalmuseet was housing the exhibition.

When the museum was opened in 1957, the DKP had vanished as political power and so had the resistance movement. The last decade after the war had shown the enormous differences between the political ideas of the groups that had once joined forces and especially the differences between those who always despised the old parties and those who had joined them. But the veterans still had contacts on a personal level and they could always agree on their military efforts and their armed struggle.⁹²⁴ The disappointment of the postwar periods was balanced by a description of the war years as free of conflict. This might have been the underlying idea of the founders of the FM.⁹²⁵ The starting point of the research during the time of the erection of the museum was a very broad understanding of resistance – an understanding that included the whole Danish people. The exhibition had to be anonymous in order not to cause conflict and to appeal to everybody. The memorial character of the museum strengthened this notion. Conflict and discord were not appropriate when the dead are honoured.

⁹²³ Olesen, Nils Wium (ed.), *Mennesker, politik og besættelse. Fire biografiske skitser*, Esbjerg: Historisk Samling fra Besættelsestiden 1940-1945 1996.

⁹²⁴ Hansen, Niels Jakob Mørk, *En analyse af frihedsmuseets permanente udstilling - Med henblik på en diskussion af formidlingen af besættelsestidens historie*, thesis (speciale), Københavns Universitæt, 1988, p. 53.

⁹²⁵ Kjeldbæk, Esben, *Idéoplæg til ændring af den faste udstilling på Frihedsmuseet*, 1991, Frihedsmuseets Bibliotek, 37a, p. 4.

The old or original exhibition therefore was entirely anonymous. Resistance was described as growing and finally victorious. Veterans had again a big share in setting up the exhibition, and they were again coming from all kinds of groups and organisations. The choice of objects and the stories told therefore had to be balanced to pay all groups due respect. Other problems of any museum were that it had to deal with what it had collected. The objects were given to the museum by veterans. If there was a lack of objects from one group there was the possibility to take things from other groups. What does distinguish a 'communist screwdriver' from a national-conservative one'? The weapons workshop contained parts from the BOPA and the Holger Danske group – one communist, the other one from the conservative camp including the nationalist Dansk Samling. Also the print shops shown in the exhibition – or better: their machines – reflected the different wings. On display were the machines that printed Frit Danmark which was the non-partisan but communist-founded paper and De frie Danske which was the first widespread non-communist paper. Everything and every group was sub-summoned under the big umbrella Frihedsrådet.⁹²⁶ It is highly unlikely that even if Kirchhoff's Augustoprøret had been published and accepted as the historiographical state-of-the-art at the museums setting up that this would have had any implications on the way the exhibition was designed. Maybe the veterans actually remembered the trajectory well – it is fair to assume they would not have given priority to any group. The unity among the veterans is also reflected in the façade of Frihedsmuseet which is decorated with clinker bricks that show in golden letters the names of individuals and organisations who have donated money for the erection of the museum. All former resistance groups that still had a loose association did of course donate money. One can find the names of groups from all parts of Denmark and ways of life. Of course the communist groups are found among the donators and BOPA has a prominent place among all bricks. The first time the visitor of the exhibition meets the communists is in the display on the arrests and the demonstration after the Danish signature under the Antikomintern pact and the following demonstrations. Nordic flags that were carried along at the manifestation symbolising a Nordic solidarity are shown. The beginnings of the resistance are shown on the little podium to the right of the kanonhallen where the clandestine print shop is also located. The displays tell the visitors about the first illegal milieus and here the communists and especially the volunteers to the International Brigades find mention. The fact that the pioneers of the resistance came from the extreme sides of the political spectrum is stressed and the left is given its due space.⁹²⁷ In the following displays the communist groups are always mentioned when

⁹²⁶ Hansen, En analyse, p. 69.

⁹²⁷ Frihedsmuseet, exhibition, "De første illegale".

their most famous actions are described. In the display on the August riots that led to the breakdown of the collaboration policy, the fact that the first strikes and riots occurred often under the leadership of the local communists is explained.⁹²⁸ The background to the strikes in a beginning hope for a German defeat and also social discontentment is explained as is the leading role of the communist organizations. The same is true in the display on the big popular strike in Copenhagen in 1944 after the allied landing in Normandy where the politicians called for an end and calm but the Copenhagen citizen continued, campaigned by the communists. The narrative of the whole people united in the fight is thereby reproduced albeit without neglecting the complex development from the marginalised group into the centre of society. That the resistance was started by communists and national-conservative folks is not seen as something degrading but as part of the development of the Danish struggle for freedom.

The old print shop display was not changed too much but now on tables in front of the machines the visitor can follow the development of the clandestine press and its variety with the help of the front pages of a different papers. The weapons workshop also still contains the different objects. The anonymity of the previous exhibition, however, that had for a long time been one of the recipes for its success, is partly abandoned in the new one. Besides the naming of agents and protagonists in the different display, it becomes most visible in the display on the Frihedsrådet, which contains death masks of its members and their names and backgrounds. Here the differences in the political agenda of these leaders and their political origin, which were introduced in the beginning, are taken up again. The four biggest organisations that joined in the Frihedsråd are named in the following order: Communists, Dansk Samling, Frit Danmark, Ringen.⁹²⁹ And on the museum's webpage the BOPA stands as the example for a resistance group on the virtual tour.⁹³⁰

The communists are dedicated to a whole display at the beginning of the exhibition. In the accompanying school material the "Communists lead the struggle" (Kommunistene fører an).⁹³¹ More interesting, however, is the last part in Spærretid when the exhibitors treat the spring of 1945 and the summer of the liberation. The chapter *Inddæmningen* (Containment) explains the course of political struggles after the liberation and how the old parties and the collaboration politicians managed to quickly curb the influence of the resistance as a political power and how the movement split in the first months. The disappointment of the resistance when they were faced with the fact that almost none of their political and economical goals were to be fulfilled

⁹²⁸ Frihedsmuseet, exhibition, "August 1943".

⁹²⁹ Frihedsmuseet, exhibition, "Frihedsrådet".

⁹³⁰ Frihedsmuseet, webpage, URL <http://frihed.natmus.dk/rundvisninger/bopa1.htm>.

and the propaganda of the politicians is explained. The poster of the DKP for the first election that depicts a pencil bearing the sign of the resistance filling in the ballot paper is the sign of the short-lived success of the party before vanishing into political insignificance.⁹³² As can be seen, the medium of the exhibition has, with regard to the communists, changed from a disregard of the divergence of the resistance via a period of acknowledgement of the special trajectory of communists and other groups into the resistance towards an understanding of the complexity of the whole phenomenon and the postwar implications.

Such understanding could not have been thought about in *Matador*. Produced two decades before by conservative liberals, the tendency to belittle the communist resistance is very present. The protagonists of the active resistance are for the most part conservatives or liberals. The bank manager is active and the whole conservative and bourgeois elite of Korsbæk. The communists are either underground or passive. This way the whole history was turned upside down. In the first episode about the war, the local communist Røde (the Red), who is not generally described too sympathetically, is confronted by the other inhabitants of Korsbæk with the Hitler-Stalin-pact and asked mockingly in the pub, where two German soldiers sit drinking beer, whether he would not prefer to sit with his "allies".⁹³³ The following sabotage of the German car park as well as the spreading of clandestine papers is logically (for the series) performed by members of the conservative youth movement. The suspicion that the political orientation of the author Lise Nørgaard was decisive here is not unreasonable. Her background in the movement of cultural radicalism is well known and possibly played a role in the description of the communists.⁹³⁴ The school material does not offer much since the communists are absent from the programme.

Denmark besat is ten years later and after the end of the Cold War different in outlook. The first acts of disobedience and resistance are performed by not very political Danes and – like an announcement of what was to come later – connected with help for Jews, but in the second volume published in 1991 the first organised groups develop: a conservative and a military conservative one but both find disdain for the well-behaved common people who arrange themselves with the occupation.⁹³⁵ Later the problems and conflicts within the resistance are told. This antagonism between the communists and some of the leaders of the resistance is told through the story of the liquidation of Rode. His cooperation with the communist groups and his

⁹³¹ Nationalmuseet, Skoletjenesten, Spærretid – Hverdag under besættelsen 1940-45, skolehæfte, København: Nationalmuseet 2005, p. 47.

⁹³² Nationalmuseet, Spærretid, "Indæmningen".

⁹³³ Lise Nørgaard, *Matador*, episode 16, Lauras store dag.

⁹³⁴ Interview with Claus Bryld at Roskilde Universitetscenter, 27 January 2005.

⁹³⁵ *Opbrud*. Bind 1 - 1940 Morten Hesseldahl, Niels Roland, and Henrik Rehr. *Danmark Besat*, København: Carlsen Comics, 1990. and *Bristepunktet*. Bind 2 - 1941-42 Morten Hesseldahl, Niels Roland, and Henrik Rehr. *Danmark Besat*, København: Carlsen Comics, 1991.

supply of weapons to them was reason enough to liquidate him – in the cartoon.⁹³⁶ This story is a reference to the murder of lieutenant Skov that was discussed earlier. The communists themselves are described as active and courageous but come off badly as characters otherwise. The leader of the group is for example portrayed as an unfaithful 'lady-killer' and schemer. But generally the cartoon has, as could be seen, incorporated research and the discourse of the later 1970s and 1980s.

The celebrations were another point where the challenge between the differing narratives became obvious. Since the celebrations also with their public appearances were reflections of the leading paradigms they had to follow certain rules with regard to who was allowed to speak and whom the speeches would refer to. In this respect they would also be a representation of the public opinion and the political agendas during the Cold War and the development of the Danish communists. One of the main problems for former communist veterans was of course the focus on the NATO-membership that was – as shown in the chapter on the celebrations – expressed in a lot of speeches. The majority of the population as well as the veterans saw the NATO-membership as a direct outcome of the war and the resistance, and therefore greeted it and cultivated the theme. That did not leave much way for those who opposed membership and the organisation in sympathy for the Soviet Union. Was a general sympathy for the SU as one of the main liberators of Europe and enemy of Hitler still conceivable in the first postwar years despite the occupation of Bornholm, did this sympathy vanish quickly with the beginning of the Cold War? An exception was the invitation of general Korotkov for the celebrations in 1970. As a result, the former and new communists do usually not join the official celebrations but celebrated inside their own groups. The speaker for the veterans on these early celebrations was mostly Frode Jakobsen, who due to his young age was after a while the only surviving member of the Frihedsrådet but who also had still been very active all these years. The other speakers usually came from the administration. None of them was to be expected to be critical towards NATO. This split in the celebrations was to be broken in 1985. As mentioned before, people thought that the 40th anniversary might be the last big celebration. So this time unity was the aim and the speakers on the Rådhuspladsen were chosen carefully in order not to let anybody out and to reflect the spirit of the consensus reached after the war and the liberation government. Besides Prime Minister Poul Schlüter, Alfred Jensen, a former minister in the liberation government and a communist was on the stage, as was Frode Jakobsen again and the mayor of Copenhagen, Egon Weidekamp, another social democrat.⁹³⁷ The communists had agreed this

⁹³⁶ Skumring, Bind 4 - 1944 Morten Hesseldahl, Niels Roland, and Henrik Rehr. Danmark Besat, København: Carlsen Comics, 1993, pp. 37-40.

⁹³⁷ Warring, 40 år efter, p. 14-15.

time to officially join the official celebrations despite the previous criticism of the official arrangements on the other anniversaries.⁹³⁸ This is surprising since no former communist veteran had been invited to the prime minister's committee. And the leftist paper *Information* had already criticised the official celebrations in the charged political situation.⁹³⁹

As already mentioned in the chapter on the celebrations, a noticeable monopolizing effort of *Frihedskampens Veteraner* and their chairman Seehusen always existed. Of course this de facto monopoly was not unchallenged. The notion of a unified resistance movement was undermined in the 1995 celebrations. Certainly the committee set up under the office of the Prime Minister was making a conscious effort in that direction but the outcome was not necessarily as desired. This time the BOPA was represented in the committee through Jørgen Jespersen. He had been on the committee for the planning of the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the break-up of the collaboration policy as well but now a representative of this mostly communist group was also on the committee for the liberation day. Still, he represented BOPA and not the DKP of course, since his background was of the conservative *Akademisk skytterforening* and he was himself also an army lieutenant colonel. The common perception at least within parts of the media seems to have been that therefore some of the former resistance groups were under-represented. Sven Seehusen, who was at that time the chairman of the *Modstands- og fangerforeningernes koordineringsudvalg*, a committee that represented a choice of the groups and in particular *Frihedskampens Veteraner* as the biggest of all, felt unduly attacked by some articles that claimed the under-representation of the communists and other groups.⁹⁴⁰ As could be seen these accusations were in fact true.

It seems that through the last years a stronger sentiment of all kinds of groups had developed that their agenda or memories were under-represented. Maybe this has something to do with the changing paradigm about the resistance, namely that not only historiography and the public but also the veterans themselves began to understand that the notion of a unified resistance did not reflect in all respects their own experiences and that, the older they grew, the more they felt that they had a right for their own story. This strongly reminds one of the notion of a floating gap and the border between the communicative and cultural memory as explained at the outset. An indication for this is given in a memorandum for the committee.⁹⁴¹ The memorandum stated that one of the lessons to be drawn from the preparations of August 1993 was that the composition

⁹³⁸ Bryld, Warring, *Besættelsestiden*, p. 157.

⁹³⁹ Styrk, Mads Nissen, *Hvad skal Schlüter på Rådhuspladsen 5. maj?*, *Information*, 11 January 1985.

⁹⁴⁰ Letter by Sverre Seehusen, *Frihedskampens veteraner* to Formanden for 5-maj-udvalg Ulrik Federspiel on 12 January 1995, FM Arkiv, 40 A. I used the files that are kept in the Frihedsmuseet due to Esben Kjeldbæk's participation in the committee.

of the committee had been too random and that some interests had been over-represented. This certainly did not change – the committee's composition was not remarkably changed and smaller and non-mainstream groups were by the strong lobby of some veterans excluded. The committee called itself a "coordination committee, not a common committee with representative structure".⁹⁴² As consolation, they got some money, for example, for their publications. The minutes of one of the committee's meetings shows that also this was rather due to an 'outsider's' intervention than to the solidarity among veterans. When this question was discussed in June 1994 Esben Kjeldbæk is reported to have said that the committee should either support all applications for financial aid for non-scientific publications or none at all, and so the committee recommended the budgets. *Håndslag – Aktive modstandsfolk* (also: *Håndslag. Erhvershemmede fra modstandskampen*), a distinctly leftist group, got a grant for a special issue of its magazine.⁹⁴³ This group, as it was done on the occasion of the celebrations of August 1943 in 1993, organised their own gatherings with other leftist groups and veterans associations. *Håndslag - Aktive Motstandsfolk* and *4.Maj Komiteen*, which represented leftist and old communists, arranged a gathering on the Rådhuspladsen. The Prime Minister's committee also granted DKK 20,000 for the gathering – although that amount was DKK 2,000, smaller than the one granted to *Frihedskampens Veteraner* for a celebration in Sct. Clements Dane in London in commemoration of the Royal Air Force pilots who lost their lives in the skies over Denmark.⁹⁴⁴ Also the original petition was about an amount of DKK 110,000.⁹⁴⁵ However, *Frihedskampens Veteraner*, which were directly represented through Svenn Seehusen, got their work and office expenses paid.⁹⁴⁶

But in 1995, the communist resistance fighters got a memorial of their own. The comparatively small stone slab by artist Knud Nellemose with the same falling man that is inside the Frihedsmuseet's courtyard is made in the very traditional and rather representational style of the monuments of the 1980s. Its small size belies the size of the communist share in the active resistance. The money for the memorial came from the committee after a longer discussion. It is remarkable that it was not the old comrades from the struggle but the veterans in the committee who were at the front in support in the memorial. On the contrary, their comments in the minutes

⁹⁴¹ Skydsgaard, Inger, Notits vedrørende markering af 50-året for 29. august 1943 m.v. og festligholdelse af 50-året for 4.-5. maj 1945, Stm (DK), 051-5 1999-2003.

⁹⁴² Referat af 5. møde i 5. maj-udvalget, 4 August 1994, Stm (DK), 051-4, 1995, p. 13. This was used to deny Frit Danmark the wish to be represented. Also Frit Danmark had a high communist participation.

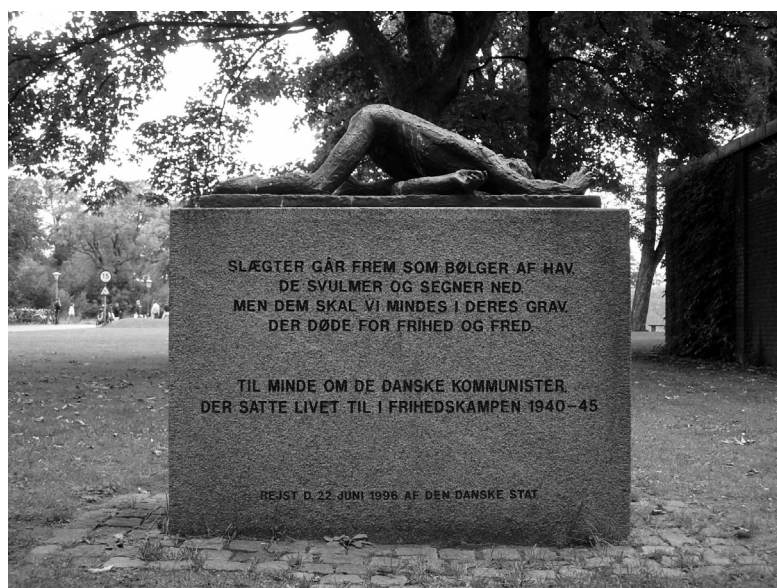
⁹⁴³ Referat af 4. møde i 5.maj-udvalget, 13 June 1994, Stm (DK), 051-4, 1995, p. 15. That had happened already in 1993 for the celebrations of August 1943.

⁹⁴⁴ Letter by Ulrik Federspiel, 5. maj-udvalget to Medlemmerne af 5. maj-udvalget, of 27 January 1995, FM Arkiv, 40 A.

⁹⁴⁵ Referat af 4. møde i 5.maj-udvalget, 13 June 1994, Stm (DK), 051-4, 1995, p. 12.

⁹⁴⁶ Referat af 4. møde i 5.maj-udvalget, 13 June 1994, Stm (DK), 051-4, 1995, p. 19.

show how much they wanted the grant to be lowered and the statue to be small. It was again Kjeldbæk who brought up the application that had been before approved by the Prime Minister himself after letters from the two communist parties DKP and Kommunistisk Parti. The discussion revolved around the question of whether an existing memorial plaque or statue should be used or a smaller version should be manufactured.⁹⁴⁷ In the end the meeting decided in favour of financial aid, probably also influenced by the Prime Minister's letters to both parties that were distributed in the beginning. It should be noticed, however, that this was *after* the actual anniversary. The actual statue is now outside the FM. The inscription reads that it was raised by the Danish state.



The memorial to the fallen communists.

This division between the different veteran's and political groups was also kept up in 2005 on the 60th anniversary. I happened to be on the Rådhusplassen the evening of the May 4th and the scenery I found was a small, almost insignificant number of participants gathering around a stage where leftist rock- and folk-bands took turns with speeches. Veterans were present and in an information tent political brochures were sold aside their memoirs. The stewards of the organizers wore badges in the same colour, size and manner as the freedom fighters did in May 1945 and the whole meeting had as a motto: "Denmark's liberation 1945 – Denmark as occupying power 2005" and the poster showed the resistances preferred gun and a rose in front of the partisans badge.

⁹⁴⁷ Referat af det 8. og afsluttende møde i 5. maj-udvalget, 19 June 1995, Stm (DK), 051-4, 1995, pp. 5-6 and 11.



The poster of the gathering on Rådhuspladsen

Certainly not all living former communist veterans might have agreed with the event and it clearly displayed a very political message in its protest against the Danish involvement in Iraq – because that is what the participants referred to with the "occupying power" – but it nevertheless showed that the officially organized celebrations did not appeal to all veterans in the same way and that some on the left side viewed their struggle as being misused by the administration and other veterans.

The communist veterans, though, were not by nature always keen on conveying a different message than the rest of the veterans. There was at times a noticeable effort to stress the common positions. When the debates around the different new historical analyses of the 1970s emerged or when the celebrations could be used as a political argument or just when their own narrative was challenged, communist veterans did oppose the diverging positions of the consensual narrative of the united struggle. When Trommer defended his study on the military results of the railway sabotage, the communist veterans did not approve of it and joined the others in their rejection. Leif Larsen, the son of the leader of BOPA Eigil Larsen, for example, wrote an account on his father when the thesis of Aage Trommer on the effectivity of the railway sabotage was published. In it he defied Trommer's notion of the military ineffectivity of the sabotage.⁹⁴⁸ With regard to the sculpture of Ejdrup Hansen, the veterans were also unified. The letters to the committee at the Prime Minister's office show that all groups, no matter which background they came from, had opposed the laser-show. Communist veterans were certainly

⁹⁴⁸ Larsen, Leif. *BØrgerlige PARTisaner. Om Modstandsgruppen BOPA Og Dens Leder Eigil Larsen*. København: Gyldendal, 1982.

not per se more prone to accept a challenge to the basic narrative than were veterans of other groups.

In 2005 the same people felt mistreated when Fogh Rasmussen apologized for the treatment of Jews and the eviction of some 20 Jews during the 1930s. Demands were also voiced to give the communists an official apology.⁹⁴⁹ Copenhagen's rabbi Bent Melchior also mentioned in an interview that he had missed the word 'communist' in the Prime Ministers speech on the anniversary and with it an apology directed toward the Danish communists. Naturally the right wing party Dansk Folkeparti had their representatives to object another apology claiming that there could not possibly be apologies for each and every group of people that had ever suffered.⁹⁵⁰ It is remarkable though that a widespread feeling that the communists deserved an apology was noticeable.

Summary

The Cold War has left its traces in the basic narratives in both countries regarding the communist share in the resistance. In both countries politicians and veterans of the democratic parties tried to degrade the communist groups and belittle their actions. That the success of these memory-political ambitions and the resulting debates were different is mainly due to the different trajectories during the occupation. The Norwegian communist resistance groups never formally joined the Hjemmefronten's leadership but discord and open hostility prevailed. The distrust of the groups acquired during the war and the fear of a communist coup d'état and the neighbour in the north-east, the Soviet Union, prevented an appreciation of their activities and also in the beginning respect for their fighters. The same politicians who had struggled with the communist resistance groups had later been the leading figures in the integration of Norway in the western alliance that was created as a defence-mechanism against an alleged communist threat. The communist groups at home were seen as the Fifth Column of the enemy rather than as the old comrades of the fight against the German invader. The motives of the communist resistance could easily be called into question with reference to the dictatorial regime in the east and the oppression of the smaller states of the eastern block by the Soviet Union. The communist claims for a representation could be compared to the claims of the former Nazis for

⁹⁴⁹ Eivind Larsen, *Skriver Fogh Danmarkshistorie*, Information, 6 May 2005. Information is a rather leftist newspaper. The author also raised the question whether one prime minister could do away with a narrative that had been cemented by the legal purge but acknowledged that Fogh Rasmussen had at least slightly corrected the "lie" on the war.

⁹⁵⁰ Ebbe Sønderriis, *Flere undskyldninger ønskes*, Information, 6 May 2005.

revision. In Denmark, on the other hand, the communists had officially closed ranks with the bourgeois and the nationalist resistance and their leaders were public figures after the war. Their reputation was not diminished by the split of the communist parties but they enjoyed at least individually respect. The former clandestine newspaper Information that was transformed into a leftist newspaper after the war certainly played a role in the transmission of views of the communist veterans but reached a broader audience. Certain authors like Hans Scherfig enjoyed a wide popularity. It was the later decades that changed some part of the perception of the communist resistance when at the peak of the Cold War the communist veterans were certainly not inclined to join celebrations that had an obvious political agenda propagating the NATO membership as well as the foreign and security policy of the country.

The very nature of the resistance struggle also played an important role in the way the communist contribution was seen. In a wider understanding of resistance, as in Norway where the civil disobedience against the Nazification from above was stressed, the very active stance of the communist groups was perceived a threat rather than a valuable assistance. In Denmark where roughly speaking the resistance became identified with the armed sabotage, the actions of the communist groups could be honoured more smoothly. The inclusion of their groups into the Frihedsrådet furthermore helped the integration of their story.

In both countries the communist resistance was honoured with memorials in the 1990s. In Norway the most prominent veteran advocated it – in Denmark the proposal was met with reluctance. The judgement on communists certainly was milder after 1990 and both in historiography and in the media the communists made their way into the public awareness. They had lost the Cold War and so their sacrifices could be acknowledged. In Denmark I have the suspicion that the reluctance to include the communist veterans in the celebrations was rather influenced by the jealousy of other veterans who guarded their own influence. Though the rather nationalist pro-NATO propaganda organisations which stood behind the publications in the 1990s might still have held political animosities. All in all, it seems that official Denmark never had problems to the same extent as could be found in Norway to acknowledge the communist share in the resistance. Certainly some of the veterans meet each other with distrust, but the very fact was appreciated. And yet, the multitude of resistance groups in the Frihedsrådet had brought not unity but also discord after the war.

Also interesting in the case of the communists is that the memory-political struggle here was fought on a different level than in some other cases because the 'opposition' had proper

organisations at their disposal, something that is widely lacking in the next case, the case of the girlfriends of German soldiers and their offspring.

3. 'TYSKERPIGER' AND THEIR 'KRIGSBARN'

During wars, sexual relations with enemy soldiers have always been highly reprimanded or even harshly punished. The same was true during the Second World War, where vast lands and whole states came under occupation.⁹⁵¹ Most people know the pictures of French women, who had had relationships with German soldiers and who, with their heads shaven and clothes ripped off, were chased through the streets in acts of 'public revenge'. These scenes occurred in Denmark and in Norway as well, albeit on a smaller scale. But also the Scandinavian countries, which shine for most outsiders as the models of gender-equality today, have a record of gender-based discrimination and punishment on the basis of assumed gender roles with respect to the war. Comparative research on these women – their relationships, their social background, the German policy towards them and their suffering – is scarce. Their situation and the treatment of their children during and after the war depended highly on the kind of occupation regime the Germans had enacted in the occupied countries, as did their number. German racist ideology was the basis on which these relationships and the children have to be assessed, since the attitude towards the women in the occupied countries depended heavily on the position the occupied people were attributed in the racist pseudo-science of the Nazis. Danes and Norwegians counted as being on the same 'superior' level as the Germans and relationships were not forbidden, but encouraged. The further south or east the occupied country was located the more these relationships were restricted. Another important factor for the number of these relationships seems to have been the number of German soldiers in certain areas. The per capita rate of German soldiers is often assumed to have had a direct relation to the number of relationships with the local population. But again newer and comprehensive comparative studies are missing. But one thing is clear, all women faced anger on the background of gender-roles that were shaken and sometimes turned obsolete by the war. The women and their offspring were met with hostility fed by sexist, nationalist and sometimes racist categories – by men and by other women. This hostility did not just show during and directly after the war but continued with mobbing and public concealment far into our times. Though the sexual relations they had belong logically to the private sphere, they became a public and a political phenomenon through the situation of an occupation. Their private choices had to be interpreted as political choices as well. More problematic was that this notion was also extended to the offspring of these relationships. The children of war were categorized, as I will show, as 'enemy blood' and 'fifth

⁹⁵¹ A more recent work on women in occupied Europe who had relationships with German soldiers is Drolshagen, Ebba D., *Nicht ungeschoren davonkommen. Die Geliebten der Wehrmachtssoldaten im besetzten Europa*, München: Econ 2000.

column' and the calls to expel them from the country, together with their mothers, were loud. In both countries many opted voluntarily in favour of emigration as a direct result of the pressure. The root of the conflict was the same – a sexual relationship with the enemy – the persecution differed in its features. A particular case is the children of the NS members in Norway. Due to a tendency to mix them up with the war children they will be examined here as well.

But a short remark may be permitted on the forehand: The history of the 'German brides' always runs the risk, also by well meaning authors, to be told solely as a history of suffering. A great number of these women had suffered or are still suffering from traumatic events and consecutive mistreatment, but it is doubtful if one pays due respect to either the women or their life stories if their biographies are reduced only to a state of passiveness – also they did make choices. The notion of these women as driven by desire or as being intellectually or morally inferior to the majority as found during and right after the war may find its continuation in images of the women as mere victims of history. Today's approaches to their histories should rather be directed by a combination of scientific sobriety that takes into account their actions in the context of the transitional stage from traditional to modern gender roles and a sympathy to their individual fate. The problem of any discussion of this complex chapter of any war history is already visible when one looks at the terminology available. There seems to be no word to describe the women that is not infected by moral judgement of sexist categories. The women have been called 'tyskertøs' which literally means 'whore of the Germans', feltmadrass – 'camp bed' or 'tyskerpige', a 'girl of the Germans' – the latter being the least insulting, albeit not free of negative connotations.⁹⁵² The first two terms refer directly to a purely sexual relationship and do not leave space for emotional commitment but only functional relationships of the kind of 'venal love'. Their children were referred to as some kind of a future threat to the 'health of the nation' and racist categories were frequently used when referring to them. To understand the special situation these women often were in and to acknowledge the existence of emotional bonds between them and their partners becomes impossible by the choice of words. That this had often been the case will become visible on the following pages where Norway is treated first because of the greater complexity of the case, since the fate of the children of the *tyskerpiger* was often merged with those of the children of the Norwegian Nazis. In order not to perpetuate the insulting notion of the mothers as being prostitutes, on the following pages I will refer to them

⁹⁵² The Danish historian Anette Warring is therefore using *tyskerpiger* as term in her publications. Warring, Anette. *Tyskerpiger - Under Besættelse Og Retopgør*. København: Gyldendal, 1994 and Warring, Anette, *Danske Tyskepiger - Hverken Ofre Eller Forrædere*, in *Kvinner, Krig Og Kjærlighet*. editors Dag Ellingsen, Anette Warring, and I. D. Blörnsdóttir, 81-148. Oslo: 1995.

mostly with the Danish word *tyskerpiger* as has Anette Warring suggested.⁹⁵³ Through her book with the same title, she has established this term in the research on the women. In Norwegian, some refer to the *tyskerpiger* as *tyskerjenter* which means exactly the same – girls of the Germans.

'Vi ville ikke ha dem' – Deportation and Apologies

Even if it was not officially encouraged, the acts of shaving occurred in significant dimensions all over the country.⁹⁵⁴ Not just that. Besides these incidents of spontaneous outbursts of anger against women who were accused of having betrayed their country and which often left scars on the victims' souls, more organised and long-lasting measures were taken. The women were generally referred to by their almost exclusively male tormentors as 'tyskertøser', thereby being branded as prostitutes. So there often seems to have been just a short step to insinuating that they carried contagious diseases and were therefore a threat to public health.⁹⁵⁵ As a result police measures seemed to be appropriate. All over Norway women who had had either intimate or just friendly relations with German soldiers were interned in camps or taken into police custody – even though they had never broken an existing Norwegian law. The official explanation given, if the local authorities bothered to give one at all, was that they were put into custody allegedly to protect them from the angry population. But the real cause was often punishment.⁹⁵⁶ There was a harsh regiment in the nine camps and the fact that the women had to perform hard labour and the guards were allowed to use firearms if necessary show its punitive character.⁹⁵⁷ The authorities had extended the power of the police to that matter.⁹⁵⁸ One of the provisions was officially aimed at preventing the spread of venereal diseases. Remarkably enough it was directed only at women.⁹⁵⁹ A lot of these women went through harsh and embarrassing interrogations in which they had to talk about intimate details. In general they were characterised as being of an indecent character, stupid or mentally retarded. Except for these regulations, the Norwegian government and central authorities do not seem to have ordered any special treatment of the *tyskerpiger*; instead it was the local civil servant or citizen who took action. It seems that the general opinion was quite united in its desire to punish the

⁹⁵³ Warring, Anette. *Tyskerpiger - Under Besættelse Og Retopgør*. København: Gyldendal, 1994, pp. 11.

⁹⁵⁴ Eriksen, Knut Einar, Halvorsen, Terje, Frigjøring, Skodvin, Magne (ed.), *Norge i krig. Fremmedåk og frihetskamp 1940-1945*, vol. 8, Oslo: Aschehoug 1987, p. 236.

⁹⁵⁵ Eriksen/ Halvorsen, Frigjøring, p. 249.

⁹⁵⁶ Eriksen/ Halvorsen, Frigjøring, p. 250.

⁹⁵⁷ Drolshagen, *Nicht ungeschoren davonkommen*, p. 160.

⁹⁵⁸ Eriksen/ Halvorsen, Frigjøring, p. 233.

⁹⁵⁹ Drolshagen, *Nicht ungeschoren davonkommen*, p. 160. More in-depth Helgesen, Kari, "... f.t. siktet som tyskertøs", in *Historisk Tidskrift (N)*, 1990, pp. 285-310.

women. The government and the Hjemmefront created a climate favourable to punishment and worked as instigators, for example, via the war propaganda. A radio speech from a 1941 broadcast via the BBC on its Norwegian programme warned women to "subjugate Norway"⁹⁶⁰ and they were told that they would have to pay a "dreadful price for the rest of their lives."⁹⁶¹ So it is not that astonishing that the shaving of tyskerpiger and other humiliating acts like ripping their clothes were frequent incidents of street justice in 1945. In Denmark, this happened too, but there the tyskerpiger had already been victims of the mob in the days of the general strike in August 1943, which shows that the hatred against them had built up already at an early stage of the occupation.⁹⁶²

There is no accurate figure on those women for Denmark or for Norway but an estimate says that there were between 40,000-50,000 tyskerpiger all in all in Norway.⁹⁶³ The reason might have been that, in the 'Festung Norwegen', the German soldiers (at times around 400,000) normally were stationed at fortifications along the coast to fight the expected invasion by the Allies. That meant that the soldiers were in one place for a long time and at some of these places they were more numerous than the local population. All that made relationships a lot easier and more frequent than in some other countries under German occupation. The question here is now what happened to these children and their mothers? The Norwegian authorities issued a provisional law in 1945 stating that everybody who married a German lost their citizenship and could therefore be expelled from the country.⁹⁶⁴ Even though it was stated that this rule was not created to be applied mainly on these children and their mothers unofficial commentaries made it quite clear what was intended. The government followed a policy of getting rid of the women and their offspring. The measures were recommended by a special committee founded in 1945 by the Norwegian Ministry of Social Affairs. It was intended to find solutions for what was generally referred to as the problem of the 'German brats'. It is astonishing to read what categories determined the thinking of the members of this committee, categories that were of a purely racist background. The children were expected to turn out criminal and aggressive due to their 'German blood' and their supposedly mentally retarded mothers. The mothers had shown that they were unworthy of the care of the children and if the children could be kept in check it

⁹⁶⁰ Eriksen/ Halvorsen, *Frigjøring*, p. 249.

⁹⁶¹ Olsen, Kåre, *Da freden brøt løs. Norske myndigheters behandling av tyskerjenter*, in: Ugelvik Larsen, Stein (ed.), *I krigens kjølvann. Nye sider ved norsk krigshistorie og etterkrigstid*, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget 1999, pp-275-296, p. 275.

⁹⁶² Warring, Anette, *Tyskerpiger – under besættelse og retsoppgør*, København: Gyldendal 1994. It is the published Ph.D.-thesis she wrote at the Roskilde Universitetscenter 1993. She prefers the less offensive term 'tyskerpige' which means 'girl of the Germans'.

⁹⁶³ Olsen, *Da freden brøt løs*, pp. 277-278 and Eriksen/ Halvorsen, *Frigjøring*, p. 251.

⁹⁶⁴ Eriksen, Anne, *National Pride, National Pollution. The Case of the Norwegian War Children*, in: *Arv*, vol. 59, 2003, pp. 199-219, pp. 208-209.

would have to be done by special institutions which would have to be set up. They should examine mothers and children carefully to be able to react against deviant or dangerous developments. All traces of the indecent origin of the children had to be wiped out.⁹⁶⁵ Still, it was not about punishment of the children. They were the "embodiment of national betrayal"⁹⁶⁶ but their mothers had to be blamed and punished. A committee set up by priests who were interned in Lillehammer as early as the fall of 1944 voted with reference to the power given to the proper authorities by God that the women had to be prosecuted.⁹⁶⁷

All this today appears to be very harsh and some of the reasons for it have to be briefly discussed. Women, in the gendered society of the 1940s, were seen as the bearers of the nation. Their betrayal was seen by men to be even worse than that of men because it affected the purity of the nation that they had 'soiled'. The above-mentioned efforts to expatriate the women if they stayed loyal to their German partners reflect the specificity of this case. If the women fled to Sweden during the war where a huge Norwegian exile-community lived, the Norwegian authorities at hand would not support the women if they had the slightest suspicion that they had had affairs with the occupant. They were left to the Swedish welfare system.⁹⁶⁸ This shows that Norwegian authorities tried to exclude them from the nation because they had brought shame on it.⁹⁶⁹ They were seen as worse traitors than the NS members, coming close just to the *frontkjempere*, those men who fought on the German side in the war. Both the women and the men "incorporate the utmost betrayal of the nation." They have not only collaborated but showed the "ultimate negative male and female behaviour."⁹⁷⁰ Inside and outside of the country, Norwegians had worked so hard to transform it from a collaborating puppet of the Nazis to a resistance nation and both the volunteers and the *tyskerpiger* not only endangered this important new reputation but ultimately transgressed the ascribed gender roles and their offspring is the embodiment of shame and the betrayal. Johannes Andenæs wrote in a little brochure on the transitional justice that was printed in 1945 that foreigners faced with rumours of about 9,000 war children might wonder "if it is the same people that has been otherwise described as an example of the will to resist and of unity".⁹⁷¹

It seems that the anger was a mixture of feeling insulted not only in respect to national virtues but also in respect to traditional gender roles and views on female sexuality as such. The women

⁹⁶⁵ Eriksen, National Pride, p. 209.

⁹⁶⁶ Eriksen, National Pride, p.213.

⁹⁶⁷ Olsen, Kåre, *Krigens barn. De norske krigsbarna og deres mødre*, Oslo: Forum Aschehoug 1998, p. 241.

⁹⁶⁸ Olsen, *Krigens barn*, pp. 245-257.

⁹⁶⁹ That is what an illegal newspaper already in 1943 argued. Olsen, *Krigens barn*, p. 246.

⁹⁷⁰ Eriksen, National Pollution, p. 212.

⁹⁷¹ Andenæs, Johannes, *Rettsoppgjøret*, Oslo: Johan Grundt Tanum 1945 found in NHM Bibliotek 341.69 Boks, p. 7.

were not only seen as forgetting their national duty to support the male resistance, even worse they also showed sensual pleasure. This posed a menace to the traditional sexual moral.⁹⁷² Their sexuality became a national question of honour and Norwegian men might have viewed their inability to ward off the break-up of the gender roles and the treason with German men as a sign of "national impotence".⁹⁷³ In addition to these motifs, whose origin is a gendered view of the society and of fixed gender rules, other more vulgar reasons might have played a role. So also the personal need for revenge might have played a role in the incidents of young men shaving and humiliating women because they had been rejected by them before – an offence even worse when the woman afterwards went out with the enemy.⁹⁷⁴ Others may have wanted to show that they were standing on the 'right side' of the community and were appalled by the 'un-national' behaviour of the women. And finally, throughout the war the government in exile as well as the leaders of the Hjemmefront were eager to create a picture of the Norwegian population as one united in hatred and resistance against the Germans and their Norwegian collaborators. The tyskerpiger posed a threat to the self-image of the resistance and to the opinion in the allied countries.⁹⁷⁵ In order to categorize the women as being outside of the national community, the resistance, even during the occupation started spreading certain rumours: that they were promiscuous and stupid or that they were prostitutes. Examinations of the social background of the tyskerpiger did though show the invalidity of these myths.⁹⁷⁶

After having said that, it is not that surprising that not much has been written about the victims of these policies. So far no comprehensive examination of the phenomenon that affected, in the relatively small population of Norway, a considerable amount of women, has been done. The first more scientific monograph on the matter was published in 1998 and dealt primarily with the children.⁹⁷⁷ It seems that it was easier to accept that these children were innocent and that what was done to them might have been wrong. The women, however, were better to be kept secret. Books about them were mainly autobiographical, fiction or what might be called semi-documentary. In the beginning they were represented among other 'common' Norwegians in the book of the journalist Johan Jensen *De nære årene* (These Close Years), in which besides the tyskerpiger also the adjutant of Quisling and the SS-volunteer or the allied sailor got a 'voice'.⁹⁷⁸ Astonishingly he quotes a woman who became a victim to an act of revenge when the "[...]

⁹⁷² Warring, 'Tyskerpiger', p. 199.

⁹⁷³ Eriksen, National Pollution, p. 214.

⁹⁷⁴ Helgesen, "... f.t. siktet som tyskertøs", p. 303.

⁹⁷⁵ Olsen, Krigens barn, p.235.

⁹⁷⁶ Ellingsen, Dag, De Norske 'Tyskertøsene': Der Myter Rår, in *Kvinner, Krig Og Kjærlighet*. editors Dag Ellingsen, Anette Warring, and I. D. Blörnsdóttir, 13-80. Oslo: 1995, pp. 13-80.

⁹⁷⁷ Olsen, Krigens barn.

⁹⁷⁸ Jensen, Johan O. (ed.), *De nære årene*. Norske kvinner og menn forteller om krigen, Oslo: Gyldendal 1986.

brave Norwegians, who had never once lifted a finger for their country in these five years [shouted] 'We shall cut your hair!'"⁹⁷⁹

Some examples are Sigurd Senje's *Dømte kvinner* and Astrid Datland Leira's *Kjærligheten har ingen vilje*. Both have a particular approach, the first includes the collaborating nurses in the Wehrmacht and the other concentrates on the tyskerjenter that got caught up behind the iron-curtain.⁹⁸⁰ At the end of the 1980s, the time was ripe to present the topic to a broader audience and the state-owned television Norsk Rikskringkasting (NRK) showed a programme on the 'krigsbrudene' – the brides of war. The reactions proved that public opinion on the matter had changed and people were interested in this aspect of the war history as well.⁹⁸¹ Veslemøy Kjendsli, the journalist responsible for the programme also published a 'follow-up' documentary book on the children of the brides of war.⁹⁸² The story of the adopted Lebensborn-child Elke/Turid and her childhood is told. The book focuses on her troubles in finding out about her past, was well received and widely read.

These works of fiction or semi-documentaries helped to bring attention on this group of war victims and to trigger off a debate – a debate that did not stop short of also finding its way into the research. At around the same time the eighth volume of the big work on the war in Norway *Norge i krig* was published. The last chapter of the volume *Frigjøring* by Knut Eriksen and Terje Halvorsen examined also tyskerpiger in a very critical and reflected manner.⁹⁸³ But it was not until 1998 that a monograph on the story of the children and the mothers that could live up to scientific standards was published. The author of *Krigens barn* Kåre Olsen was then the archivist in the National Archives in Oslo and occupied with the files of the 10-12,000 war children, which after changes in the law on public access to files and the adoption law in 1971 and 1986 were eligible to apply for information on their biological parents.⁹⁸⁴

It seemed to be easier to talk about the offspring of these women, the krigsbarn, than about the mothers. And here again, it was the fiction genre that saw the first treatment of the topic. Herbjørg Wassmo is a popular author in Norway. She dedicated several books to the matter, telling the story of a young girl – a war child - who grows up with her mother and stepfather in a rural area and gives a good understanding of the stereotypes and the problems these children often met. In her trilogy on the story of Tora, *Huset med den blinde glassveranda* is probably

⁹⁷⁹ Jensen, *De nære årenen*, p. 150, quoted from Ellingsen, *Tyskertøsene*, p. 49.

⁹⁸⁰ Senje, Sigurd, *Dømte kvinner. Tyskerjenter og front søstre 1940-45*, Oslo: Pax 1986 and Leira, Astrid Datland, *Kjærligheten har ingen vilje. Norske "tyskerjenter" bak jernteppe og Berlin-mur*, Oslo: Tiden 1987.

⁹⁸¹ Helgesen, "... f.t. siktet som tyskertøs", pp. 285-286.

⁹⁸² Kjendsli, Veslemøy, *Skammens barn. Dokumentarroman*, Oslo: Metope 1986.

⁹⁸³ See Eriksen, Knut Einar, Halvorsen, Terje, *Frigjøring*, vol. 8, *Norge i krig*, Oslo: Aschehoug 1987.

⁹⁸⁴ Borgersrud, Lars, *Vi ville ikke ha dem. Statens behandling av de norske krigsbarna*, Oslo: Scandinavian Academic Press 2005, pp. 11-12.

the most well-known, and was awarded the Nordisk Råd's prize for literature in 1986.⁹⁸⁵ Also in the 1980s self-help groups of the krigsbarn were established in which the now adult krigsbarn could get psychological and social support. There are currently three major lobby groups working in this field. The first one was the *Norges Krigsbarnforbund* in 1985, followed later by *Stiftelsen Retferd for Tapere* and *Krigsbarnforbundet Lebensborn*.⁹⁸⁶ From the NKBF initiatives were taken to approach the public and the state on the matter. After 1998 more information on the terrible fate of some of the war children came out and the Norwegian Parliament (Storting) even dealt with the matter. The government promised to act and the Norwegian Research Council was assigned to examine the charges and the history of the children. The result of it was a report called *Fiendens barn* (The Children of the Enemy) which was published in 1999.⁹⁸⁷ The report found evidence for mistreatment and a responsibility of the Norwegian state but also stated that more intensive research was needed. The Research Council then started a further research project at the University of Oslo to examine the life stories of the children. This project, supported by the Department of Social Affairs and the Department of Health and Family Issues, *Oppvekstvilkår for krigsbarna* (The Social Conditions of Growing-Up of the War Children) was started in 2001 and has so far brought some interesting findings. It discovered the plot of Norwegian authorities who knowingly and deliberately managed to send the children of Norwegian mothers, who had been brought to a Lebensborn-Heim (orphanage) in Germany by the Germans, to Sweden where they were adopted under the false premises that they were born in German concentration camps.⁹⁸⁸ The project is still going on. Besides this project the German-Norwegian foundation Willy-Brandt-Stiftung created an exhibition on the topic that was shown in Berlin, Oslo, Bergen, Tromsø, Erfurt Hadamar and Essen in 2001-2003.⁹⁸⁹ Other contributors to the project have examined and published on the life stories of the children.⁹⁹⁰

⁹⁸⁵ Wassmo, Herbjørg, *Huset med den blinde glassveranda*, Oslo: Gyldendal 1981. The sequels are *Det stumme rommet*, Oslo: Gyldendal 1983 and *Hudløs himmel*, Oslo: Gyldendal 1986.

⁹⁸⁶ All associations have their respective webpages: *Norges Krigsbarnforbund* - <http://www.nkbf.no/>; *Stiftelsen Retferd for Tapere* - <http://www.taperne.no/krigsbarna.htm>; *Krigsbarnforbundet Lebensborn* - <http://home.no.net/lebenorg/>.

⁹⁸⁷ Borge, Baard H. and Borgersrud, Lars, *Fiendens Barn? Undersøkelse av noen sider ved norske myndigheters behandling av tysk-norske krigsbarn etter andre verdenskrig*, Oslo: Norsk forskningsråd 1999.

⁹⁸⁸ Borgersrud, Lars, *Overlatt til svenske myndigheter. De norske krigsbarna som ble sendt til Sverige i 1945*. Conference *Børn og Krig 2002*, Oslo, Institutt for Kulturstudier ved Universitetet i Oslo and Norsk Nordsjøfartsmuseet i Televåg. And the subsequent publication Borgersrud, Lars, *Overlatt til svenske myndigheter, De norske krigsbarna som ble sendt til Sverige i 1945*, Oslo, Unipub, Institut for kulturstudier UiO 2002.

⁹⁸⁹ Olsen, Kåre, *Krigsbarn. Vandretstilling med fotografier av Einar Bangsund – Barn av norske kvinner og tyske soldater 1940-45*, Willy-Brandt-Stiftung, <http://www.willy-brandt-stiftung.de/krigsbarn.htm>.

⁹⁹⁰ Ellingsen, Dag, *Krigsbarnens levevilkår. En registerbasert undersøkelse*, Oslo: Statistisk sentralbyrå 2004; Simonsen, Eva, Ericsson, Kjersti, *Krigsbarn i fredstid. Sosialpolitiske og professionelle føringer i synet på tysk-norske krigsbarn 1945-47*, Oslo: Institutt for kriminologi og rettssosiologi, UiO 2004 and Simonsen, Eva, Ericsson, Kjersti, *Krigsbarn i fredstid*, Oslo, Universitetsforlaget 2005. An English book on the topic is:

One of the immediate outcomes of the debate and the new information was, that the Prime Minister of Norway, Kjell Magne Bondevik, in his speech on 1 January 2000, publicly asked for forgiveness on behalf of the Norwegian state for the treatment of the war children⁹⁹¹ and in 2002 met with one of the deported children and personally apologised again.⁹⁹² He said among other things: "If we want to create and keep national unity, we have to right the wrongs and create a community of reconciliation."⁹⁹³ Criticism was voiced though, because at the same time and in the same New-Year's speech Bondevik and other politicians discussed restitution for the Sámi people and the hardship they had been through and for the Norwegian Jews and the property that had been stolen from them.⁹⁹⁴ The war children's lobby groups saw this as an encouragement to demand compensation as well and those who had suffered most, because they had been put into sanatoriums or children's homes, some even in homes for the mentally retarded, started to claim compensation from the state themselves with individual lawsuits and class action suits. Meanwhile some of the findings of the research project and especially the shocking report of Borgersrud on the deportation of a group of war children to Sweden persuaded the Norwegian parliament to officially ask the Ministry of Justice to form a committee to find a mode of compensation. It thereby acknowledged the right of the krigsbarn to gain redress. This triggered a debate in the newspapers and really brought attention to the matter. The process of compensation was supposed to be settled in October 2004 but in spring 2004 it became public that the costs of going to court might be so high that some of the krigsbarn would have to give up their claim.⁹⁹⁵ The reason is that the Ministry of Justice demands proof for every individual krigsbarn that it suffered strain to a high degree.⁹⁹⁶ The associations of krigsbarn describe the behaviour of the Ministry as an intentional attempt to protract the compensations. An effective solution was not found until fall 2004.⁹⁹⁷ There was still a considerable resistance against the compensation and a debate on whether or to what extent the war children had suffered from maltreatment after the war. Some studies suggest an overall lesser degree of education due to harassment in school and psychological problems, and consequently a lower economic status in

Simonsen, Eva and Ericsson, Kjersti, *Children of Second World War. The Hidden Enemy Legacy*, Berg, Oxford, New York: Universitetsforlaget 2005.

⁹⁹¹ NRK news report, *Må dokumentere overløst*, 16 December 2004, <http://nrk.no/nyheter/innenriks/3361551.html>.

⁹⁹² Kluge, Lars, *De stal min sjanse å treffe mamma*, *Aftenposten/ web issue*, 25 April 2002, <http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/article.jhtml?articleID=318933>.

⁹⁹³ Cited from Letvik, Tore, *Bondevik vil ikke svare*, *Dagsavisen/ web issue*, 22 February 2000, <http://www.dagsavisen.no/innenriks/article984704.ece>.

⁹⁹⁴ Maerz, *Landesverrat*, p. 69.

⁹⁹⁵ Sandberg, Tore, *Krigsbarn kan bli gjeldslaver*, in: *Dagsavisen*, 12 March 2004, web issue, <http://www.dagsavisen.no/innenriks/apor/2001/09/596866.shtml>

⁹⁹⁶ NRK news report, *Må dokumentere overløst*.

society, others dispute the findings and point at the percentage of war children that lead a perfectly adapted life.⁹⁹⁸ A preliminary end to at least the administrative struggle was found when the Parliament decided on a law to compensate the krigsbarn alongside the Tatere and the Romani people in April 2005.⁹⁹⁹ Krigsbarn are eligible now to a compensation of NOK 20,000 if they produce medical certificates for post-traumatic diseases and up to NOK 200,000 if they are able to document extraordinary suffering. Not all children, however, were satisfied and there is a number of children of which some were born in Lebensborn institutions who claim that the money allocated to the individual petitioner according to the compensation plan was not sufficient. They also wanted a public acknowledgement that state institutions were part of a systematic mobbing scheme against them. So they even went to the European Court of Human Rights. Their cases, at the time of writing, are still pending.¹⁰⁰⁰

On the side of the veterans the new interest in the krigsbarn is not necessarily greeted with favour. For some of them these children still represent the living 'mark of Cain' of Norwegian fraternization. A comment in the veterans' journal *Krigsinvaliden* in 2000 said that everybody was talking about the krigsbarn but no-one about the children of the sailors sailing for the allies and defending the country that never got to see their fathers or were traumatized.¹⁰⁰¹ The same only in harder words was claimed in 1999 in *Dagsavisen* in a letter to the editor where a woman called Petty Amundsen wrote: "Shame on you who had children with Germans and you children should understand that you are not victims of injustice! Give up that disgraceful organisation!"¹⁰⁰² In the meantime the research project on the children has produced more publications. Under the direction of Anne Eriksen of Oslo University several books were published and gained widespread attention. Among the around eleven books and 30 articles in several languages was another book by Lars Borgersrud focussing on the administration's treatment of the children and their mothers, *Fiendens barn* by Kersti Ericsson and Eva Salomon

⁹⁹⁷ Norges Krigsbarnforbund, Styret, Nyhetsmelding 13. Møte med justisminister Einar Dørum og krigsbarnas organisasjoner 16. desember 2003, press release 24 March 2004, http://www.nkbf.no/Nyheter/2003/Nyhet_13/mote_justism_161203.htm.

⁹⁹⁸ Kluge, Lars, Høyere dødelighet, dårligere økonomi, *Aftenposten*/web issue, 19 September 2004, <http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/article873621.ece>

⁹⁹⁹ Erstatningsordning for krigsbarn og erstatningsordninger for romanifolk/tatere og eldre utdanningsskadelidende samer og kvener, 4 April 2005, *Stortingstidende*, Innst. S. nr. 152 (2004-2005), jf. St.meld. nr. 44 (2003-2004). The actual regulations can be accessed as pdf from the Ministry of Justice and the Police at <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/ministries/jd/Documents-and-publications/Reports-to-the-Storting-White-Papers/stmeld/20032004/Stmeld-nr-44-2003-2004-.html?id=198295> and at Justissekretariatene, Billighetserstatning av statskassen, <http://www.justissekretariatene.no/billighet.html>.

¹⁰⁰⁰ The first hearing was on 8 March 2007. European Court of Human rights, <http://www.echr.coe.int/>.

¹⁰⁰¹ Aasland, Hanno, Krigsbarn Eller Krigens Barn?" *Krigsinvaliden* 3 (2000): 31-33.

¹⁰⁰² Amundsen, Petty, Krigsbarn?, 16 September 1999, *Dagsavisen*/ web issue, <http://www.dagsavisen.no/kultur/article1050536.ece>.

and the English anthology *Children of Second World War* by the same authors.¹⁰⁰³ But why did it take the public so long to consider that mistakes had possibly been made in the postwar years or by the Hjemmefront? Analogous to a general trend in the historical sciences, it was not until the 1980s that aspects of the everyday life under German occupation were examined and focus was directed to hitherto forgotten topics. Anne Eriksen voiced the thought that saying that intimate relationships with the Germans were quite all right would at the same time make the 'ice front' part of civil resistance meaningless. But even smaller adjustments of the collective memory may be threatening, because of this relational domino effect.¹⁰⁰⁴ This is reflected in an article in *Krigsinvaliden*, a newspaper of the veteran associations, that states pity for the mobbing the children were exposed to but that violently argues against any compensation.¹⁰⁰⁵ The women are not mentioned in this debate at all, it still seems to be harder to talk about them than about the innocent children. Also the Stortingspresident Kirsti Kolle Grøndahl in her speech in Parliament on the 50th anniversary of the liberation said: "[...] today we can see much clearer that there was suffering on both sides of the front, which is also a reason for the fact that today not all Norwegians take fully part in our joy. I think about those, who had suffered because their fathers chose the wrong side, and about those who were born with a German soldier as father."¹⁰⁰⁶ The children can be re-incorporated into the nation because unjust suffering had to be made up for. The wording of Kolle Grøndahl's speech, which made way for the later apologies by the Prime Minister was actually more to the point than a suggestion made by the historian, veteran and politician of remembrance Ole Kristian Grimnes. In the Archive of the Stortinget, a draft can be found that he had on request sent as a specialist. In his draft the corresponding passage was: "The many postwar years make it clearer that the war had two sides and that there has been suffering on both these sides, also in the second generation. The descendants were made to feel which side their fathers stood on – and have suffered."¹⁰⁰⁷ Kolle Grøndahl calls them what they were, but also she does not mention the reason for the suffering nor does she name those responsible for it. That had still to be left unspoken off.

¹⁰⁰³ Borgersrud, Lars, *Staten Og Krigsbarna. En Historisk Undersøkelse Av Statsmyndighetenes Behandling Av Krigsbarna i De Første Etterkrigsårene*. Forskningsprosjekt "Oppvekstvilkår for Krigsbarna", Oslo: Universitetet i Oslo, Institutt for Kulturstudier, 2004; Ericsson, Kersti, and Eva Simonsen (eds.), *Krigsbarn i Fredstid*, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2005 and Ericsson, Kersti, and Eva Simonsen (eds.), *Children of Second World War : the Hidden Enemy Legacy*, Oxford: Berg, 2005.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Eriksen, *National Pollution*, p. 213. 'Ice-front' or 'cold shoulder' (Norw. 'isfront') was a slogan given out by the resistance movement to isolate the Germans and the NS.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Hobblesland, Ole, *Erstatning til mobbeoffre*, *Krigsinvaliden*, 2 (2002), p.4.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Cited according to Borge, Baard H., "De kalle oss nazyngel". *NS-barnas historie 1940-2002*, Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget 2002, p. 235.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Grimnes, Ole Kristian, *Utkast til taler for stortingspresidenten*, Stortingets arkiv, Stortingets kontor saksnr 94/811, Frigjøringsjubileet 1995.

"NS-barn"

Another group which was mentioned in the speech and whose fate was comparable and connected to the 'tyskerbarn' is that of the children of the members of the Nazi party Nasjonal Samling. The history of the NS-barn is specific to the Norwegian case because Denmark was lacking a Nazi-party as strong as it grew in Norway over the course of the occupation years. But in Norway these groups are very often confused.¹⁰⁰⁸ However, the treatment of their history and the feelings towards them in postwar Norway makes it nevertheless seem reasonable to connect the two topics. NS-barn are the children of families in which at least one of the parents was a member of the Nasjonal Samling party during the occupation. This group is almost identical to the children of parents charged with treason or landssvik. Early during the war the Hjemmefront called for an 'isfront' against them as well. Ice-front meant that the illegal newspapers would spread slogans that said that no 'good Norwegian' should talk or socialise with the NS members and their children should not talk to the children of these quislings. During and after the war, so many, but not all, of these children suffered harassment or were even physically attacked or isolated and mobbed. Some would still not talk about their traumatic experiences or do not want that anybody to know about their parents because of the social stigma it means in a small society like Norway. Also in the case of the NS-barn the suffering must not necessarily stem from direct psychological or physical abuse by others but might also have its roots in inner conflicts of the children themselves. The feeling of shame and guilt some of these people feel amounts to problems as bad as the effects of mobbing and often to a higher degree than that felt by the krigsbarn. Just a short glimpse of the case of the children of Norwegian Nazis shows that it is harder for Norwegian society to make it up with the NS-barn than with the krigsbarn. The suspicion that these children are still influenced by the NS ideology of their parents and continue the landssvik that the parents once committed is widely prevalent. A problem that is not implausible and might sometimes even be the case. Ole Kristian Grimnes wrote in an article in 1990 that the NS-barn are either silent or if they write about war and occupation tend to apologise for the NS or accuse Norwegian society of injustice done to their parents.¹⁰⁰⁹ And yet to make a general statement on the whole group would probably do wrong for most of its members. In the first in-depth study on these children Baard Borge asked NS-barn who he had interviewed about their party preferences and came up with a distribution of preferences that was comparable to the general population. One might argue that the group of interviewees was not necessarily representative but his findings indicate that there is no compelling necessity to

¹⁰⁰⁸ Borge, *De kallte oss naziynge*, p. 13.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Grimnes, *Historieskrivingen*.

assume that these people are all neo-Nazis. However, it is true that in the circle round the organisations of the former NS members and their children, there had been right-extremist tendencies at least in the 1970s and that NS-barn, he claims, are among the leading neo-Nazis in Norway.¹⁰¹⁰ Finn Fuglestad, historian and himself a NS-barn, in an article for the journal *Samtiden*, in 1991, voiced the suspicion that the reason for the silence around the NS-barn and the landssviker in the public as well as in historiography is the fact that it was quite a large number. The master narrative tells us of a country united in resistance and in which only a very small number of traitors left the national community. Talking about the 'other side' or acknowledging the fact that a substantial number of Norwegians suffered from mobbing after the war would endanger the narrative and the self-image. He states that only the Danes were a 'tamer' occupied nation and that half of the population worked for the German army and nobody really opposed it, that the police played a rather dubious role and that the only people who really helped to fight the Germans, the krigsseiler, were treated badly after the war. All that and the fact that parts of the Storting negotiated with the Germans on the dismissal of the King changes the picture and therefore was better forgotten. The NS-barn are the visual proof of all the treason.¹⁰¹¹ This assumption should not easily be dismissed since the number of NS-barn is quite large. Given the fact that around 50,000 families in Norway had via one of the family members contact with the NS, it is reasonable to assume a total of around 100,000 NS-barn.¹⁰¹² The number is also higher because the time period one has to talk about when dealing with the NS-barn is significantly longer. Krigsbarn would logically have to be born during the five years of the occupation and the first months after the liberation. The NS-barn would be born into shame even a decade after the war. Another argument Fuglestad puts forward in this article is the feeling that the ones who mobbed most were actually the ones whose conduct throughout the war was rather doubtful – the bystanders and the hesitant – the 'strippete'.¹⁰¹³ They needed to show their patriotic feelings after the war and to prove that they were on the right side. Everybody who today writes about NS-barn or even about the rettsoppgjøret still has to assure the public that he does not defend Nazism and that he abhors the NS. Fuglestad does so too, and often in his article, he assures the readers of his hatred of the Nazis.

If Fuglestad is right, it is not surprising that until the 1990s no one was interested in this rather large group of the population. Of course, any work on the NS-barn had to face the problem that those concerned were not very willing to speak. Only very few came out into the open and told

¹⁰¹⁰ Borge, *De kallte oss naziengel*, p. 220-230.

¹⁰¹¹ Fuglestad, Finn, *Vi som arvet skammen*, *Samtiden*, 1991, pp. 16-23.

¹⁰¹² Borge, *De kallte oss Naziengel*, p. 241.

¹⁰¹³ Fuglestad, *Vi som arvet skammen*. Strippete means striped and denotes the people who would not take side.

their story. The earliest book that contained a larger number of life stories of NS-barn was Asger Olden's *Fødd skyldig* (Born guilty) in 1988.¹⁰¹⁴ In his introduction the author explains his interest and also performs the ritual of abhorring Nazism which was visible in the above-quoted Fuglestad book. The last chapter obviously is added for the same purpose, it is an interview with the scholar Harald Ofstad on the nature of Nazism and the motivations of the NS members. The chapter serves to prove the proper attitude of the author. The book alleges even that the majority of the NS-barn was either at some point of their life institutionalised, in psychiatric treatment or in need of mind drugs – fails though to supply proof. Another estimate based on a survey claims that 60% of the children have suffered some problems during their youth – the effects of those problems are not quantified though.¹⁰¹⁵ It would need much more structured and intensive research to be able to understand how many of these children had suffered dramatic problems as well as the nature of the trauma – research like what has been done in the case of the krigsbarn. Their fate is still discussed outside the mainstream research.

One of the more popular books on the topic was *Dommen* (The Judgement) by Hanna Kvanmo, published in 1990.¹⁰¹⁶ It certainly contributed to the popularity of the book and the debate that developed after its publication that Kvanmo was a member of the Stortinget. As public figure and politician of a democratic party Kvanmo was a voice to reckon with, particularly because she was visibly not right-extremist. Another important book was Eystein Eggen's *Gutten fra Gimle* that was published in 1993.¹⁰¹⁷ Eggen grew up as the son of one of Quisling's collaborators at Quisling's mansion on Bygdøy and tells his experiences in postwar Norway. Though the books did make the existence of the NS-barn visible they also had the problem of in varying degrees tending to be apologetic rather than explanatory. Eriksen accuses Eggen of giving the NS membership of his parents a different meaning, describing noble intentions on their side.¹⁰¹⁸ This tendency on the side of a lot of the NS-barn could be explained by the psychological need to exculpate the beloved parents but it makes the perception on the side of the ordinary population harder. Attempts to promote a positive re-evaluation of the Quisling party necessarily must provoke fierce opposition not only on the side of the veterans but from all parts of society. Such a re-evaluation should also not be confused with scientifically serious research on the NS that tries to analyse and contextualize the rise and the policies of the NS. But that the number of persons affected by the stigma of the parents' political engagement and collaboration calls for a treatment of the topic seems logic.

¹⁰¹⁴ See Olden, Asger, *Fødd skyldig*, Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget 1988.

¹⁰¹⁵ Borge, *De kallte oss Naziengel*, p. 242.

¹⁰¹⁶ Kvanmo, Hanna. *Dommen*, Oslo: Gyldendal 1990.

¹⁰¹⁷ See Eggen, Eystein, *Gutten fra Gimle*, Oslo: Aschehoug 1993. Gimle is the place of Quisling's former villa.

At a conference in Bergen in 1998, a paper was presented that dealt with the postwar history of this group of Norwegians.¹⁰¹⁹ The first major and more academic book on the NS-barn had only recently been published. Baard H. Borges book *De kallte oss Naziyngel* (They called us Nazi-rabble) came out in 2002 and contained an analysis of a questionnaire that the author had sent out to NS-barn and of a sample of the interviews he had made. The book is guided by a strong sympathy for the NS-barn. The comments and the debate it stirred up varied from approval of his endeavour and a tone of apology to a hard disapproval. Some of the younger generations of historians wrote rather positive reviews on the book.¹⁰²⁰ The leftist newspaper *Klassekampen* also published a positive review in which they focused much on the role of the Hjemmefront and the 'isfront' in the process of stigmatising the children.¹⁰²¹ Lasse Midttun of *Morgenbladet*, however, wrote in his review in June 2002 a rather harsh critique on the book. Not that he approves mobbing against innocent victims but he accuses Borge of siding with his interviewees to such a level that he tends to play down the NS as organisation, ideology and a threat to democracy and freedom. Borge would also tend to generalise and to be directed by the desire to destroy myths that does not contribute to a good book and a proper report on the NS-barn that they deserve.¹⁰²² In *Krigsinvaliden* Ole Hobbesland, a veteran, vigorously contests, as mentioned above, the right of any victim of mobbing for compensation, be it krigsbarn or NS-barn.¹⁰²³

Despite the critique, the books fell into a general trend that began in the mid-1990s. During her above-mentioned speech, the Stortingspresident Kirsti Kolle Grøndahl called for reconciliation using the example of the NS-barn,¹⁰²⁴ something that was immediately reported in the newspapers.¹⁰²⁵ In the speech I already have referred to earlier, the King had also called for reconciliation and specifically included the "ones that once stood on the wrong side".¹⁰²⁶ This logically includes their children as well. There was a debate going on about these topics and about reconciliation around the 50th anniversary of the liberation. Three days before the king's

¹⁰¹⁸ Eriksen, *Historie*, üp. 113-116.

¹⁰¹⁹ Eik, Jarl, Ugelvik Larsen, Stein, Taushet og dobbelt taushet. NS-barns oppvekst etter krigen, in: Eik, Jarl, Ugelvik Larsen (ed.), *I krigens kjølvann. Nye sider ved norsk krigshistorie og etterkrigstid*, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget 1999, pp. 255-273.

¹⁰²⁰ One example is: Hagtvet, Bernt, *Dei sjølvrettferdige dommarane*, in: *Dag og Tid/ web issue*, 25 May 2002, <http://www.dagogtid.no/arkiv/2002/21/bok2>.

¹⁰²¹ Aspevoll, Tone Foss, *Hjemmefronten dyrket hatet*, in: *Klassekampen*, 5 July 2002, <http://www.klassekampen.no/kultur/2956/3007/>. The title is in English: *The Hjemmefront cultivated hatred*.

¹⁰²² Midttun, Lasse, *Svakt om NS-barnas skjebne*, in: *Morgenbladet*, 21 June 2002, http://www.morgenbladet.no/index.php?cmd=print&show_article=1004766

¹⁰²³ Hobbesland, Ole *Erstatning til mobbeofre*, in: *Krigsinvaliden*, no. 2, 2002, p. 4.

¹⁰²⁴ Stortingspresident Kirsti Kolle Grøndahls tale i Stortinget 8. mai 1995, in: *Minnemøte ved 50-årsjubileet for Norges Frigjøring 1945*, brochure, Stortinget.

¹⁰²⁵ NTB, *Nei til intoleranse*, *Aftenposten*, 9 May 1995.

¹⁰²⁶ H.M. Kong Harald V, H.M. Kongens tale, *Akershus mandag 8. mai 1995*.

speech one of the leading historians, Ole Jacob Malm, wrote in the biggest newspaper *Aftenposten* a long article in which he energetically rejected any reconciliation which would include oblivion for crimes or wrongdoing. To draw a final line under the matter of collaboration is impossible. On 9 April 1940, the nation was divided into a good majority and a bad minority and the following *holdningskampen* was a struggle for the Norwegian soul. Reconciliation without remorse and admission of guilt on the side of the minority would give a wrong signal to the youth. On the other hand, one should feel pity for these who became innocent victims – *krigsbarn* and *NS-barn*.¹⁰²⁷ The veterans and the representatives of the resistance are certainly not inclined to build up a great deal of sympathy for the *NS-barn* not only because of their own sufferings but also because any admission of the sad story of the *NS-barn* intrinsically bear the risk of a negative quality of the resistance's deeds. It was the *isfront*, the policy of the cold shoulder, which started the suffering of the *NS-barn*. In times of war a strategy to keep the influence of the Nazis at bay, it turned out to be a permanent torment to some of these children. But an acknowledgement of that could easily turn into a challenge of the resistance narrative.

This chapter of Norwegian war and postwar history will not be closed soon. The emotions still run high because it touches the very heart of the problem of collaboration and the continuation of *NS*-ideology. How deep the mistrust in Norwegian society and specifically the historical establishment might be rooted shows the allegation of the director of *Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum* Arnfinn Moland, who on a seminar on the illegal press claimed that descendants of *NS* members and sympathisers are sitting in the editorial offices of the Norwegian newspapers and make it easy for 'revisionists' to spread false contentions on the war and to attack the *Hjemmefront* and the *Milorg*. He specifically meant the journalists that took part in the debate not only on the war but also about the books of Hans Fredrik Dahl, Kjell Fjørtoft and Egil Ulateig who are, with some doubts about Dahl, by most of the established historians called revisionists.¹⁰²⁸ In the article on this incident, the editor Harald Stanghelle accused Moland of trying to prevent any debate that could rock the image of his idols in the *Hjemmefront*. But this way he just gives the real revisionists the chance to attack the heritage of the resistance. Another editor agreed on that matter and adds that there is not just one truth in occupation history. But we can see here how much the question of the *NS* membership still triggers off fierce debates. Something that certainly also afflicts any discourse on the *NS-barn* and makes it, despite numerous similarities to the experiences of the *krigsbarn*, harder for them

¹⁰²⁷ Malm, Ole Jacob, *Forsoning 8. mai? Bare på vilkår!* *Aftenposten*, 5 May 1995.

¹⁰²⁸ Mikalsen, Espen, Aas Olsen, Trygve, *NS-avkom i norske aviser*, in: *Dagbladet*, 25 November 2000.

to claim rehabilitation and compensation. Although addressed by the King and the president of the parliament in 1995, their fate is not met yet with the same sympathy as that of the krigsbarn. As already mentioned, the fact that some of the NS-barn for understandable reasons tend to apologize to the quislings does contribute to a certain lack of sympathy. It is therefore doubtful whether they will experience the same process of rehabilitation as the krigsbarn have already.

The issue of the NS-barn is very special and lacks a counterpart in Denmark but as could be seen from the Norwegian example of the war children, an official apology was important for both the war-children and the Norwegian public as a means of addressing the problem. Certainly not every single war child or common Norwegian agreed and the question of compensations is now partly resolved but stays a moment of debate. But the acknowledgement of this group played a role in the shaping or re-shaping of the narrative on the war. The question is whether an apology is necessarily the only or the best way of addressing a topic with traumatic implications. The case of Denmark might serve a lackmus test. Also here I will start with the tyskerpiger.

Acts of Mobbing and Accepted Pornography

How long-lasting a stereotype is and how easily it could be evoked can be seen in the reaction of Danes to the laser project of the artist Elle Mie Ejdrup Hansen on the occasion of the liberation celebrations in 1995. I described the project in the chapter on the anniversaries. Opponents of the project called her, in letters to the editors in several Danish newspapers, because of the project and the participation of German technicians *tyskertøs* and *nazitøs* (whore of the Germans or the Nazis).¹⁰²⁹ This shows how easily the libel and the accusation are still invoked. When Anette Warring published her book on the Danish tyskerpiger, she was threatened and insulted.¹⁰³⁰ The Danish women who had emotional and sexual relationships with the German occupants had a very similar fate as their Norwegian counterparts had. Also the numbers resemble each other, although there is also no official number in Denmark. During and after the war the figures were quoted differently, depending on what political agenda was pursued. If the aim was to show the steadfastness of the Danes and their hatred towards the Germans and their loyalty towards the allies the numbers quoted were lower than when the aim was to incite people.¹⁰³¹ It is estimated that around 50,000 Danish women had for short or long periods intimate contact with occupation soldiers. The number is derived from an estimate that is based

¹⁰²⁹ Nielsen, 50års, p. 26.

¹⁰³⁰ Interview with Anette Warring in Florence at the European University Institute on 29 January 2007.

on the around 5,700 confirmed children that sprung from the relationships and the resistance's own figures on these women.¹⁰³² An elaborate estimate is to assume a total of at least 50,000 tyskerpiger in Denmark.¹⁰³³ One difference with respect to Norway is that the Danish women could feel already in 1943 what was to be expected after the liberation. During the riots and strikes in August 1943 and again during the popular strike in Copenhagen in 1944, harassment and *klippeaktioner*, the cutting of the women's hair by an angry mob, were reported. As in Norway these attacks had occurred during the whole time of the war, but the strikes and riots were occasions with a massive increase of incidents. And yet, they were small compared to the wave of persecution in May 1945.

The illegal papers contributed with their propaganda directed at the tyskerpiger to the violent sentiment against them and even published lists of known tyskerpiger. These agitation that accompanied those lists and the form of punishment shows that the women were not only perceived as a threat to the resistance and as potential informers but that beneath these accusations a “mixture of feelings of national and gender-moral insults” was boiling.¹⁰³⁴ The girls were seen as besmirching at the same time 'Mother Denmark' as well as the 'Fatherland'.¹⁰³⁵ The Second World War was everywhere a challenge to traditional notions of gender and sexuality. At the front lines of the process of transition the women transgressing the lines drawn by older ideas not only provoked hatred by being 'in bed with the enemy' but by challenging the very fabric of society.

After the liberation only a few women were actually sentenced by the courts for their behaviour but as in Norway thousands were first interned and abused by the freedom-fighters of the Frihedsråd. And of course the personal consequences in the social environment were at times devastating. The treatment of the women during and shortly after the liberation originated in not only in the sentiment of the populace but also in the matching opinion of those in charge. Frode Jakobsen, who had the effectively the command over the freedom-fighters in the first days of the liberation, did not in general disapprove with any measures taken against the women by his men but opposed the involvement of the resistance in the acts of revenge. He, however, understood the hatred of the population.¹⁰³⁶

¹⁰³¹ Warring, Anette, *Tyskerpiger - Under Besættelse Og Retopgør*, København: Gyldendal 1994, p. 24.

¹⁰³² Warring, Anette, *Danske Tyskepiger - Hverken Ofre Eller Forrædere*, in: Ellingsen, Dag, Warring, Anette, Björnsdóttir, Inga Dora (eds.), *Kvinner, Krig Og Kjærlighet*, Oslo: Cappelen 1995, 81-148. p. 83.

¹⁰³³ Cf- Warring, *Tyskerpiger*, p. 25.

¹⁰³⁴ Warring, Anette, *Ryskerpiger*, in: Kirchhoff, Hans, Lauridsen, John T., Trommer, Aage (eds.), *Gads Leksikon Om Dansk Besættelsestid 1940-45*, København: Gads, 2002, pp. 477-478, p. 478.

¹⁰³⁵ More on these 'figures of nationalism' in Warring, *Tyskerpiger*, pp. 198-203.

¹⁰³⁶ Gade, Sven Ove, Frode Jakobsen - *En Biografi*, København: Gyldendal, 2004, p. 233.

The treatment of the women in the immediate postwar period differed extensively from the later lack of interest in their fate. In the vast literature on the war, the tyskerpiger were not a topic on its own. They were seldom mentioned and also the mass-media did not allocate much space or attention to them. In one of the earliest movies on the war in Denmark *De røde enge* the tyskerpige is a drunken prostitute. The movie came out in 1945 and was in the top ten in the cinemas countrywide. Some of the early war novels or rather resistance novels which were legion in the first years the tyskerpige would occur but not be a main protagonist – neither positive nor negative. Just one book, published in English stands out as a little bit different. In *The Girls They Left Behind* she gave an account of the situation of the women as well as of their children and did away with some of the stereotypes connected to the women such as that they were spreading venereal diseases.¹⁰³⁷ That also in this rather official account the women were described as naive and of inferior intelligence is the other side of the medal.

An equivalent to Norway's Herbjørg Wassmo, whose books on Tora became well-known in the 1980s, is missing in Denmark. The earliest novel that dealt with the matter came out in 1991 and was rather stigmatizing in tone.¹⁰³⁸ This lack of interest for these women in Danish fiction writing contrasts clearly with the more intensive Norwegian discussion. Anette Warring also transferred this notion to the level of the more scientific works on the war.¹⁰³⁹ It is true that the aforementioned standard works of the 'canon' did not pay attention to the tyskerpiger and that the first history books on the matter were certainly Peter Schmidt's *Feltmadrasser* and the already quoted PhD thesis of Anette Warring.¹⁰⁴⁰ But there have been earlier critical books in which the tyskerpiger were either dealt with as a problem of the transitional justice or in which their treatment was analysed as part of the wave of riots and the growth or the resistance in August 1943 or in Copenhagen in 1944, as she has to admit herself. So did in fact both critical historians of the 1970s mention the girls in their main works. Trommer dealt with them in *Modstandsarbejde i Nærbillede* and also Kirchhoff gives mention to the phenomenon in *Augustoprøret* when he describes the transitional justice.¹⁰⁴¹ But both books were certainly not reviewed and neither praised nor criticised for exactly those parts but rather for what has been discussed earlier – their conflict view of Denmark's war history. Nevertheless both distinguished

¹⁰³⁷ Hartmann, Grethe, *The Girls They Left Behind. An Investigation Into the Various Aspects of the German Troops' Sexual Relations With Danish Subjects*, København 1946.

¹⁰³⁸ Ib Michael, *Vanillepigen*, København: Gyldendal 1991.

¹⁰³⁹ Warring, *Tyskerpiger*, p. 29-31.

¹⁰⁴⁰ Schmidt, Peter. *Feltmadrasser: Kvinderne Som Tyske Soldater Efterlod*. Munkebo: Mariteam, 1994. Warring, *Tyskerpiger*.

¹⁰⁴¹ Trommer, *Modstandsarbejde i Nærbillede*; Kirchhoff, Hans. *Augustoprøret* 1943.

themselves strongly from the description of the tyskerpiger that could still be found in the 1970s by the highly-esteemed Jørgen Hæstrup.¹⁰⁴²

Frihedsmuseet's old exhibitions did not, as far as I could see, deal at all with the women or with their punishment. There might just have been some cartoons on display that depicted the general feeling towards them. Also Frihedsmuseet's current exhibition does not represent this group, neither in a favourable or an unfavourable way. Possible displays for the topic would have been the Augustoprøret or the strike in Copenhagen where some of the public abuses took place or the part that dealt with either the daily life or the so-called cold-shoulder strategy towards the Germans because this is where the girls were particularly visible in the common perception. Another logic place in the exhibition would be the end, the liberation and its aftermath. The exhibition is particularly poor with respect to the days following the actual liberation. It seems that the understanding of the museum as a museum of and for the resistance has led to a certain ignorance to the following transitional justice. Another reason could be that a majority of the veterans perceived the legal purge as insufficient. It was not part of the old exhibition and in the new one just a single display presents this topic at the exit of the exhibition. In it are objects that compared to the rest of the museum are rather un-exciting. A board game that was released after the liberation and others represent just an attempt to make the aftermath a topic. This part is not even mentioned in the catalogue. The showcase and the exhibition would not just have gained from an inclusion of the tyskerpiger but it would have seemed natural to include them here.

However, the exhibition Spærretid did not, in contrast to the FM, refuse the challenge of dealing with the tyskerpiger. They were dealt with in detail in the chapter *Tyskerpiger – The German's Danish Girls*. The tricky question for the makers of the exhibition was of course where to put them in the threefold division of the tour. Arguably, the number of the women and the fact that most of them were in fact very normal Danish women would have pointed to an inclusion of the topic in the mainstream path of the occupation. The makers though decided to follow the war-time and common postwar period perception of the tyskerpiger as collaborators and dealt with the topic on the red path – the side of the collaborators. The display reflects the unease the makers might have felt with that decision. It is certainly one of the most complex ones and abstract ones. But exactly that is also the problem. Besides a sober account of the amount of young women engaging in affairs and sexual relationships with the soldiers and the various ways this happened, ranging from working for the German army and circles of friends to prostitution, the text mentions the fact that the relationships were allowed by the Germans and concludes with the public opinion about the women and the risks of abuse they underwent. The

¹⁰⁴² Examples can be found in: Warring, *Tyskerpiger*, p. 28.

picture above the text shows a photograph of such a couple with the German soldier in uniform sitting on a bench at a pond in a garden. The picture was taken from behind and is slightly blurred at the edges as if it was taken clandestinely with a camera hidden underneath a coat or in the bushes. The ideas which are evoked in the viewer are those of illegality and danger. Although the picture is not explained, it gives the impression that it was taken by some resistance people to collect facts about the woman on the photo or to document the treachery and that was certainly dangerous during the occupation. This way the picture does in fact enhance the notion that these women were misbehaving also for the contemporary observer. Since these two people probably did not represent prostitute and client, a picture taken by one of the soldiers or the women themselves would have transported a different message certainly: A message of leisure time pleasures – and maybe love. Such a picture though would have contradicted the general message of the women as traitors. But more interesting is the part of the display which showed a series of photos of an alleged attack on a girl accused of having such relationships. The girl is brutally undressed, her clothes ripped, her hair looks shaven and swastikas are smeared all over her body before she is left behind crying naked on a park bench. The photos that were spread during the occupation and gained a widespread popularity were fake though, made in Odense by a gang of young men that were inspired by a similar event. The girl got a hat for her partaking and her hair was not in reality cut. The pictures gained such popularity not only because of their 'patriotic' message of 'punishment' for these women but also because it was seen as a kind of socially 'acceptable pornography'.¹⁰⁴³ The photos must have gained a certain degree of familiarity, since it re-appeared in 1994 again as the cover of the aforementioned cartoon *Danmark besat*. The story of Tove and her boyfriend, a German officer, is told with sympathy and the cover picture of the violated girl must be seen in the context of the 1990s. That time and with a younger audience common addressee of cartoons, such images were not suitable to evoke the same feelings of hatred as they were in 1943. Most consumers will probably have felt pity for the girl. Besides that is Tove's story a love story and does not bear any resemblance to the negatively loaded stories of prostitution or ideological collaboration as were prevalent during the war. A change can be observed in the reaction towards the tyskerpiger – not necessarily less biased but different at least. The cartoon was published around the same time as Anette Warring and Peter Schmidt were writing on their books on the girls.

¹⁰⁴³ Nationalmuseet, exhibition Spærretid, "Tyskerpiger – The Germans' Danish Girls", 2005.



The cover of 'Skumring'



The 'real' photo as it hung in Spærretid

The sympathy towards the tyskerpiger shown in *Denmark besat* in the 1990s also starkly contrasted to the way the topic was dealt with in the series *Matador*. In the aforementioned episode number 18 the maid 'Mrs Hollenberg' gets together with one of the German soldiers that are stationed as guards in the family's backyard. Hollenberg is depicted as slow, bordering on stupid, naive, and lazy. She smokes in the master bedroom while on the phone but is generally rather too lazy to talk. She is constantly dating different men and lovesick. This relationship with Sigmund is not approved of by anyone in the family and costs Hollenberg her job. Before leaving she steals some sheets triggering the bank director's comment: "Well, guess it's for the

camp-bed." which refers to the often used word feltmadrass for the tyskerpiger. In the last episode that deals with the war *Vi vil fred her til lands* (Episode 21), a woman is charged through a screaming crowd by a freedom fighter with a submachine gun in his hand and thrown onto a truck's loading space where other 'traitors' are already waiting. *Matador* reflected in its description of the women the long-lasting prejudice of being 'easy' and generally of inferior intelligence. Their treatment might not have been soft but a certain understanding for the sentiment of the population is noticeable. Both parts were produced and written in the 1970s and early 1980s and most likely represent the contemporary view of the tyskerpiger – but also renewed this view. The school material developed in the later half of the 1990s in turn challenges both the view of women and the use of the word 'feltmadrass'. In the suggestions for exercises, the students are asked to explain the term feltmadrass and to reflect on its connotations. Another suggestion is to stage a 'trial' of a tyskerpige with the students as prosecutors and advocates.¹⁰⁴⁴

In the celebrations of Denmark's liberation the girls played no role whatsoever in the first decades. In the early postwar periods they were most probably looked at with either anger or shame and then they were simply forgotten. Now and then they are mentioned maybe in an article or a description of the liberation days published in the newspapers around the anniversaries. A noticeable change occurred, as in Norway around the 50th anniversary in 1995. The reasons were probably not only the books now published about them and the reviews but also the beginning of an articulated and organised lobby for the children – the krigsbarn. In May 1995 the tyskerpiger were in the public perception transformed from "traitor into victims completely."¹⁰⁴⁵ The description of the women was considerably changed and now dominated by sympathy. Though still not very reflected on the complexity of the topic, the newspapers now talked about the women as 'in love' instead of as 'prostitutes' and the mob that abused them as fanatic and guided by wrong motives.¹⁰⁴⁶ In contrast to the anniversary ten years earlier where *Matador* was in fact the only TV programme dealing with the women, this time several programmes mentioned the women and the acts of revenge as part of the liberation days – and this time the descriptions of the abuse were not characterized by understanding for the lynch mob.¹⁰⁴⁷ How much this new paradigm concerning the tyskerpiger had been consolidated can also be seen from the cartoon *Denmark besat* where it had found its way into popular culture. The veterans on the other hand still tried their very best to prevent 'their' committee in 1995

¹⁰⁴⁴ Madsen, *Matador Og Besættelsestiden – Lærervejledning*, p. 30.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Nielsen, 50-års, p. 58.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Nielsen, 50-års, p. 58.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Nielsen, 50-års, p. 77.

from supporting any events or media that focussed on the dark sides of the occupation. After the disaster of the *Jane Horney* series on the occasion of the last anniversary, it was reasonable to expect a certain degree of carefulness or even self-censorship on the side of Danish broadcasting corporations (the DR was as mentioned earlier reprimanded ten years earlier).¹⁰⁴⁸ The DR was represented in the coordination committee where their representatives were confronted face-to-face with the wishes and the policies of the veterans, who on the other side could exercise some pressure by recommending or disapproving of some of the applications for financial support. As could be seen already earlier, the veterans did in fact use this tool. Also when dealing with the *tyskerpiger* the committee refused new and critical approaches in their approval. The application by Claus Ladegaard and Atlas Productions for DKK 500,000,-- for a series *På den forkerte siden* (On the wrong side) was disapproved of. Sven Seehusen is quoted in the minutes of a meeting as having said that "The 50th anniversary of the liberation of Denmark should not be used for films about German whores [the protocol uses "tyskertøsene", C.M.], volunteers to the eastern front and economic collaborators."¹⁰⁴⁹ The programme was not made even though the protocol mentions that the chairman wanted to contact the Ministry of Culture for advice. As can be seen from that episode, the public attention and the development within historical research did not match the sentiment and the policies of those who had the most decisive influence on the celebrations.

That the time was indeed ripe for a new evaluation of both the women as well as their children could not be ignored any more. As in Norway the trigger for a new look on the whole complex was made possible through the children. Arne Øland, himself a 'child of war' founded – with the help of Anette Warring who supplied contacts to *krigsbarn* she had interviewed earlier – in 1996 the *Danske Krigsbørns Forening* (The Association of Danish Children of War, DKBF) and started writing articles and letters to newspapers to attract attention to the children and the difficulties they not only had suffered growing up stigmatized but also those they encountered when trying to find information on their biological fathers. According to an interview he had with Peter Øvig Knudsen he had read the book by Anette Warring and contacted her.¹⁰⁵⁰ After he learned that the Norwegian *krigsbarn* had organised themselves, he decided to do the same in Denmark and after the autobiographical account of another *krigsbarn*, Lotte Tarp, entitled *Det sku' nødig hedde sig* (Some Things Better Remain Silent), the children started contacting the

¹⁰⁴⁸ Nielsen, 50-års, p. 65.

¹⁰⁴⁹ 5. maj udvalget, Referat af møde i 5. maj-udvalget den 13.juni 1994, 21 June 1994, in: Stm (DK), 051-4, 1995, p. 9.

¹⁰⁵⁰ The interview is published on the DKBF's webpage <http://www.krigsboern.dk/artikler/arneinterv.htm>.

association.¹⁰⁵¹ Tarp's book was the first Danish account of a krigsbarn and it established the whole topic from one moment to the next in the minds of the Danes – one decade after Kjendsli's *Skammens barn* had done the same in Norway. It has been reprinted several times also as paperback and published as a 'talking book'. Arne Øland of the DKBF published his own collection of biographies of tyskerbørn in 2001: *Horeunger og helligdage - tyskerbørns beretninger* (literally 'Sons of bitches and holidays').¹⁰⁵² Through the organisations work the Danish krigsbarn now got access to their files at the National Archive. Although all adopted Danish children are, according to a law of 1937, entitled to information on their biological parents the administration often sabotaged the search for the fathers and the access to archives. There is reason to suspect that some files have even disappeared. The Danish regulations governing the access to archives are in a comparative perspective quite strict and there is a general 80 years closing rule for most files. The struggle for access to the files on paternity matters was the prime priority of the Danish association of the krigsbarn. According to a self-projection of the association, a retired judge read an article about the children and joined their work and gave valuable advice and in 1997 the files were opened by dispense from the law for the krigsbarn.¹⁰⁵³ A quick glance at the table of contents of the member's journal *Rødder* (Roots), which has been published since 1997, shows that besides autobiographical contributions the rules and regulations of archives and practical information is often the subject of articles. The DKBF does, however, at the moment not intend to start any lawsuits about compensation.

The anniversaries in Denmark did not have either a positive or a negative effect on the perception of the children. As in Norway, the waves of publications and media attention around the anniversaries had an effect on the perception of the topic. The children got a voice that was heard. The anniversaries were by the sheer number of publication and by the general attention to the war history catalysators for an intensified research. That that has not yet resulted in a legal coming to terms in Denmark is the unexplainable but significant difference to the Norwegian case.

Summary

Women who had had relationships with German soldiers during the occupation were ill-treated and abused in both Scandinavian countries after the liberation and often during the war. In this respect both Norway and Denmark do not differ from any country in Europe. The categories that

¹⁰⁵¹ Tarp, Lotte, *Det Sku' Nødig Hedde Sig*, København: Lindhard & Ringhof 1997.

¹⁰⁵² Øland, Arne, *Horeunger og helligdage - tyskerbørns beretninger*, København: Schønberg 2001.

were decisive for the treatment were fed by traditional notions of gender and sexuality and often by racist ideas about blood and nation. But additionally these women have also at times played a crucial role in the self-perception of the majority populations in the liberated countries. If so many women chose to have relationships with the enemy, what did that say about the extent of the resistance?¹⁰⁵⁴ Their very existence was seen as a threat to the narrative of resistance and unity in both countries. Therefore the anniversaries were not events when attention would purposefully be drawn to the *tyskerpiger*. The same applies to the museums of the resistance where these women would spoil the harmonious picture of the resistance. The last exhibition in Denmark could, due to a different overall structure and as the latest attempt to narrate the war, include the women on the basis of an increasing amount of literature. The exclusion of the *tyskerpiger* from the official commemorations and the museums also meant that the veterans did not need to bother too much or get involved in the debates. As mentioned above, just occasionally one can witness veterans getting agitated about the women and their children. What did not change is the negative judgement about the *tyskerpiger* and the exclusively negative meaning given to the word. Still in 1995, the word would be used by veterans as an insult in debates. This reflects the intensity with which they have been perceived as an injury to the nation and its struggle for liberation. The anniversary years, however, with their renewed interest in the history of the war and waves of publications favoured a growing interest for these women – at least since the 1990s.

In Denmark, particularly the behaviour of the *tyskerpiger* and their treatment reflected the conflict that was prevalent in society from the first to the last day of the war – should one cooperate with the enemy or resist. From the beginning, the clandestine press did treat the women as a safety risk and as potential informers, their behaviour was seen as treason and their treatment in the first days after the liberation was very much the same as that of the actual war criminals and collaborators – as it was in the first studies and articles. The fact that in both countries just a small number of women were actually sentenced for crimes shows how inadequate the accusations actually were. The problem though was the gap between the judgement of the courts and that of the public. Anette Warring quoted several studies about the war criminals in her book on the *tyskerpiger* in order to find information on their social background.¹⁰⁵⁵ At first glance, that looks odd seen through today's eyes, since today a common understanding of the girlfriends of the German soldiers would not be one of active collaboration.

¹⁰⁵³ Danske Krigsbørns Forening, Arkivadgang, <http://www.krigsboern.dk/>.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Ellingsen, Dag, Anette Warring, and Inga Dóra Björnsdóttir, *Innledning. Myter Og Ubehagelige Historier*, in *Kvinner, Krig Og Kjærlighet*. Dag Ellingsen, Anette Warring, and Inga Dóra Björnsdóttir, 9-11, Oslo: Cappelen 1995.

But the sentiment of the 1940s did indeed rarely make a difference between those who really collaborated and also informed the Gestapo and those who felt free to have a relationship with whoever they wanted to. So, for the contemporaries the difference did not exist and the women were actually moving and acting within these parameters. A great part might have been aware of the aggression their behaviour was about to cause and it is indeed possible that some might have given information to the Germans and deliberately worked as informers. That leads to a question still to be left unanswered – the question of the women's freedom of choice and the consequences for the assessment of their behaviours and of the historiography. Did they have no other choices or did they, on the contrary make very conscious choices during the war? Does 'Love have no will' as Astrid Daatland Leira's book claimed?¹⁰⁵⁶

As could be seen, the fate of the war children and their mothers, the so-called 'brides of war' could serve as an example on how certain groups of the population first harboured on the wrong side in the public perception, how subsequently this perception sometimes is fed with traditional role models and even racism and how – due to a change of the public climate and a change of the scientific approach towards marginalized groups and most importantly a change of the cultures of remembrance – are integrated into public memory. That this development is not a straightforward one and that it is not necessarily of the same intensity could be seen from the previous pages. It seems that no country in Western Europe was as intensively affected by a discussion on the war children and their mothers as Norway was. The reasons could be manifold: a harsher treatment for the women and therefore a harder process of admitting them to the narrative, better information on the cases, a larger number because of a less suppressive German occupation policy and other explanations have been suggested.¹⁰⁵⁷ Certainly Eastern Europe has made different experiences with this legacy of the war since the racist categories of the Germans did prevent a significant number of relationships. But the fact that also Denmark had not experienced the same degree of debate and attention neither on the children nor on the mothers suggests other reasons than the sheer number of the group. In Norway the process of integrating the children into the narrative found a catalyst in the festivities of the liberation in 1995. The half-centenary anniversary was used as a gentle entrance of the war children into the arena of public memory – albeit still without their mothers. Since the era of greater festivities seems to have come to a temporary end they will have to enter by other means. In Denmark there has not been a comparable attention towards this side of the war history by the official agents of memory and there is also no debate on any financial compensation but here the

¹⁰⁵⁵ Warring, *Tyskerpiger*, pp. 37-39.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Leira, Astrid Daatland. *Kjærligheten Har Ingen Vilje*. Oslo: Tiden, 1987.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Borgersrud, *Vi ville ikke ha dem*, p.11.

historical research plays a comparable role. The mistreatment of the tyskerpiger was in France, probably due to the much harsher war and occupation regime, incomparably harder. And yet also here the reconciliation begins. In Norway, the research was boosted by an administration that needed knowledge to decide on compensations – in Denmark the research is the forerunner. Maybe there will be an official acknowledgment to follow. There are signs of the beginning of a 'parallelization' of the narrative in Scandinavia. At the 24th Meeting of Nordic Historians in 2001 that was held in Århus, Kåre Olsen was invited to speak about the Norwegian children of war at the round table called *Bortsetting og forflytning av barn i Norden i det 20. århundre – velferd, interessekonflikter og barns erfaringer* (Displacement and Flight of Children in the North in the 20th Century – Welfare, conflicts and the children's experiences).¹⁰⁵⁸ The integration of the topic in the Nordisk Historikermøde reflects the increased attention now shown in both countries. The *Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung*, certainly a highly esteemed research facility, organised a conference on the war children in April 2006. Among the participants and speakers of *(Un)desirable children. Nazi Biopolitics and its Consequences* were a lot of the above-mentioned contributors of the discussion in Scandinavia: Besides Claudia Lenz from the HL-senter, Kjersti Ericsson and Eva Simonsen as well as Dag Ellingsen, Georg Lilienthal and Arne Øland presented their research and shared their experiences.¹⁰⁵⁹ The question of the treatment and the experiences of the children has clearly made it into the mainstream research now and it can be expected that this will also influence the public's perception on the long run. Not because historical research must necessarily influence public memory – we have seen how much they can diverge – but because the sympathy for the innocent children could pave the way not only for them but for their mothers as well. The French case seems to support such a notion where a new interest in this particular side of the war was stirred by a book on the 200,000 children of war in 2004.¹⁰⁶⁰

Another group that needed to enter the narrative and whose fate is in Norway also tied to the question of compensation is the group of the Jewish victims of German and Scandinavian anti-Semitism and the Holocaust.

¹⁰⁵⁸ The webpage of the conference can be consulted at <http://aarhus2001.hum.au.dk/rundborde/rundbord3.html>

¹⁰⁵⁹ The conference's programme can be consulted at Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung, Workshops, Tagungen, Symposien, Kolloquien seit 1994, <http://www.his-online.de/cms.asp?IDN=293&H='1143'>.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Picaper, Jean-Paul, and Ludwig Norz. *Enfants Maudits: Ils Sont 200 000, On Les Appelait Les "Enfant des boches"*, Paris: Les Editions des Syrtes, 2005.

4. NORWEGIAN ANTI-SEMITISM AND THE FLIGHT OF THE DANISH JEWS

The genocide of the European Jews has after a period of silence, of shame and of inability to deal with it become Europe's and the world's standard for the evaluation of crimes and the symbol for inhumanity – rightly so. The establishment of memorial days in most European countries to commemorate the victims, and at times a certain fixation with the Holocaust, makes it the first global memory. Therefore it seems reasonable to ask how Denmark's and Norway's narratives have incorporated it and whether the outlook on the significance of the breach of civilisation has changed over the years. Certainly, both countries have a very different trajectory especially with regard to the persecution of Jews – but if there is a meaning in the narrative of the genocide, there will be one for Denmark and Norway too.

Norwegian Guilt and Cooperation?

Odd-Bjørn Fure wrote in an article in 1998 that Norwegian historiography is the exception to the general rule that the fate of the Jews is one of the fields that is best studied in the field of research on the Second World War. He stated that the silence around this topic in Norway comes close to being a complete taboo.¹⁰⁶¹ In the already cited and much praised book that was published as the outcome of a seminar at the University of Bergen on the 'losers' of the war in Norway, *I krigens kjølvann*, which dealt with a number of hitherto forgotten groups that were affected by the war, the question of the Norwegian Jews that became victims also of Norwegian anti-Semitism and complicity are missing. Certainly, it would be wrong to ascribe the silence that has prevailed over the Norwegian and Danish Jewish victims to a strong and lasting hatred against Jews as Pierre Lagrou has argued with regard to the Benelux countries' postwar silence. He said that "both blatant and latent anti-Semitism had been the necessary pre-conditions for the massive deportations of Jews from the occupied societies and would be an underestimation of the inveteracy of anti-Semitism in western European societies to suppose that it suddenly disappeared with the discovery of the genocide in 1945."¹⁰⁶² But still there seems to have been a certain unwillingness in Norway to write and speak about those Jewish Norwegians and other Jews in Norway that were deported from Norwegian soil. What had happened in Norway?

After the occupation being a fact and the takeover of Quisling, the NS also replaced a number of clerks and civil servants. But also parts of the old administration stayed in office – out of a sense

¹⁰⁶¹ Fure, Odd-Bjørn, *Krigen: konsensus and fortelse*, in: *Dagbladet*, 8 May 1998.

¹⁰⁶² Lagrou, Pieter, *Victims of Genocide and National Memory: Belgium, France and the Netherlands 1945-1965, Past and Present*, no. 154, 1997, pp. 181-222, p. 190.

of duty or in order to avoid being replaced by a NS member thereby trying to avoid a worse scenario. Those who were able to stay were exposed to pressure and moral trials when the NS tried to change the country. It is clear that the NS-dominated administration persecuted all kinds of political enemies. Communists were among the first to be chased and arrested – then came the Jews. Out of the more than 1,500 Jews living in Norway, only half of them survived the German occupation, most of them often by dramatic flights over the Norwegian-Swedish border with the help of the Norwegian resistance. The majority of victims were deported on board the MS (also found as D/S or S/S) Donau in the autumn of 1942 and two later transports with other ships in 1943. There is no doubt that the extinction of more than 50% of the Norwegian Jews would never ever have happened without the German occupation. It is unlikely that an independent NS-regime in Norway would have had the means to perform a mass slaughter on this scale on the Norwegian Jews alone. It is clear that many members of the resistance risked their freedom and their lives, and that of their friends and families in their attempts to smuggle Jews out of the country or to hide them. Survivors tell moving stories about the help they got from the Norwegian people.¹⁰⁶³ The Norwegian state church issued a letter to be read from every pulpit with the appeal to stop the arrests as soon as it was informed.¹⁰⁶⁴ But it became clearer that the Norwegian Jews were arrested by Norwegian police officers and that Norwegian civil servants filled out the lists with their names and belongings. And not all of them might have done it because they were forced to do it. Anti-Semitism or indifference was also a feature of Norwegian society during the war, even though the overall picture is still dominated by the notion of a comparably good attitude towards Jews and the disgust of wide parts of society for its racist ideas. The people on the MS Donau had been looted before by laws amended by Quisling's NS. These racially defined who was to be regarded as Jewish and were more far-reaching than the German laws.¹⁰⁶⁵ It is unclear whether the Germans or Norwegian authorities took the initiative for the deportations. The police force was one of the most NS-infiltrated organizations under the occupation. Relatively more of their members joined the NS and a high percentage of the newly recruited officers and all members of the special 'Statspoliti' became

¹⁰⁶³ One example is Adler, Hugo, 'Als Jude waehrend des Krieges in Nord-Norwegen'. Zeigenbericht von Dr. Hugo Adler, aufgenommen am 22. August 1958 in Kfar Saba durch Dr. Ball-Kaduri, Yad Vashem Archives, YV01/227. The report describes the protest of the population when Norwegian police officers arrested Hugo Adler.

¹⁰⁶⁴ The text is text is included in most of the books that deal with that topic and is repeatedly reprinted. For example also in the booklet published by Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, Mendelsohn, Oskar, Jødeforfølgelse i Norge under 2. verdenskrig, temaheft, Oslo: Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum 1990, p. 18.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Mendelsohn, Oskar, Jødernes historie i Norge gjennom 300 år, 2 vols., Oslo, Bergen, Stavanger, Tromsø: Universitetsforlaget 1987.

members of the NS.¹⁰⁶⁶ The pressure on police officers to adapt is always stronger than for other groups of the population, and yet it seems safe to assume that ideological proximity to the racist policy of the NS can have played a decisive role for officers as well, and that they were prone to eagerly carry out the orders of persecution. It has to be mentioned, nevertheless, that it is not clear what individual officers knew about the fate of the deportees. Yet, that it was not going to be good was evident. It is one of the ironies of the Norwegian trajectory that cooperation in the persecution of Jews and work for the resistance was not necessarily mutually exclusive as I will describe later on. Now, however, questions have been raised on aspects of the story that was so far not considered a dark chapter in the Norwegian master narrative.¹⁰⁶⁷

The Hjemmefrontmuseum has a showcase on the Norwegian Jews and another one in which the Holocaust is described on the European scale. The latter one is incidentally besides the one on the sailors the only one that 'leaves' Norwegian soil and incorporates other events. Now, the text of the first one mentions an active participation of the NS in the baiting and persecution and also one of the NS laws against Jews. When it comes to the rounding up of Jews a little bit further down, the participation of Norwegian officials is not told. So it does not mention any Norwegian part in the destruction process, just in the 'less brutal' process of deprivation. The text also says that some managed to evade the arrests and "were helped to Sweden."¹⁰⁶⁸ This passage was actually changed during the works on the exhibition as the archival material shows. In December 1969, Jens Christian Hauge sent parts of the texts developed by the 'script committee' that has been mentioned earlier to several veterans to consult them on the tone-of-voice of the texts. The veterans – obviously themselves former political prisoners – received a text that varied slightly from the later published one. Here it said: "People who otherwise had not been engaged in the work of the Hjemmefront now actively partook in the struggle to rescue the Norwegian Jews from the Nazis and bring them to Sweden."¹⁰⁶⁹ There is no hint as to why the text was changed. Maybe it seemed too much of praise for the Norwegians? The author of that part of the exhibition was the same who also contributed a brochure (temaheft) on that matter, published in 1990. Oskar Mendelsohn is generally seen as the specialist on the history of the Norwegian Jews. His two-volume book *Jødenes historie i Norge gjennom 300 år* was the first

¹⁰⁶⁶ On the story of the police specifically: Ringdal, Nils Johan, Mellom barken og veden. Politiet under okkupasjonen, Oslo: Aschehoug 1987.

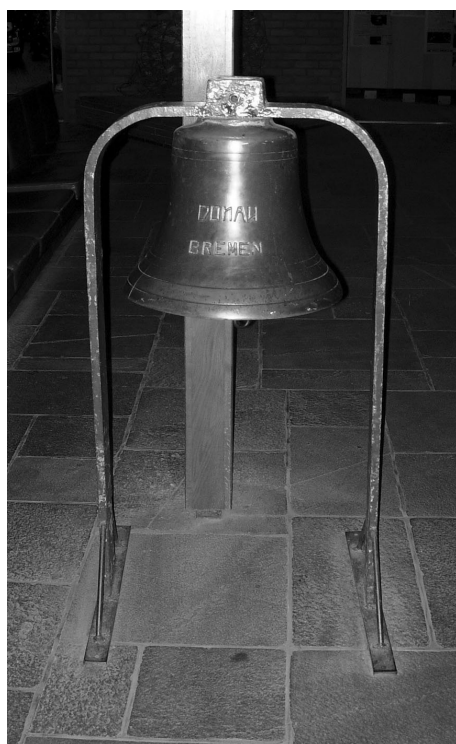
¹⁰⁶⁷ The dominant version stresses the attempts of individuals and hjemmefront to rescue Jews from the German persecutors and this version found also his way into books. One example is: Elazar, Daniel J., Weiss Liberless, Adina, Werner, Simcha, The Jewish Communities of Scandinavia, Lanham, New York, London: University Press of America 1984, p. 119. Another example is Friedmann, Tovia, Dokumentensammlung über die "Deportierung der Juden aus Norwegen nach Auschwitz", Institute for the Documentation for the Investigation of Nazi War Crimes in Israel, Haifa 1994.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum, exhibition, "Jødeforfølgelser".

¹⁰⁶⁹ NHM Arkiv, 195 Ddc-0008, Dreieboken, Texter.

complete description of the history of that minority in Norway and was well received. It names the units and detachments that took part on the Norwegian side. The 1970 movie about the exhibition that I have mentioned already a couple of times does mention this part of the exhibition but with no word the identity of those who carried out the deportations.

A small but maybe not insignificant and telling fact is that the visitors of Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum are greeted in the lobby by the ship's bell of the Donau. There is no text explaining the story of the bell to the visitor and I was not able to find evidence on when and why it was put up. But it serves as a reminder – not of the deportation of the Norwegian Jews – but of one of the more important and most hazardous resistance operations. The ship that was then sailing as a supply vessel and transport vessel for troops for the Wehrmacht was blown up by a group of saboteurs under the lead of the famous Max Manus in 1945. The plan was to sink it in the middle of its trip to Germany with 1,500 soldiers on board, but a malfunction of the bomb wrecked it in the Oslo-fjord. The ship is therefore connected to two stories of the Norwegian war history – a proud and a problematic one. And yet the visitor is not told about it.



The ship's bell of the M/S Donau

The question of a possible complicity of Norwegians in the Holocaust is closely connected to the question of whether Norwegian Jews and their dependents were eligible for any kind of indemnity which came up for real in 1995. Björn Westlie, an author and journalist, had published an article in *Dagens Næringsliv* on those Norwegians that had robbed the Norwegian

Jews. The article does not seem to have initiated an intensive debate.¹⁰⁷⁰ Then, finally in 1997, a committee appointed by the parliament examined the participation of the Norwegian state and its institutions. Also here the focus is on the looting of Norwegian Jews and the right of survivors or their heirs to compensation, but the historians involved did not fail to mention the destruction as well. It seems though that the committee was a result, not of internal Norwegian willingness to investigate the role of the Norwegian state in the persecution of Jews but as a result of external pressure – or to be more exact: bad press. As could be seen in the description of the development of the narrative in the previous part, Norway was specifically dependent on the perception of the outside world as a resistance nation and had taken care that this reputation did not change since it safeguarded Norway's new foreign and security policy. Now in 1996, the World Jewish Congress came forward with charges that Norway had still not lived up to her moral obligations – an accusation that was especially devastating since Oslo was back then playing a decisive role as mediator in the Middle-East and risked to lose recognition. Even though already in 1995 a member of parliament had asked the government to look into the matter, now with the external pressure things got moving. Justice minister Grete Faremo promised an investigation to deliver a report within a year's time.¹⁰⁷¹ The chairman of the committee created by the government, after whose name the whole committee soon became known, was Oluf Skarpnes. The government official from the Ministry of Justice was joined, among others, by none less than Ole Kristian Grimnes, the grand-seigneur of war history and Berit Reisel from the Jewish Community in Oslo. She had been working on the issue for a year and was supported by a young historian called Bjarte Bruland. It was the two of them who later came to influence the committee's work a great deal. The tensions inside the committee, the questions were to take a starting point in the evaluation of looted property – at the time of the confiscation or earlier – were a burden on its work. That became even more important when the outside pressure grew. More than one hundred elected representatives of Jewish organizations held a conference in Oslo in November 1996. Among them was Edgar Bronfman, the president of the World Jewish Congress. But a majority in the committee seemed to have taken an approach of historicizing the Holocaust whereas a minority was more eager to make the report a public clamour against the immorality and the suffering. Whereas the majority of the members held on to the figures and saw the committee's task as a mainly administrative one, the minority saw it as a chance to do away with injustice and to correct it.¹⁰⁷² The committee never made it to

¹⁰⁷⁰ Maerz, Landesverrat, p. 62. The article: Westlie, Bjørn, Nordmenn ranet de norske jødene, in: Dagens Næringsliv, 27 May 1995.

¹⁰⁷¹ Westlie, Bjørn, Oppgjør. I skyggen av holocaust, Oslo: Aschehoug 2002, p. 100.

¹⁰⁷² Westlie, Oppgjør, pp. 110-111.

a unanimous decision. Bjarte Bruland and Berit Reisel handed in a minority report in which, contrary to the majority's findings, they described the postwar compensation process as unjust and insufficient.¹⁰⁷³ The reports and the split in the committee were received with mixed emotions in the public and among historians to which the provocative publication of the minority report even before the official publication of the committee added a lot. The new justice minister Gerd Liv Valla seems to have taken sides with the minority as did most of the editorials and the press. The accusations against the majority were that they supposedly had a tendency to exculpate Norwegian administrators from the persecution, especially the murder, by 'concentrating' on figures and assuming ignorance of the destruction process on the Norwegian side. The minority position in the committee, that there had to be a moral and ethical tidying up of the case to an extent bigger than the one proposed by the majority, in the end clearly made its breakthrough in the public and most importantly in politics. There were, however, different opinions as well, among them also of prominent archivists of the state archives, including its head archivist Riksarkivar John Herstad. They and the majority insisted that it was the committee's task to give a moral judgement but to examine what had happened to Jewish property during the war and that not the current government but the NS and its police was responsible.¹⁰⁷⁴

The political solution of the dilemma was something in between the two positions and probably was influenced by foreign policy interests as much as by the individual choice of the leading politicians. The Labour government under which the committee was created gave way for a conservative government under the clergyman Kjell Magne Bondevik who used his speech on the 50th anniversary of the State of Israel in May 1998 as the occasion to announce his government's decision to give NOK 450 million for compensation and other projects. By doing so, Bondevik linked a question that initially was about Norway's own history and the treatment of minorities and that became a burden for Norway's reputation again to its foreign policy.¹⁰⁷⁵ The total sum was, according to the governments proposition that passed parliament in March 1999, divided in three different shares – one to compensate individuals, one for projects to nourish Jewish life in Norway and the last one to erect a Centre for the Study of the Holocaust and Religious Minorities focused on the documentation of and the education on the Holocaust and other genocides as well as the situation of ethnic minorities in Norway.

¹⁰⁷³ Both reports can be found in: Skarpnes, Oluf (ed.), *Norges Offentlige Utredninger. Inndragning av jødisk eiendom i Norge under den 2. verdenskrig: utredning fra utvalget som har kartlagt hva som skjedde med jødernes eiendeler i Norge under den 2. verdenskrig og oppgjøret etter krigen, 1997*, Oslo, Statens Forvaltningstjeneste//Statens Trykningstjeneste. *Norges Offentlige Utredninger (NOU 1997:22)*.

¹⁰⁷⁴ Maerz, *Landesverrat*, p. 63-64.

¹⁰⁷⁵ Westlie, *Oppgjør*, p. 118.

But the discussion on the compensation of the Norwegian Jews was just the beginning of a wider process of facing the Norwegian story of the Holocaust. The next step was a memorial. Since 1996, the Ministry of Culture had discussed the erection of a monument for the deported Norwegian Jews on the quay at Akershus where the ships with which the Jews were deported were once moored. It was inaugurated in November 2000 by the Minister of Culture Ellen Horn who in her speech described the location of the memorial outside of the protection of the Akershus fortress as a symbol of the fact that the Jews back in 1942/1943 were unprotected. She described the deportation as a result of hatred both of the German and Norwegian side.¹⁰⁷⁶ The artist Anthony Gormley had put up several metal chairs that stand just outside the fortress's walls – a memorial plaque bears the inscription:

"On 26 November 1942, 532 Norwegian Jews were deported from this area on the cargo vessel Donau. This was the first step on the journey to the death camp Auschwitz. On 25 February 1943, a further 158 Jews were deported from this area on the Gotenland. Altogether the total number of Jews deported from Norway was 767. Of these 30 survived. Two hundred and thirty families were completely exterminated. This monument has been erected in commemoration of the Norwegian Jews who were deported and killed in this dark chapter of our history."

Two years later, in 2002, Norway like many other countries, also introduced the day of the liberation of the concentration camp Auschwitz as a day of commemoration.¹⁰⁷⁷ In 2003, on this occasion, the head of the Norwegian Social Democrats (Arbeiderpartiet) Jens Stoltenberg spoke at the memorial about the Norwegian dimension of the Holocaust that was not just European history but also Norwegian history. He said that the Jews that were brought on board of the M/S Donau had been Norwegians and that it had also been Norwegians who had dragged them on board and who before that had reported them to the police. He mentioned the Norwegians who had kept the lists and had looted them. Compatriots had sent other countrymen into sure death because they had been Jews. An ideology of hatred had come to Norway he said, but this ideology grew on the Norwegian soil.¹⁰⁷⁸ In 1995, during the celebrations of the anniversary of the liberation, Jens Stoltenberg had also visited the Jewish cemetery and found similar words.¹⁰⁷⁹ In January 2004, however, I happened to be in Oslo and attended the ceremony at the memorial. Even if it was a wonderful bright winter day, only about two dozen people showed up. In the speeches the Norwegian participation in the deportations was not mentioned. The day

¹⁰⁷⁶ Horn, Ellen, Avduking av jødisk minnesmerke, Speech/ web issue/ erection of memorial to the Jewish deportees, <http://odin.dep.no/odinarkiv/norsk/dep/kd/taler/018001-.../index-dok000-b-n-a.htm>.

¹⁰⁷⁷ Holocaust-dagen for første gang offisiell i Norge, Aftenposten/ web issue, 27 January 2002, <http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/article.jhtml?articleID=265125>.

¹⁰⁷⁸ Stoltenberg, Jens, Speech at the Holocaust-day 2003, Oslo/ Vippetangen on 27 January 2002, source: Den Norske Arbeiderpartiet.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Krigens jødiske ofre minnet, Aftenposten, 8 May 1995.

and the ceremony that were combined with the showing of a new movie on the Norwegian Holocaust found almost no mention in the daily press. Only the leftist paper *Klassekampen* printed a review of the movie that was shown on the initiative of the new Holocaust centre.¹⁰⁸⁰

The movie will be dealt with later.

The founding of the HL-Senter and its focus as well as the establishment of the museum were highly debated round the turn of the millennium and after.¹⁰⁸¹ It was the centre's initiative that led to the establishment of the previously mentioned Holocaust day. The HL-senter's establishment was part of the compensation plan as it had passed Stortinget. The smallest part of the payments, still NOK 40 million, were set aside to finance the centre and its exhibition. The meaning was to establish a centre not only for research into the genocide of the European Jews but – in coherence with a global trend of a greater focus on human rights – a centre for the study of all genocides and the situation of minorities. In order to secure a proper academic environment and support the centre was linked to the University of Oslo and graduate and post-graduate students and researchers of that institution work and do research at the centre. The exhibition was opened on 23 August 2006 in the presence of an illustrious society including the Norwegian Foreign Secretary Jonas Gahr Støre, the Vice President of the German parliament Wolfgang Thierse, the survivor and Nobel Prize winning author Eli Wiesel, Oslo's Chief Rabbi Michael Melchior, the former Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik, who had as we have seen taken the initiative for the centre, and Yehuda Bauer, the curator of Yad Vashem. The actual opening was carried out by Queen Sonja.¹⁰⁸² The list of guests of honour reflects the importance given to the event as well as again the foreign policy moment linked to the centre and its origin.

Beginning from the Christian roots of anti-Judaism and the rise of social Darwinism and racist ideologies, the exhibition subsequently gives a survey of the situation of Jews in Norway before Second World War and the specific Norwegian shades of anti-Semitism in order to describe finally the process of discrimination and persecution of the Norwegian Jews and other Jews living in Norway. The 'final solution' and the concentration and extermination camps outside of Norway are also explained. It is followed by exhibitions on other genocides. At the end of the basement exhibition there is a commemoration room, serving as a memorial for the Norwegian deportees. The set up of this room follows the nowadays widely popular and at times even

¹⁰⁸⁰ Eielsen, Marte Stubberød, En ulykkelig kjærlighetshistorie, in: *Klassekampen*, 27 January 2004. The reviewed movie was *Mannen som elsket Haugesund*.

¹⁰⁸¹ NTB news report, Ikke museum i Villa Grande, *Aftenposten*/ web issue, 9 May 2000, <http://tux1.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/d139304.htm>. Information on the HL-senteret can be obtained from their website <http://www.hlsenteret.no>.

¹⁰⁸² On the opening please refer to HL-senteret, Bakgrunn, http://www.hlsenteret.no/Om_HL-senteret/301.

stereotypical formula of giving names to the murdered and thereby personalizing the memory of the hitherto anonymous mass of victims. The room's walls are decorated with all the names and their place of residence. This concept that had been so eloquently and powerfully applied in Yad Vashem and the Washington Holocaust Memorial might seem a bit misplaced in a totally new exhibition in a country with a relatively small number of victims, but it might as well be understood as a representation for the way the memory of the Jewish victims has hitherto been treated: For most Norwegians this way of representing their former compatriots who were murdered might be the first contact they had with them on a 'face-to-face' level.

The whole exhibition is set up in a symbolic way. The visitors start on the ground floor and have to descend into the basement of the impressive and depressing Villa Grande, once used by the Norwegian 'Führer' Vidkun Quisling himself, once the Nazi era and the occupation period starts within its chronological structure. The next part is in a very narrow corridor with little space to escape the long texts and the objects. Generally the whole exhibition is to a great extent dependent on long texts – it is like the proverbial 'book on walls'. In this book certain parts are repeated over and over as if they could not possibly be overrepresented but have to be carved into the visitor's mind. The participation not only of police units of the new founded secret police of the NS regime and the regime's own initiative in the process of persecution but also the participation of non-NS-affiliated Norwegians and the 'normal' police officers and the reactions of the 'jøssinger'. The sentences representing these facts are clear and urgent, reminding rather warnings and inscriptions found on memorials than museum texts. I will illustrate this with three passages from the museum texts.

Under *Politiet. Arrestasjon av Nordmenn for tilintetgjørelse* (The Police Force. The Arrest of Norwegians for Destruction) the visitor finds the following: "It was Norwegian personnel – from the secret police [Statspoliti, CM], the ordinary police and the crime squad, the Nazi storm troopers [Hirden, CM] and the Germanske SS-Norge that executed the deportations of the Norwegian Jews." As if that was not clear enough, it is repeated under a special part called *NS og holocaust* (NS and the Holocaust) where after a discussion on the origin of the order for the deportations the reader is again told: "The practical realization, however, was completely left to the Norwegian secret police. Moreover, central leaders of the NS were well informed on aims of the policy of the Hitler-regime and on what kind of fate was awaiting the deported Norwegian Jews." At the end of the section on the Holocaust of the Norwegian Jews and before the Genocide all over Europe is described, a lengthy (one of the longest in the whole exhibition) text summarizes everything again. I will give the whole quote since it shows exactly the new view and in its blankness represents the reasons for the foundation of the HL-senter. It reads:

"The brutal attack on Jewish live and property was not born out of an inner process of development inside Norwegian society, but out of occupation and foreign rule by a Nazi- and racist state. But once democracy, the rule of law, freedom of press and organisation was crashed, the Norwegian NS got a free hand for his aggressive anti-Jewish policy. It became possible to mobilize a wide spectrum of institutions and persons – even outside of that party – to participate in the registration, the arrest, transportation and incarceration of the Norwegian Jews and the Jewish refugees.

Until the Jews were handed over to the German authorities at the wharf, the whole action was lead and executed by Norwegian personnel. Without this comprehensive effort by Norwegian citizen, the Norwegian Holocaust could not have been carried out to the extent it was. The active role that Norwegians – Nazis and non-Nazis – played in the destruction-project represents a radical crisis of Norwegian civilisation."¹⁰⁸³

How much the emphasis of the centre is on this new part of the narrative is also reflected in the art installation that is part of the centre and was first shown on 27 August 2006. The piece called *Oslo by night – the Stars* by the artist Victor Lind consists of Quisling former library with its empty shelves where a video is shown that links the star-lit skies over Oslo to a city map depicting where those Jews who never returned from the camps lived, the stars representing the houses. The artist explicitly wanted to have the piece understood as a reminder of the participation of Norwegians.¹⁰⁸⁴ And a quick survey of the press coverage after the opening of the exhibition shows that this new paradigm represented in the centre and its exhibition was now widely accepted and integrated. The Norwegian Holocaust was established as a 'fact' and as a result of Norwegian efforts to loot and deport the Jews in Norway.¹⁰⁸⁵ The Foreign Secretary also repeated this in his speech, as well as Berit Reisel, the Vice Chair of the Board and representative of the Jewish Community in Oslo. A very special occasion was connected to the opening of the centre – the awarding ceremony of the *Righteous Among the Nations*, medals for the rescuers of children of a Jewish children's home in Oslo. The suggestion for the award came from the surviving children themselves on the initiative of Irene Levin, a professor of the Høyskole in Oslo who is currently doing research on that incident. It was also her who held the laudatio for the award. Her thoughts touch deeply on the topic at hand. Therefore I quote her extensively here. In this laudation she referred to the rescue as a forgotten story:

Not only is the recognition late, but the miraculous rescue operation carried out by these courageous women and men continues to be unknown to the Norwegian people. The fact that the Jewish children's home was saved is not considered part of our history of resistance. In the Norwegian narrative of resistance stories, we have some histories that are so famous that they have entered our language as metaphors

¹⁰⁸³ All quotations taken from the original exhibition at the HL-senter in August 2006.

¹⁰⁸⁴ HL-senter, Installasjon om det norske Holocaust, <http://www.hlsenteret.no/Nyheter/528>

¹⁰⁸⁵ As examples see: Braanen, Bjørgulv, Holocaust, Klassekampen, 24 August 2006, [http://oslopubs.no/kunst/article1432685.ece](http://www.klassekampen.no/kk/index.php/news/home/artical_categories/kommentarer/2006/august/holocaust; Hegtun, Halvor, Dystert minne om grusom tid, Aftenposten, 24 August 2006, <a href=).

for escape and heroic deeds. "Nine lives" by Jan Bålsrud serves as an example of how a man saved his life despite all odds. There are many more stories of resistance heroics that are part of the Norwegian cultural heritage. Just by saying a single catchword one can make everyone think in the same direction.

Not only did Levin refer to the story as not being incorporated into the main narrative, she also again identified those tracks that are. The story of the resistance heroes. She continues:

The postwar period was full of stories of grand acts of bravery. However, none of the collective resistance stories are about the courage it took to save the children from the Jewish children's home. It is true that a film was made in the 50's [called I slik en natt – In such a night], but it was full of inaccuracies. Nor did it make a difference for the collective narrative of the Norwegian history of resistance. The silence surrounding this rescue operation has been striking. The classical resistance- and history books since the war have also failed to mention the rescue of the Jewish children's home. Even if there might be one exception, the main picture is the same: The silence is, quite simply, odd, given that bringing 14 children aged between eight and fourteen to safety requires the sort of courage in which the goal overshadows the importance of one's own life.

Levin gives the reason to that silence herself at the end of her speech:

But why has saving the Jewish children from the home in Oslo not been considered an important part of Norwegian war resistance? There are many reasons to that. However, I think we have to admit that saving Jews has not been given much status in this country. To this day, no-one has become a resistance hero in Norway by saving Jews.¹⁰⁸⁶

If she was right, that surely changed after the opening of the HL-senter. The centre was also laid out as a research institution and several projects are planned for the future with one imminent one on the SS volunteers. The research project was initiated by the then Minister of Justice Odd Einar Dørum following some media speculation in 2003-2004 concerning the possible implication of Norwegian Waffen SS volunteers in atrocities on the Eastern Front during Second World War. It is financed mainly by the Ministry of Justice, but with contributions from other ministries, including the Department of Defence. The HL-senter administers the programme. The budget involves three research positions (two post-doc projects and one PhD) for three years and the project will run until the autumn of 2009. A board comprising eight Norwegian and international historians will regularly evaluate progress and ensure the scholarly independence of the project. There are plans to publish preliminary results during the course of the investigations before the project as a whole will be concluded with the publication of three

¹⁰⁸⁶ Levin, Irene, Speech by Professor Irene Levin at the award ceremony Righteous Among the Nations 24th August 2006, Senter for studier av Holocaust og livssynsminoriteter. The speech is available in English on the HL-senter's web page, <http://www.hlsenteret.no/English/667/684>.

studies and a synthesis of their findings. Niels Bo Poulsen who was part of a similar project in Denmark is on the scholarly board of the project.¹⁰⁸⁷

A quick scan of the publications of the post-war years shows that there is some truth in Fure's notion and Levin's words about the silence on the issue in Norwegian historiography and fiction – at least for most of the postwar years. Until the 1980s there was hardly any work published on this matter in Norway. As mentioned earlier, the first author that wrote the history of the Norwegian Jews, who is also the only one, was Oskar Mendelsohn. In 1987 he finished his very detailed and well written description of the history of the Norwegian Jews. The two volume book was later complemented with a much shorter paperback edition.¹⁰⁸⁸ His works are of great value, and he virtually holds a monopoly of the historiography on the Norwegian Jews. On the matter of the deportations, Mendelsohn leaves it up to further research to establish if the initiative of the deportations came from German or even from Norwegian authorities but also mentions the participation of Norwegian officials after the order was given from the Gestapo. Not very much has been written except for his works. In 1996, Kristian Ottosen wrote a book only about the deportations. It is a biographical account of the events rather than an academic work.¹⁰⁸⁹ One other author that devoted work to the history of the deportations was Nils Johan Ringdal, who included a chapter in this matter in his book on the Norwegian police forces under the occupation. This chapter is one of the most detailed in the whole book.¹⁰⁹⁰ Ole Kristian Grimnes reviewed the book for the biggest Norwegian historical journal and also devoted some lines to this chapter. He was rather disappointed about the technical and methodological flaws of Ringdal and certified Ringdal a bias towards a condemnation of the police, thereby neglecting the illegal work done by officers.¹⁰⁹¹ This clandestine support for the resistance by officers was the ruling paradigm for a long time.¹⁰⁹²

There had been chances though to understand and acknowledge the nature of complicity. For example by means of the trials that came up during the time of the transitional justice. One of the most difficult trials in this time had definitely been the trial of Knut Rød. Rød had been in charge as the highest representative of the ordinary police during the deportations on 25 November 1942. After the liberation he and three of his officers were charged with complicity in murder but were acquitted in two court proceedings. The judges saw his and his aides work

¹⁰⁸⁷ The information was provided by Rolf Hobson of the HL-senter.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Mendelsohn, Oskar. *Jødene i Norge. Historien om en minoritet*, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget 1992.

¹⁰⁸⁹ Ottosen, Kristin, *I slik en natt. Historien om deportasjonen av jøder fra Norge*, Oslo 1994.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Ringdal, Nils Johan, *Mellom barken og veden. Politiet under okkupasjonen*, Oslo: Aschehoug 1987.

¹⁰⁹¹ Grimnes, Ole Kristian, Nils Johan Ringdahl: *Mellom barken og veden. Politiet under okkupasjonen*, review in: *Historisk Tidsskrift (N)*, vol. 67, 1988, pp. 213-221.

¹⁰⁹² An example here is Johansen, Per Ole, *Oss Selv Nærmest*, Oslo: Gyldendal, 1984, pp. 150-153. Notwithstanding that Johansen expressively mentions collaboration of the force in general.

and information given to the Hjemmefront as more important than his complicity.¹⁰⁹³ The participation in the deportations was never questioned and was even admitted by the defendants. They referred to orders. With their acquittal, the whole Norwegian police was acquitted.¹⁰⁹⁴ This might be the reason why the participation of more than 300 Norwegian officials was for a long time not made the subject of scrutiny – simply because no administration had to do so after this trial. The occupation was a fact in Denmark as well. Still, there most of the Jews could be rescued. In Norway, the relatively high percentage of around 50% of the Jews living in the country were killed. An explanation might be the complicity of Norwegians based on their personal dislike of minorities or anti-Semitism, since Quisling alone would not make the difference.¹⁰⁹⁵ How much indeed the sentence of Rød and the complicity is still capable to arouse discussion can be seen from the fact that the newly opened HL-senter organised a *Seminar om politiinspektør Knut Rød og frifinnelsen av han etter krigen* in November 2006. Two lectures were given, one by Øivind Kopperud on the question of how much the idea of what a 'Norwegian' was influenced the deportations and the second by the director Odd-Bjørn Fure on the "Rød-sentence as a challenge".¹⁰⁹⁶ Linked with the seminar, the HL-senter has put up a figurine of Knut Rød by the artist Victor Lind who is known for his political art around the deportation of the Norwegian Jews. The brochure that was published in Norwegian, English and German and bore the title *The Perpetrator* (Gjerningsmannen). Besides a poem by Paul Celan it contained a quote from the reasons given for the judgement of 1948 and the assertion that the figurine will be left standing until "the sentence of 9 April 1948 is annulled."¹⁰⁹⁷ It was put up on the anniversary of the Donau-transport on November 26.

¹⁰⁹³ Sveri, Knut, Landssviksoppgjørets merkeligste rettssak, in: Bratholm, A., Christie, N., Opsahl, T. (eds.), *Lov og Frihet. Festskrift til Johs. Andenæs på 70-årsdagen*, Oslo: Universitetsforlag 1982.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Pihl, Joron, *Monumenter og mot-monumenter*, *Nytt Norsk Tidsskrift*, vol. 2, 2002, p. 141-154.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Pihl, *Monumenter*, p. 145.

¹⁰⁹⁶ The programme can be accessed on the center's webpage. <http://www.hlsenteret.no/Arrangementer/795>.

¹⁰⁹⁷ Lind, Victor, *Gjerningsmannen*, Oslo: HL-senteret 2005.



The figurine of Knut Rød by Victor Lind, courtesy HL-senteret

For some time this complicity was understood only by professional historians.¹⁰⁹⁸ It found its way into the public by a widely popular book by Espen Søybye in 2003. His *Kathe, alltid vært i Norge* in which he told the story of a young Norwegian Jewish girl who was deported.¹⁰⁹⁹ Working in the state archives the author had found the file of the murdered Jewish girl, Kathe Lasnik and had made the effort to find out more about that girl who, when asked – on a form implemented by the NS to register Jews – for the date of her immigration to Norway had simply stated 'alltid vært i Norge' – 'always been in Norway'. Whether she answered that way because that was the simple truth because she had been born in Norway or whether she, instead of merely skipping the question had filled it out that way because she hoped it might help – no one knows. Søybye believes the latter though.¹¹⁰⁰ The author's intention was to show that not only Norwegians had participated in the deportations but that it was also Norwegians who were deported. Knut Rød's role during the whole process was thoroughly examined. The book was positively reviewed. A lot of the reviews dealt with the matter in more depth. The influential weekly *Morgenbladet* devoted several articles to the book. On 28 November 2003 Guri Hjeltnes, one of the few women in the field of occupation history in Norway reviewed the book. She praised it for its wealth of details and said that it illustrates the history of the persecution of the

¹⁰⁹⁸ For example Bruland, Bjarte, *Forsøket på å tilintetgjøre de norske Jødene*, thesis (Hovedoppgave), Universitetet i Bergen 1995.

¹⁰⁹⁹ Søybye, Espen, *Kathe, alltid vært i Norge*, Oslo: Oktober 2003.

¹¹⁰⁰ Søybye, Kathe, p. 102.

Jews in Norway better than other works hitherto and that it will set standards.¹¹⁰¹ In an interview with the author and the connected article, Håkon Gundersen of *Morgenbladet* also quotes Odd-Bjørn Fure, the head of the HL-senteret who said that the notion of Norway as a tolerant country is so deeply rooted that scholars would not pay attention to the dark sides of the society and that even Oskar Mendelsohn was too considerate towards the Norwegians.¹¹⁰² He saw his two-volume book on the history of the Norwegian Jews as an acknowledgement of the many Norwegians that had helped during the war,¹¹⁰³

There is something odd though about the book's get-up, the story and the whole discussion around it. The cover and its contents reminds one very strongly of the later issues of Anne Frank's *Diary*. The picture of the young girl smiling shyly at the viewer and the fact that Kathe was about the same age as Anne and that the peg for the story is a written testimony of the girl – though of course there is no literary analogy between them. It seems as if there is an underlying desire to have Norway's own little Anne. Even though the media was certainly looking for such an analogy, researchers disagreed. Irene Levin explained in an Interview with *Dag og Tid* in November 2003 why Kathe was by the facts no Norwegian Anne Frank. She was never helped and never hidden.¹¹⁰⁴ The reviews also revolted around that topic or analogy although it was rarely expressed as directly as by the aforementioned Håkon Gundersen of *Morgenbladet*.



The cover of Kathe, alltid vært i Norge, courtesy Forlaget Oktober

¹¹⁰¹ Hjeltnes, Guri, Ensom i Norge, *Morgenbladet*, 28 November 2003, http://www.morgenbladet.no/index.php?show_article=1007688.

¹¹⁰² Gundersen, Håkon, Historien må utdypes, in: *Morgenbladet*, 28 November 2003.

¹¹⁰³ Dahl, Hans Fredrik, Oskar Mendelsohn: Jødernes Historie i Norge Gjennom 300 År, *Historisk Tidsskrift* (N) 67 (1988): 204-12.

¹¹⁰⁴ Helgheim, Roald, Pedantisk som det grufulle, *Dag og Tid*, 22 November 2003.

The title of the article and the frontpage accused the Hjemmefront of being guilty of complicity in the deportations. The reason why the topic never came up was that Hjemmefront members were too influential after the war and the story was not suitable for a country that needed moral and economical recovery. Gundersen has had also talked with Arnfinn Moland on that matter and Moland is quoted as having said that the acquittal of Knut Rød was highly disputable and that the veterans never agreed on the case, but that shortly after the war the extent of the genocide had not been understood and that seen with today's eyes the affair would look more difficult.¹¹⁰⁵ The whole debate of the Rød-trial reminds us of the Feldmann case discussed in the chapter on the liquidations. There too, the Hjemmefront members were not punished. And there too, the case and its aftermath were taken up by an artist decades later.

As seen earlier in the case of the Liquidations, publications of critical or false documentation, the veteran's squad felt called to respond. In 1995 Ragnar Ulstein published a book on the flight of the Norwegian Jews and the help the Hjemmefront and other Norwegians had tried to give. In *Jøder på flukt*, the author, an expert on the history of the clandestine escape routes in occupied Norway, made expressive references to the Feldmann case and also included a comparison with Denmark.¹¹⁰⁶ Ulstein had before studied these routes to Sweden with the support of the NHM and published a lengthy study in the end of the 1970s.¹¹⁰⁷ He has since then published intensively on the matter. Ulstein claims that any comparison with the Danish case has to fail if it does not take into account the very different trajectories, occupation regimes and the different timing of the deportations. He stresses the efforts that the Hjemmefronten, despite the risks for the fragile organisation which the time of the deportations was, made and describes the different conditions under which the aid work had to be conducted. Ulstein certainly has a point in stressing the differences in the occupation regime and history though his general dismissal of a comparative approach and the vindicating tone of the book make it look like an effort to exculpate Norway from the suspicion of indifference. The book came in a time when public opinion in Scandinavia was little favourable to such an explanation. A certain neo-moralism prevailed and the direct comparison in numbers of rescued Jews was drawn. The debate on a compensation for Jews was hot and different agents felt, rightfully or not under pressure. Such a book can be seen as a contribution to battle an image of Norway as anti-Semitic, an image that was brought onto Norway not the least from outside. Debates on the assumed anti-Semitic nature of many European countries before the war and the consequences for the respective

¹¹⁰⁵ Gundersen, Det norske Holokaust.

¹¹⁰⁶ Ulstein, Ragnar. *Jøder på flukt*. 95. Oslo, Det Norske Samlaget.

¹¹⁰⁷ Ulstein, Ragnar. *Svensketrafikken*. 3 vols., Oslo: Samlaget 1974-1977.

Jewish populations during the war developed and maybe also the decision to use Quislings former Villa as a Centre for the research on genocide can be seen in that context.¹¹⁰⁸ Part of that narrative is also that there exists a fair amount of literature on the German prisoner camp Grini, whereas there is almost nothing to find on the only camp entirely under Norwegian (Quisling) control – Berg. Also unknown or unrewarded is the story of those 70 inmates that were from so-called mixed marriages and who with the help of the Swedes were rescued to Sweden. The Norwegian government refused their re-nationalisation after the war which is a hitherto unknown fact in Norwegian historiography.¹¹⁰⁹

As can be seen, a 'Norwegian share' of the responsibility for the persecution and subsequent murder of the Norwegian and other Jews in Norway had been debated and denied for a long time or had simply not made it out into the public. Step by step, a consciousness of – at least – the fact that the Holocaust also happened in Norway seeped into the minds of the Norwegian population, but not without resistance. Some may have thought such a confession would be a dark spot on the otherwise shining white war history. The discussion though seemed to have reached the climax in the discussion on the compensation of Norwegian Jews for the robbery suffered at Norwegian hands. In 2003 Joron Pihl, a professor at Oslo College warned that the act to take responsibility for the economic exploitation should not be a final stroke, but that further steps were needed. She claimed that still the Holocaust in Norway was still presented as a German act and that it was time to publicly acknowledge the Norwegian guilt. It is not altogether improbable that she thought about an official apology.¹¹¹⁰ But just three years later the opening of the Holocaust centre again attracted wide attention which was not only due to the presence of the Queen and the Crown Princess. The previous debates on the compensation for the Norwegian Jews seem to have found its way into the reception of the centre. Remarkable is the fact that the all participants of the debates now use the expression 'Norwegian Holocaust' when referring to either the fate of the Norwegian Jews or the participation of Norwegian officials in the persecution – the facts not only have found their way into the discourse, they have come along a new term for this part of Norwegian war history.

A quick search of the relevant newspapers around the opening of the centre revealed a wave of articles on almost any aspect of the genocide of the European Jews. A recurring feature of the articles was an underlying fear that Norwegians have an insufficient knowledge of the genocide and tend to (mis-)use it in discussions. Voices that denied the co-responsibility of Norwegians

¹¹⁰⁸ Maerz, Landesverrat, p. 62.

¹¹⁰⁹ Bruland, Norwegen, p. 464.

¹¹¹⁰ Helgheim, Roald, Eit Norsk Ansvar, Dag Og Tid, 22 November 2003.

were clearly the minority.¹¹¹¹ Early after its opening the new Holocaust centre also started a session of Sunday lectures for the broader public free of charge. It is remarkable that one of the first two lectures was already directly aimed at the rather controversial question of the persecution that was represented in the clandestine press.¹¹¹² The centre obviously tried to live up to its exhibition and aims – spreading knowledge on the Norwegian Holocaust – in all aspects.

The first movie produced after the war that had any connection to the topic was actually positive. Based on a true story, the almost documentary-like drama *I slik en natt* tells the story of a young female doctor, who in 1942 helped several Jewish children from a children's home in Oslo to escape to Sweden.¹¹¹³ Not knowing who to trust and chased by the Germans, the doctor tries to use the Hjemmefront's 'export routes. These, however, are blown due to the intensive work of the Germans and she has to take the children to Sweden all by herself. There is a lot of symbolism in this movie. The title was taken from a verse by Hendrik Wergeland the poet that fought so intensively for the equality of Jews in Norway and the name of the doctor is Liv Kraft – *liv* means life and *kraft* is power. In 1994 Kristian Ottosen used the title again in his book on the deportations from Norway. In the previous chapter on the liquidations I have already mentioned the movie *Over grensen* based on the book by Sigurd Senje *Ekko fra Skriktjenn*. As a critical movie it provoked discussions. The underlying assumption that the anti-Semitism might also have been prevalent among the resistance was certainly provoking. In 1998, a short movie dealt with the deportations directly. The 20 minute movie with the title *Donau* was shown in November 2006 in the HL-senteret.¹¹¹⁴ In 2003 these things could not provoke too much debate anymore. If the Holocaust was not acknowledged as a Norwegian history as well, the time was certainly ripe for such an acknowledgement as can be seen from the story of Moritz Rabinowitz. In Haugesund on the western coast of Norway, a man from Poland arrived in 1911. The foreigner was rather short and did not have the fair hair of the local population. His name: Moritz Rabinowitz. Together with his brother he first worked as a travelling businessman, visiting the small towns and villages along the coastal routes – selling clothes. After some years he had saved enough money to establish a shop in Haugesund that by the end of the 1930s had developed into the largest department store for clothing in the country with orders coming from

¹¹¹¹ I found one example of that – a very emotional letter to the editor in which the author refused to accept the opinion uttered by the director of the HL-senter in a TV-interview that all members of the NS have face a responsibility. Dordi Skuggevik, *Fortsatt demonisering av NS*, *Aftenposten/ web issue*, 26 August 2006, <http://www.aftenposten.no/meninger/debatt/article1435410.ece>.

¹¹¹² Ingjerd V. Brakstad, *Hva skrev den illegale pressen om jødeforfølgelsene i Norge?*, HL-senteret 10 September 2006.

¹¹¹³ *I Slik En Natt*, Sigma, Sigval Maartmann-Moe, 1958.

¹¹¹⁴ *M/S Donau*, *Laterna Magica*, Knut W. Jordfald, 1998.

miles away. He was the only Jew in Haugesund. The bourgeoisie of Haugesund never really accepted him – maybe also because Rabinowitz was politically active and soon he warned of the threat that developed in Germany under the Nazis. He wrote a book and published countless articles. In 1939 he called for defences to be built along the Norwegian coast – and was ridiculed for the suggestion. When the Wehrmacht occupied Haugesund in April 1940, he was soon on the Gestapo's list of most wanted people. For some time he managed to hide by a remote fjord, but the Germans eventually caught up with him. He died two years later in the Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp. Sixty years later, the directors Jon Haukeland and Tore Vollan made Rabinowitz' story a documentary movie. In *Mannen som elsket Haugesund* (The Man who Loved Haugesund) the live story of Rabinowitz is told with vintage film footage and interviews.¹¹¹⁵ The documentary also traces the prevalent opinion in Haugesund that if Rabinowitz really had wanted he could have escaped the Nazis but that his greed prevented him from leaving in time. It was this mixture of rejection and prejudice by the local population that the movie-makers wanted to show and which made them choose the title as an innuendo to the fact that Rabinowitz had once fallen in love with this small town and had made it his home – but that Haugesund has not returned his love. That instead the town quickly "repressed" the memory of her most important businessman.¹¹¹⁶ The movie was shown in Denmark and Finland as well, attracting a great number of viewers at the Haugesund film festival in 2003 and gained some popularity after winning the prize.¹¹¹⁷ The *Norsk filminstitutt* recommends the movie as complementary material for the ninth grade when the Holocaust is dealt with in the schools.¹¹¹⁸ The media received the movie generally benevolently and the reviews were positive. The provocation that the movie included does not seem to have been too strong, however, because *Aftenposten* reported "thundering applause" from the "older citizens of Haugesund". The intention of the makers was to counteract a notion that "[T]he destruction of Jews had just happened in Poland and Germany, not in Våland I Stavanger and in Strandgata in Haugesund [the address of Rabinowitz' store]" was wrong. They wanted to prove that "these things also happened here."¹¹¹⁹ The movie was also shown at the Stockholm Holocaust Conference.

¹¹¹⁵ *Mannen som elsket Haugesund*, Haukeland, Jon, Vollan, Tore, Medieoperatørene AS, Corianderfilm, Norsk filminstitutt 2003.

¹¹¹⁶ Lismoen, Kjetil, Fortrengninger og steinkasting, *Morgenbladet*, 30 January 2004.

¹¹¹⁷ The movie won the Regeringens menneskerettighetspris (Price on Human Rights) at the Norsk filminstitutt. Norsk filminstitutt, 11 November 2004, http://www.nfi.no/nyheter/_nyheter/vis.html?id=1277.

¹¹¹⁸ Norsk filminstitutt, <http://www.nfi.no/barnunge/filmstudieark/film.html?id=341>.

¹¹¹⁹ Haddal, Per, *Mannen som ikke ble elsket*, *Aftenposten*/ web issue, 19 August 2003, <http://www.aftenposten.no/meninger/kommentarer/article606934.ece>.

Altogether it can be seen from the previous pages that Norwegian society for most of the postwar period did not consider the possibility of a Norwegian 'share' in the genocide of the European Jews or the existence of a 'Norwegian Holocaust'. Anti-Semitism was neither considered to have been nor to be of any considerable size in Norway. If Norwegians were involved or had accumulated guilt, it had to be the quislings. Literature, Historiography, and the public narrative that did not include Jews or the victims of the Shoa to any degree added to this view. The fact that the Jewish community and those who had suffered or written about it did not try to force a debate on the Holocaust in Norway also probably had an impact. The reasons for the relative silence on the side of the victims can only be guessed. Maybe the social composition of the postwar community with a considerable part being non-Norwegian eastern-European survivors of the camps and a certain anti-Semitic continuity in the postwar Norwegian administration prevented common efforts and nurtured the fear of renewed discrimination.¹¹²⁰ In many countries all around Europe Jewish communities chose a heads-down low profile approach to politics in order not to attract too much attention.

What might have triggered the debate that in the end lead to a widespread acknowledgement of Jewish suffering also in Norway and the incorporation of the Holocaust into the main narrative? Norway is at the periphery of the European continent but of course not detached from it. My guess is that again debates from other countries spilled over into the Norwegian memory circus. The heated debate on the Swiss 'anonymous' bank accounts, the signs of a re-interpretation of the wartime neutrality in Sweden and the Nazi-gold, the acknowledgement of a part of the blame for the deportation of the French Jews by the French prime minister, as early or late as 1995 as well as the German debate on its identity in the wake of its re-unification will have added to a certain awareness within the Norwegian political elite and public to the dark sides not only of the war history but also of the narrative. A certain pressure felt to come from the outside in the form of a bad reputation abroad or at times as law suits have added everywhere in Europe to this development. Germany had not and would probably not have given any compensation to the slave-labourers if not threatened by a class action suit in the United States and Swiss banks would not have cooperated without the threat of their interest in the US and elsewhere being at risk. There are no exact times or immediate links between these developments in other European countries and the discourse in Norway, but it seems very likely that they have influenced the development there.

¹¹²⁰ Correl, Synne, "vårt lille plaster på krigens sår" Norges mottak av jødiske "displaced persons" og arbeidere mellom 1946 og 1950, thesis (hovedoppgave), Oslo University 2000.

The Flight of the Danish Jews – October 1943

The Danish trajectory was very different and therefore its problems deviated from those discussed in Norway. Out of around 7,500 Danish Jews and other Jews in Denmark just about 500 had been caught and deported by the Germans. Personnel from inside the German administration had leaked the information of the imminent arrests so that the others could be brought in a joint effort of people from all parts of the Danish society to neutral Sweden with small trawlers. For people inside and outside of Denmark – not only the survivors – it is an event to celebrate. The Danish helpers understood the action against the Danish Jews as an infringement against their fellow citizens and the whole public life including the universities, labour unions, the employer's associations – in short the whole elite – and the churches protested against it and took part in the rescue. Danish civil society was challenged and answered to that challenge immediately and in a determined manner. Not only did the helpers come from all social strata and did the employers organise and place their employees, the professors their students and the physicians their hospitals to the disposal of the rescue operation, but the churches also read the pastoral letter written by Copenhagen's Bishop Hans Fuglsang Damgaard that very clearly condemned German action. The resistance movements helped wherever they could, providing their escape routes. The and as a result of the rescue, many Danes who had been sceptical and reluctant joined the resistance groups. Uncertainty about the role of the German Reichsplenipotentiary Werner Best in initiating and sabotaging the deportations was voiced but the heroism of his employee Georg Ferdinand Duckwitz was not to be doubted. So far the tradition.

The fact that the overwhelming majority of Jews survived and that it was civil disobedience that caused it, is generally regarded as 'light in the darkness of the Holocaust' – especially in the USA. The state of Israel acknowledges the uniqueness of the event as well, by the decoration and the name of a square in Jerusalem and through the official memorial Yad Vashem where a rowing boat used in the successful rescue has since 1983 represented the Danish people as Righteous Among the Nations. Fourteen individual Danes were awarded the title of Righteous Gentile but their name, on the request of the Danish side, was not published – instead King Christian X was awarded the title on behalf of the Danish people in correpodance of the consensual tradition of the rescue as an effort of all Danes.¹¹²¹ The square next to 'Sweden Park' was opened in 1968. The days in October 1943 are probably one the few events in Danish 20th

¹¹²¹ Bak, Sofie Lene, *Jødeaktionen Oktober 1943. Forestillinger i offentlighed og forskning*, København: Museum Tusulanum, 2001, p. 162.

century history that attracted wider attention outside of Denmark. And it gives Denmark a special place in Holocaust museums all over the world. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington keeps a boat used in the rescue in its exhibition and on its webpage a "special focus" on Denmark can be accessed.¹¹²² Denmark attracts visitors from around the world but especially the United States who wander in the tracks of the helpers and the survivors.¹¹²³ A survey in the FM showed that in the early 1990s the exhibition on the Jews represented an important part of the museum for most foreigners – their interest in that part was more than 100% higher than that of Danes who concentrated on sabotage.¹¹²⁴

But then again, if the quotation at the beginning of this subchapter holds true for Norway, one might contemplate whether it in some respect may apply for Denmark as well. It is true that virtually everybody who ever studied the history of the Second World War and the Genocide knows about the rescue of the Danish Jews. At first glance, the literature on October 1943, the persecution, the role of German officials, the flight itself and the role of the rescue as recruiting ground for clandestine work was extensive immediately after the war and got another upswing in the 1990s during the 'decade of anniversaries'.¹¹²⁵ The gap between the scholarly and the common interpretation of the events that could be seen in other aspects of the war does not seem to exist – at least until recently. The story stands out as an example of a widely acknowledged narrative. The Danes proved immune against the anti-Semitic propaganda and the whole population joined in the effort to help the persecuted. Disagreement is just visible when the reasons for the nearly total success is discussed. Here, as could be seen already in the previous chapter on the Holocaust in Norway, the discussion was whether it depended on a special 'character' of the Danish people, on the unique situation in 1943, the geographical location close to the safe haven of Sweden or the 'sabotage' of German officials. The latter factor was time and again discussed with regard to the still unsolved mystery of the role of the Reichsplenipotentiary Werner Best and his marine attachee Georg Ferdinand Duckwitz. One or both of them had warned Danish leaders and the Jewish community, thereby making it possible that on the razzia on 2 October 1943 just some hundred people were captured. Their motives and actions were an object of detailed examinations also because it naturally became an issue during their trials after the war. Whether Best had initiated and – or sabotaged the deportations was of decisive importance to the question of guilt. Duckwitz stood out as the hero in the end of these legal and

¹¹²² United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Museum exhibitions, Special Focus, The Rescue of the Jews of Denmark, <http://www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/focus/danish/>

¹¹²³ Kirchhoff, Hans, Indledning, in: Kirchhoff, Hans (ed.), *Nyt lys over oktober 1943*, Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag 2001, pp. 9-14, p. 9.

¹¹²⁴ Kjeldbæk, Esben, Idéoplæg til ændring af den faste udstilling på Frihedsmuseet, Frihedsmuseets Bibliotek, 37a, p. 17.

academic processes and discussions as the 'saviour of the Danish Jews'. He later even became the ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany in Copenhagen. But also Best was not punished for the murder of Danish Jews. Although he was sentenced to death in the first instance because of his role in the October events, the court of appeal for the same reason lowered the sentence and he was later pardoned and expelled to Germany.¹¹²⁶ Uncertainty on the details though was met with an unprecedented unity on the role of the Danes. In the first postwar decades the rescue of the Jews was seen as a chapter of the overall struggle against the Germans as a victory of the resistance and one chapter – an important one though – of the long history of the resistance. The first standard works that gave the events an importance of their own were published in the 1960s. Leni Yahil's book *The Rescue of the Danish Jewry. A Test of a Democracy* is a very good example of a successful interpretation of those days. This thesis, originally written in Hebrew, then published in Danish and then later in English became the reference for the events of October 1943 – at least outside of the academic circles and outside of Denmark.¹¹²⁷ The theme of the light on the otherwise dark continent dominated this narrative and if there was doubt, it was not raised since it seemed to be a good propaganda for Denmark – internally for the individual and externally in its foreign relations.¹¹²⁸ Some scholars were critical of the idealizing tendencies but agreed on the depth and the quality of the analysis of the accessible primary sources.¹¹²⁹ The overwhelming tone of most works that dominated the first decades of academic and popular writing on October 1943 stressed the spirit of the Danes and their love of freedom and the effects of this national character on the German occupation authority, and the decisive moments behind the success of the operation. Even into the 1980s, they also, like the first Danish in-depth study of the decision-making processes on the German side by Jørgen Hæstrup, hailed Duckwitz as the saviour of the Danish Jews.¹¹³⁰

As part of this, earlier interpretations of the rescue, legends and myths emerged – especially outside of Denmark like the one on the King and the Star of David. The myth that the Danish King Christian X himself wore the yellow badge in the shape of the Magen David, introduced

¹¹²⁵ Bak, Jødeaktionen Oktober 1943, graph p. 176.

¹¹²⁶ The hitherto best work on Best – also on his deeds in France before his assignment to Denmark certainly is Herbert, Ulrich, Best, Bonn: Dietz 1996.

¹¹²⁷ Yahil, Leni, Et demokrati på prøve. Jøderne i Danmark under besættelsen, København: Gyldendal 1967; Yahil, Leni, The Rescue of the Danish Jewry. A test of a Democracy, Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America 1969. The Danish issue is foreworded by Jørgen Hæstrup.

¹¹²⁸ Several examples are mentioned by Paulsson, Gunnar S. in: The 'Bridge Over the Øresund': The Historiography on the Expulsion of the Jews From Nazi-Occupied Denmark, Journal of Contemporary History, 1995, vol. 30, no. 3, pp. 431-464, pp. 431-433. He calls it a healing myth.

¹¹²⁹ Hans Kirchhoff wrote a critical review in Historisk Tidsskrift: Kirchhoff, Hans, Denmark: A Light in the Darkness of the Holocaust? A Reply to Gunnar S. Poulsson, in: Journal of Contemporary History, 1995, vol. 30, no. 3, pp. 465-79.

¹¹³⁰ Hæstrup, Til landets bedste.

by the Nazis, in protest against the Nazi persecution is simply false. Neither did the Nazis ever introduce or manage to introduce the badge in Denmark, nor did the King himself ever intend to show his solidarity with the Jews in that way. What is true is that the king was sympathetic with the Danish Jews and was, as was his government, in opposition to any anti-Semitic legislation in his realm and through letters and public appearances he openly displayed this sympathy. The legend of the king and the star derives from a political caricature by the exiled draughtsman Ragnvald Blix published in the Swedish newspaper *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning* in 1942 where the king being asked by the collaborating Prime Minister Stauning what he intended to do if the Germans would introduce the badge answered: "Well, we would all have to wear the star."¹¹³¹ British and American newspapers spread the legend that actually benefitted the Danish course because it shed a much nicer light on the Danish policy of cooperation, especially after the government's forced participation in Hitler's anti-Komintern pact, which was seen internally and externally as the most far-reaching act of submission of the Danish government. Recent research has argued that it was deliberately spread to improve Denmark's reputation alongside other myths of the King and his stance toward the Danish Jews.¹¹³² It gained a widespread popularity in the 1960s through the book and the subsequent movie *Exodus* by Leon Uris, where it is also described as fact.¹¹³³ The myth has been re-evoked several times, most recently in the US in 2001.¹¹³⁴ Also in Israel the myth is traded.¹¹³⁵ In Denmark though, the legend never gained ground – the Danes knew better.

But in October 1943 not only thousands of lives were saved, the events were also an act of resistance because it directly interfered with the occupation forces' plans for the Jews to be incarcerated and finally murdered. As act of resistance it deserves attention in the course of the celebrations of the war as well as in the FM. After the successful rescue no single person could claim special honour for it and no party either. It was one of the things the whole population could be proud of. The rescue of 95% of the Danish Jews that was such an outstanding singularity in Europe during the Nazi-reign also served as a confirmation of the Danish people's rightful status as allied nation after the war. The whole operation was seen to be organized by

¹¹³¹ Stræde, Therkel, Die schwierige Erinnerung an Kollaboration und Widerstand, in: Flacke, Monika (ed.), *Mythen der Nationen. 1945 – Arena der Erinnerungen, Begleitband zur Ausstellung*, vol. I, Berlin: Deutsches Historisches Museum 2005, pp. 123-150, p.138.

¹¹³² Vilhjálmsón, Vilhjálmur Örn, The King and the Star. Myths Created During the Occupation of Denmark, in: *Denmark and the Holocaust*, Jensen, Mette Bastholm Jensen, Jensen, Steven L. B., København: Institute for International Studies, Department for Holocaust and genocide Studies, 2003, 102-117.

¹¹³³ Uris, Leon, *Exodus*, Garden City, New York: Doubleday 1958, p. 75.

¹¹³⁴ Vilhjálmsón, The King and the Star, p. 102. This is somehow astonishing given the fact that today the legend is largely cleared up. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum has the explanation on its webpage (<http://www.ushmm.org/research/library/faq/details.php?topic=04#01>), which is of course also an indicator that still people believe in it.

¹¹³⁵ Barfod, Ole, *Jødestjernen Kom Aldri Til Danmark*, Politiken, 1 October 1983.

the resistance – something that is today seen rather differently since there is evidence that suggests a high degree of spontaneity and that a majority of the helpers hitherto had had no contact with clandestine work and afterwards did not continue it. That the German action against their fellow Danes caused fury in all walks of life and strengthened the cause of the resistance could probably be affirmed. The rescue therefore was also represented and is represented in the FM which also found its way to deal with the myth. The old exhibition simply did not, to my knowledge, mention it. The whole story was represented by a simple display with copies of the few original photos from the rescue that were known back then and some personal belongings of the refugees. When the museum was refurbished, the curator was very conscious about the power of the legend. Kjeldbæk called it the kongemyten (myth about the king) and supported that it could not be left out in the new exhibition since the American visitors in particular would expect to see a picture of the king with the badge.¹¹³⁶ Furthermore, the king had shown demonstrative sympathy with his Jewish subjects, so he had to be included. After the part that illustrates the rescue with a lot of the same pictures and objects as the previous exhibition, also the model of the fishing boat *Expres* that had been involved in the rescue, a ticket to a coastal town used by Jews to reach the coast and a videoscreen with some interviews, a small statue of the king on a horse is shown and the caption under the title *Kongemyten* explains the legend and its origin. That the king had been sympathetic towards the Jews is represented by a letter to the Jewish community in November 1941 in which he expressed his joy that an arson attack on the Copenhagen synagogue had failed. Whether this way of 'de-constructing' the myth is appropriate could to be doubted since the figurine is quite small and the display can easily be missed. It would be hard to assume that this was done on purpose but on the whole, the story is not dismantled. There is, however, obviously a difficulty to deal in a museum with both the story of a flight with just a few historical documents – for good reasons the rescuers did not keep written proof – and with the notions and legends that developed over the years. The displays in the Frihedsmuseum are still very sober and modest, the flight is not given disproportionately much space. The objects are mainly objects that the refugees carried with them or papers issued in Sweden upon arrival or things that they had to leave behind. The Swedish state is represented by a buoy with a Swedish flag and the introductory text is short. Werner Best's dubious role in the preceding weeks and the leak to the Danes on the planned deportations is mentioned and followed by "More than 7,000 Jews escaped arrest and – spontaneously helped by their fellow citizens and the Resistance – reached safety in neutral Sweden."¹¹³⁷

¹¹³⁶ Kjeldbæk, Esben, Idéliste vedr. fornyelse af Frihedsmusets udstilling. 10 April 1990, FM Arkiv, box Nyopstilling 1995.

¹¹³⁷ Frihedsmuseet, exhibition, "Redningen af de danske jøder oktober 1943".

Given the importance that the rescue of the Danish Jews had won in the international memory culture on the Shoa, it is quite astonishing that there is no evidence that it had attracted too much attention from the Danish public and its cultural institutions in the last decades. If one goes beyond the sheer number of publications inside and outside of the country, the situation gets more complex. Some scholars have the feeling that inside Denmark the "unique and rather humanitarian than political action" of those October days was actually even marginalized in the public discourse.¹¹³⁸ A careful observer might even get the impression that the rescue of the Jews is something that was taken for granted, something that did not need further attention since it was clear and obvious and known.

In the exhibition on the day-to-day life during the occupation *Spærretid*, October 1943 was dealt with in two different ways. Integrated into the exhibitions 'path of the traitor' – the red side of the collaborationists on the tour through the exhibition – the visitor found a display with anti-Semitic propaganda and publications by the Danish Nazis spreading hatred against the Jews. The text briefly explained the development of racist anti-Semitism and then mentions that these ideas also circulated in Denmark – albeit just in very small Nazi groups.¹¹³⁹ The part on the events in October 1943 itself was presented in a new and rather abstract way, indicating the difficulties of representing something like a mass-flight. Behind a column with a very brief introductory text on the situation of Jews during the period of Danish cooperation, the role of Werner Best and the flight over the Sound a beamer threw a video onto a screen at the rear wall of the relatively dark exhibition area. The visitors saw a video shot of the Swedish coastline seen from a site of a former pub in Snekkersteen, a place from where a lot of refugees fled. The owner of the local pub, who had been very active in the rescue, was captured by the Germans and died in a German Concentration Camp in 1944. The recording was from 2005 but the view must have been the same back then when the refugees could see Sweden, which was very light in comparison to Denmark due to the blackout. Another display showed items of those who were captured and sent to Theresienstadt Concentration Camp. The introductory text though held some surprises. It reflected the latest discussion on the risks of the rescue and the money taken by the skippers. It read: "The part of the flight at sea was accomplished with fishing boats, whose owners transported in the course of October around 90% of the Danish Jews to safety – for payments of varying height. Decisive for the success was the passiveness of the German military and the fact that thousands of Danes helped where-ever they could."¹¹⁴⁰ We can clearly

¹¹³⁸ Stræde, *Die schwierige Erinnerung*, p. 139.

¹¹³⁹ Nationalmuseet, exhibition *Spærretid*, "Dansk Antisemitisme".

¹¹⁴⁰ Nationalmuseet, exhibition *Spærretid*, "Redningen af de danske jøder".

see that the latest exhibition had changed immensely in tone toward a more complex interpretation of the days of October 1943.

The "romantic"¹¹⁴¹ assumption of Leni Yahil, that the character of the Danish people had rescued the Jews was, as could be seen, all-in-all readily accepted inside and outside of Denmark – for various reasons and to varying degrees certainly but it seemed to have been successful because it served certain needs. The non-Jewish Danes felt good with such a description, since it placed them on the side of the good guys and the government could profit from the reputation. Victims and their families outside Denmark could use it as a recurring motif in the narratives on the Shoa and as a glimpse of hope, as light in the darkness and a reminder of the existence of righteousness. And the survivors were simply grateful. The Frihedsmuseum did its best to perpetuate the narrative by publishing a book in English by the curator of the Frihedsmuseet Jørgen Barfod, that sold well at the museum's shops. The Holocaust that failed in Denmark was a repetition of most of the traditional schemes.¹¹⁴² But step by step, doubts about the story were sneaking up on those who examined the events. The passiveness of the German authorities faced with the mass-flight and the stories of some survivors on the money taken by the fishermen. In the 1980s the interpretations were modified and later some of the scholars tried outright revisionism of the story. Where Hæstrup¹¹⁴³, as always close to the original sources, still saw the heroes as Duckwitz and the Danish people and Michael Marrus and Robert Paxton¹¹⁴⁴ stressed the complex context of the occupation trajectory others like Tatiana Brustin-Berenstein¹¹⁴⁵ and Gunnar Paulsson¹¹⁴⁶ refute the role of Duckwitz and see the flight as a German masterplan to get the Jews out of the country without provoking too much rage to continue the negotiations, a masterplan backed by none less than Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler himself. There are, however, also newer investigations – Danish – that tackle the diverging interpretations and come in the end to a synthesis that does not go back to the days of the myth-making and yet do not interpret the old and the new sources in a way that provokes a complete deconstruction and revision. In the 1990s Rasmus Kreth and Michael Mogensen commenced with a new way of narrating the rescue of the Danish Jews that pays respect to those

¹¹⁴¹ Paulsson, Gunnar S., The 'Bridge Over the Øresund': The Historiography on the Expulsion of the Jews From Nazi-Occupied Denmark, in: *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 30, no. 3, 1995, pp. 431-64, p. 431.

¹¹⁴² Barfod, Jørgen H., *The Holocaust failed in Denmark*, København: Frihedsmuseets Venners Forlag 1981.

¹¹⁴³ Hæstrup, Til landets bedste and Hæstrup, Dengang i Danmark and Hæstrup, Jørgen, *Jødisk ungdom på træk 1932-1945*, Odense: Odense Universitetsforlag, 1982, *Odense University Studies in History and Social Sciences*, 74.

¹¹⁴⁴ Marrus, Michael R., Paxton, Robert O., The Nazis and the Jews in Occupied Western Europe, 1940-1944, in: *The Journal of Modern History*, no. 54, 1982, pp. 687-714.

¹¹⁴⁵ Brustin-Berenstein, Tatiana, The Historiographic Treatment of the Abortive Attempt to Deport the Danish Jews, in: *Yad Vashem Studies*, no. 17, 1986, pp. 181-218.

¹¹⁴⁶ Paulsson, The 'Bridge Over the Øresund'.

who spontaneously helped, but at the same time leaves space for the unpleasant sides of the story like greed on the side of some fishermen and also for a new understanding in the internal German processes and passivity.¹¹⁴⁷ This view seems to be widely accepted now at least within the academia and was also incorporated into the compendium on the Holocaust in Denmark and the rescue of 2003 – giving the Danish case its due "power of fascination."¹¹⁴⁸ A little bit before that Sofie Lene Bak had tried to get behind not the actual events but the narrative and its construction and endurance. In her book *Jødeaktionen Oktober 1943. Forestillinger i Offentlighed Og Forskning* which is an outcome of her M.A.-thesis, she examined not only the different historiographical currents in the development of the narrative but also the perception of the academic discourse in the general public and the influence on it.¹¹⁴⁹ Her analysis of the making of the common perception of the rescue stressed the influence of the early works and the persistence of the ideas about the rescue originating from them. She described the "basic narrative about the persecution of the Jews in Denmark in 1943" as "a sleeping beauty" that had not been woken up for a long-time.

In the following, I will show how this was reflected in official celebrations of the rescue. Of course the Jewish community has always and still does celebrate the event, as do individuals. Official Denmark was and is involved in the more important holidays when festive services and ceremonies are held in the main synagogue in Copenhagen's Kristalgade. To some of these ceremonies, dignitaries and representatives of the Danish government and the Royal Family were and are present. This began already in 1953 when on 8 October the King and Queen visited (for the first time) the Synagoge.¹¹⁵⁰ The royals were accompanied by the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary, the Secretary for Ecclesiastical Affairs and the Swedish Ambassador and other members of parliament and the political elite. The speech given by Chief Rabbi Dr. Marcus Melchior was filled with deep-felt gratefulness towards those thousands of unknown Danes that helped, and the Royal family due to the steadfastness of the sympathetic position of King Christian X. The event was broadcasted on Danmarks Radio. Already on 2 October, the actual day the flight and rescue had begun ten years earlier a radio programme included several witnesses and survivors who told their story of survival in Copenhagen and in Terezin. On the 25th anniversary of the rescue again the King and the Queen visited the synagogue (on 29

¹¹⁴⁷ Kreth, Rasmus, and Michael Mogensen. *Flugten Til Sverige: Aktionen Mod De Danske Jøder Oktober 1943*. København: Gyldendal, 1995. Especially pp. 86-105.

¹¹⁴⁸ Mogensen, Michael, *October 1943 - The Rescue of the Danish Jews*, in: *Denmark and the Holocaust*. editors Mette Bastholm Jensen, and Steven L. B. Jensen, 33-61. København: Institute for International Studies, Department for Holocaust and genocide Studies, 2003, p. 60.

¹¹⁴⁹ Bak, Jødeaktionen Oktober. The thesis' title was "Anstændighedens Belønning Og Sandhedens Pris. Forestillinger om forfølgelsen af de danske jøder i oktober 1943, cand mag spec indiv, Copenhagen University, 2000.

September 1968). This time the event was broadcasted on TV, the new most important medium. The FM also took up the topic and made a temporary exhibition about those days in October 1943 of which I was unable to find any material.¹¹⁵¹ The Grøntorv in Copenhagen was christened Israel Square (Israelplads) during the festivities in the presence of Jerusalem's mayor Teddy Kollek and in Jerusalem, as mentioned before, a square was named after Denmark. In New York an event was staged in the Lincoln Centre called "A tribute for Denmark" in the presence of representatives from Denmark and other Scandinavian countries and a variety of Jewish organizations. It is impossible to say whether the celebrations in Denmark would have been this size if the outside world had not attached so much attention to the anniversary. The linkage between the Danish narrative and its reputation abroad could well have been of importance here.

This linkage might also have played a role in the celebrations in 1983 again. After 1978, where the 35th anniversary of the rescue was the occasion for a small commemorative art exhibition in the FM the 40th anniversary was again celebrated with more vigour. As mentioned in the chapter on the liberation celebrations, the 40th anniversary was celebrated widely even though it is not usually considered a special holiday and 1983 was the beginning of a series of celebrations. Former Rabbi Bent Melchior, a survivor of the flight himself, announced that the community would remember the helpers with gratitude in the same way as it had done in 1953 and 1968.¹¹⁵² The aforementioned exhibition of pieces of fine art of the artist Olly Ritterband *Kaddish for min far* was dug out again and re-shown now with a new location. The central commemorative event certainly was the ceremony in Mindelunden, the national memorial park with speeches by the Rabbi Bent Lexner and the provost of Copenhagen Poul Riis. Subsequently the participants marched in a torchlight parade to the community's centre. This is particularly interesting since it links – rightfully – the rescue and the gratefulness to the resistance itself. As mentioned earlier, the rescue effort was for some people their first expression of anger and resistance against the Germans and it served as a recruiting ground for the organizations. Also programmes around the Shoa and the rescue were shown again on TV.¹¹⁵³ One was the Danish-Israeli TV-programme *Et lys i mørket* (A Light in the Darkness). Leni Yahil, the author of the aforementioned book of the same title took part in the programme, which was also to be shown in Israel and New York where prime minister Schlüter was opening an exhibition on the history of the Danish Jews.¹¹⁵⁴

¹¹⁵⁰ Jødisk Samfund, no. 10, 1959, pp. 4-8. Jødisk Samfund was that time the community's newspaper/ journal.

¹¹⁵¹ Særudstilling om jøders skæbnetime, Politiken, 1 October 1968, p. 22.

¹¹⁵² Melchior, Bent, Redningen af de danske jøder for 40 år siden, Politiken, 1 October 1983.

¹¹⁵³ Jødisk Orientering, 1983, No. 10, p. 6. The Jødisk Orientering was the successor of the journal Jødisk Samfund that was quoted earlier.

¹¹⁵⁴ Flugten Til Sverige, Politiken, 3 October 1983.

The celebrations in Denmark were surpassed, however, by the arrangements in Israel. A group of 180 participants, mostly from the veteran's organisation Frihedskampens Veteraner and groups for Danish-Israeli friendship. After a visit to the *Denmark-school* in Jerusalem – built with US-American funding as a reminder of the rescue – the group participated in a ceremony and a historical symposium in Yad VaShem on the Danish exception. The Danish Minister of Culture took part in the official ceremony and the setting-up of the aforementioned rowing boat, the opening of a temporary exhibition on October 1943 and also, together with the group, an official reception with the president of the State of Israel. The celebrations did not end there but were continued with a concert by the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra under Danish participation on the Denmark Square. Not only in Israel but also in the United States the event was again paid tribute to. Several exhibitions dealing with Danish Jewish history and October 1943 were opened during the month of October, one in New York even by the Prime Minister.¹¹⁵⁵

Parallel to a growing interest in the events, especially outside of Denmark, in 1983 one can also observe a swing in the view of the event. The joy and gratefulness of the celebrations of the earlier days was now mixed with hints of historization of the event. Evidence that the Germans – military and police forces and administration alike – were not too keen on catching the Danish Jews and risking the relative quietness of the occupation, that were hitherto not part of most of the stories, gained an entrance into the narrative. Also the fact that money had to be paid to the fishermen was now made a topic. These stories might, in the eyes of some people, degrade the rescue efforts of the Danish helpers and were maybe not included in the narrative until recently. Another reason might of course be increased research on the topic and a better insight into the role of the Germans occupants. In 1983, however, this part of the story was included in the community's magazine in the form of different contributions. One, an account of the 'exportchef' of the resistance group Holger Danske's studentergruppe, stressed the suspicion that the Germans must have known what was going on directly under their noses. The author Ebba Lund goes even as far as to claim that the Germans indirectly helped the flight of the Jews through their non-involvement.¹¹⁵⁶ Lund also without a trace of hesitation of shame describes why money was paid for the transport and how the prices for the fishermen who shipped the refugees were fixed, something that two decades later became an issue of public debate. It is also noteworthy that here a woman stands out as representative for the rescue on the side of the organized resistance.

¹¹⁵⁵ Jødisk Orientering, 1983, No. 10, p. 6.

¹¹⁵⁶ Jerichow, Anders, De hjalp 500 jøder over Sundet fra Københavns midte, in: Jødisk Orientering, 1983, no. 10, pp. 8-9.

Only in 1993, the date of the rescue and the Jewish community were involved on a greater scale into the preparations of more extensive celebrations. It was the decade of the 50th anniversaries and the rescue of the Jews that was integrated into the celebrations of the formal break-up with the collaboration-policy on 29 August 1943 as a victory of the resistance. And as we have seen, there is a certain justification to that, since the rescue efforts linked all kinds of individuals and groups hitherto not connected to the resistance to clandestine work and served as a recruiting base for later resistance. Representatives of the Jewish community were invited to the committee which was planning the 1993 celebrations.¹¹⁵⁷ The FM went ahead with an extra exhibition that was made in the style of a 'book on walls' – 36 large display posters that could easily fit in a transport cylinder and that showed the background of the rescue as well as moving stories from the flight but also of those who perished in the camps. The aim was to have something cheap and easy that could be circulated around the whole country and worldwide. The displays were also small enough to be set up in smaller exhibition venues. The funding came from both the Danish State and private donators and until 1999 it was shown in 26 countries.¹¹⁵⁸ It was also shown in the Frihedsmuseum and opened on August 29 1993 which shows again the linkage made between the rescue of the Jews and the break with the cooperation policy. It was also shown in Oslo on Akershus fortress.¹¹⁵⁹ The exhibition was clearly aimed at an international audience but included a lot of the latest research.¹¹⁶⁰

In Copenhagen, the community arranged for for the traditional commemorative service on October 10th in the Synagogue in Kristalgæde. The programme from Det Mosaiske Troessamfund shows that the Queen and her husband as well as the Queen Mother were present. The speeches were given by the community's chairman, Rabbi Lexner, the veteran Victor Borge and a sermon was given by the Chief-Rabbi Bent Melchior.¹¹⁶¹ The special issue of the community's magazine *Jødisk orientering* on the celebrations was almost 50 pages long, but does not show any sign of the cautious historization or revision that could be observed otherwise.¹¹⁶² Besides moving stories of the survivors, it contained words of welcome from the Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, the American President Bill Clinton, the Chancellor of Germany Richard v. Weizsäcker, the Swedish Prime Minister Carl Bildt, the Israeli President Ezer Weizman, a

¹¹⁵⁷ Statsministeriet, Inger Skydsgaard, Notits vedrørende markering af 50-året for 29. august 1943 m.v. og festligholdelse af 50-året for 4.-5- maj 1945, 11-11-1993, 51-19 og 51-22, Statsministeriet 051-5 1999-2003.

¹¹⁵⁸ Stræde, Therkel, Fem år med Frihedsmuseets udstilling om oktober 1943, Særtryk fra Nationalmuseets Arbejdsmark (1999), pp. 45-54. The exhibition can be seen in: Stræde, Therkel. En mur af mennesker. Danmark i oktober 1943. Jødernes redning fra udslettelsen, København: Tiderne Skifter 1993.

¹¹⁵⁹ Statsministeriet (DK), Oversigt over initiativer til markering af 50-året for den 29. august 1943, 12 August 1993, Stm (DK), 051-5 1999-2003, pp. 3-4.

¹¹⁶⁰ Bak, Jødeaktionen, p. 165.

¹¹⁶¹ Det Mosaiske Troessamfund, 50 året for oktober 43, 1993.

¹¹⁶² *Jødisk orientering*, 1993, no. 9, Oktober 1943.

representative of the French resistance Marcel Bleustein-Blanchet, Eli Wiesel and the community's chairman Bent Silber. All of those greetings referred to the basic narrative of the united Danish people rescuing the Jews as the sole and unspoiled example of good in a world of evil. Nyrup Rasmussen's words also refer specifically to Duckwitz warning and citing him he gives special reference to Germans "who faving personal danger [...] gave hope that human decency always reigns strong."¹¹⁶³ It seems fair to understand these words also politically as a greeting to the neighbour in the south which in 1993 had become a NATO partner and one of the country's most important trading partners. The 1990s also saw a widespread readiness on the political side everywhere to engage in processes of reconciliation. The Prime Minister's words and the fact that the German chancellor was represented in the issue as well are surely an expression of this political process.

Another interesting article in this special issue of the community's magazine was written by one of the most important veterans. It seems reasonable that the publishers had asked the leading figure of the Frihedsrådet and later Minister for Special Affairs Frode Jakobsen to contribute with a text on the rescue operation and the resistance.¹¹⁶⁴ The importance of the resistance groups for the organisation of some of the escape routes as well as the significance of some of the newly-established escape routes for the resistance later on gives reason enough to have the resistance movement being represented in the magazine. Jakobsen though does not or just very briefly refers to the rescue in his contribution. He concentrates on the break-up of the collaboration policy and the resistance's motivation. When he finally touches on the question of the persecution of Jews he does so in the light of a reflection on whether the action against the Danish Jews was provoked or triggered by the resistance's actions and the endo of the collaboration and whether it might have been better to "bow and scrape before the Nazis".¹¹⁶⁵ Jakobsen's effort to contextualise develops into a tribute to the resistance. A certain competition over hegemony or representation within the main narrative is noticeable in 1993. There was a feeling of nuisance by some veterans, as we can see from the following letter. Jørgen Jespersen who represented the former resistance group BOPA in the committee on the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the liberation, complained that in 1993 the media coverage on the rescue was too high on expense of programmes on the 29th of August end of the collaboration. He also meant that the two state channels should have coordinated their programmes better to avoid clashes of TV broadcasts and addressed the committee to use its expertise and influence so it

¹¹⁶³ Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, En hilsen fra Statsministeren, in: Jødisk orientering, no. 9, 1993, p. 9.

¹¹⁶⁴ Jakobsen, Frode, Redningsaktionen og modstandskampen, in: Jødisk orientering, no. 9, 1993, pp. 16-17 and 19.

¹¹⁶⁵ Jakobsen, Redningsaktionen, p. 19.

would not happen again.¹¹⁶⁶ In the *temapakke* of the organisation *Samvirket Folk og Forsvar* that was spread by the Prime Minister's planning committee on the celebrations of August 1943 and which was dominated by the veteran's, the rescue was not made a topic at all.¹¹⁶⁷ Maybe these veterans who were responsible did not deem the rescue important enough or did not connect it to the resistance and the break-up of the collaboration policy – or simply felt that it had been represented enough.

On the 60th anniversary in October 2003 the community followed the tradition and also had ceremony – this time rather late on the 28th. Again the Queen was present, accompanied by her husband and this time the Prime Minister gave a speech. This speech, however, was clearly reflecting the new developments in the tradition and the discourse. Anders Fogh Rasmussen did not only historicize the Holocaust by ranking it among other modern incidents of mass-murder and genocide but he also reflected on the missing eagerness of the Germans to execute the deportations in Denmark and on Danes who had sold their fellow Jewish citizens. He also did not forget to mention Sweden's willingness to help before he praised the Danish helpers efforts.¹¹⁶⁸ Two years later during the celebrations of the liberation Fogh Rasmussen went further into his interpretation – now Denmark had even become the 'villain'. Fogh Rasmussen as described earlier condemned the collaboration policy of the government which made a lot of veterans very happy and triggered an intensive debate on the matter of Danish cooperation with Germany and the memory of the war. But Fogh went further – he also apologized for the expulsion of 21 Jews, all refugees to Denmark, during the occupation. He said: "These acts are a shame, a dirty mark in Denmark's otherwise good record in that context."¹¹⁶⁹ His apology was generally greeted by the press and the families of the victims. As mentioned earlier, several scholars and the leftist Newspaper *Information* though felt that if the prime minister had apologized to the Jews he should also mention the communists whose party was unlawfully forbidden and who have been incarcerated and later deported to Germany as well. That he should have named them in his speech alongside the Jewish victims.¹¹⁷⁰ What becomes visible here is – besides the obvious political dimensions of the speech which was described earlier – a new tendency towards a historicization of the events of October 1943. They are now seen in the light of the whole trajectory of the war in Denmark.

¹¹⁶⁶ Jespersen, Jørgen, Tilføjelse til referat af 1. møde den 11. april 1994 i representantskabet vedrørende markering af 50års jubilæet for Danmarks befrielse. 30 April 1994, Stm (DK), 051-4, 1995.

¹¹⁶⁷ Samvirket Folk og Forsvar, 50år 29. august, temapakke.

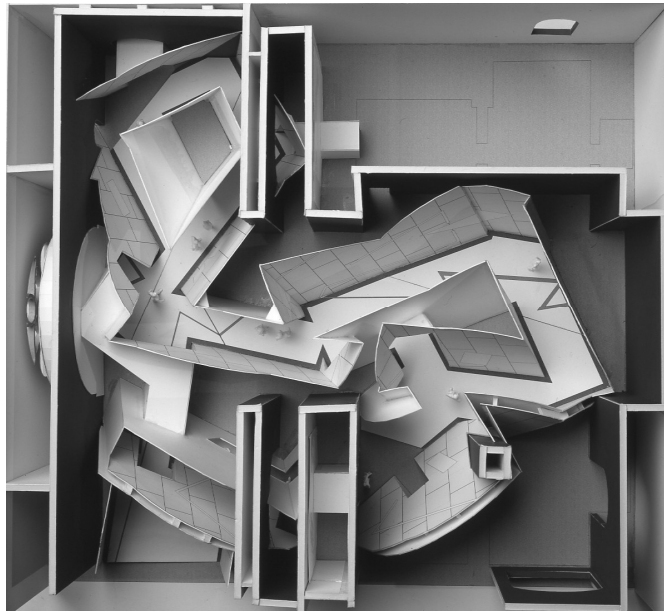
¹¹⁶⁸ Rasmussen, Anders Fogh, Statsministerens tale ved Højtidelighed i Mosaisk Troessamfund den 28. oktober 2003 i anledning af 60-året for redningsaktionen for de danske jøder, Web page, <http://www.stm.dk/Index/dokumenter.asp?o=2&n=0&h=2&d=1707&s=1>.

¹¹⁶⁹ Anders Fogh Rasmussens tale i Mindelunden, Politiken, 5 May 2005.

Around the same time in 2004, a decade long effort to establish a Danish Jewish museum was crowned with success and an opening of the same in the beautiful Gelejhuset in the perimeter of the State's Archive and the Royal Castle. The building in which it is located is also part of the architectural ensemble of the old and the new part of the Royal Library in Copenhagen. The museum therefore occupies a rather central place in Copenhagen's cultural topography. The idea of erecting a Jewish museum dates back to the 1950s and an exhibition in the community's own buildings. Later this exhibition was closed and in the 1990s a new effort was made and Daniel Libeskind, the architect of the famous Berlin Jewish Museum was commissioned with a plan which he presented in 2001. The museum is not an isolated building but the ground floor of the Galejhuset which is otherwise used, as mentioned before, by the Royal Library. The architect who is known for his at times overwhelmingly symbolic structures was therefore challenged to build a structure that was able to express something and at the same time could be fitted into a building that was landmarked. Libeskind decided to work with the displays as partitions not only to divide the spaces but to create a sign. The map of the exhibition can be read from above as the Hebrew letters for mitzvah – the good deed. The museum's exhibition is – also architecturally – divided into five parts that rest on five concepts from the traditional Jewish world of ideas. They are in chronological order: Exodus – Arrivals, Wilderness – Standpints, The Giving of the Law – Traditions, The Promised Land – Promised Lands and Mitzvah. "[...] Daniel Libeskind was inspired by the Jewish concept of Mitzvah on which he has based his design of the inside of the Museum. The Hebrew word Mitzvah has numerous meanings, two of which are: "the duty to do the right thing" and "a good deed". The Hebrew letters denoting Mitzvah have been interlaced to form the pattern of the corridors within which the guest moves through the exhibition. Thus the public moves within the text, which is a direct reference to and an ethical reminder of the rescue of the Danish Jews in October 1943. Libeskind's architectural design of the museum is in itself a story within a story about Danish Jewry."¹¹⁷¹

¹¹⁷⁰ Larsen, Eivind, *Skriver Fogh Danmarkshistorie*, Information, 6 May 2005. Hedegaard, Lars, Fint at unskyldte and Sørensen, Jakob, *Kommunister glemte*, Politiken, 5 May 2005.

¹¹⁷¹ Dansk Jødisk Museum, *Space and Spaciousness – An Exhibition about Jews in Denmark*, <http://www.jewmus.dk/udstilling.asp?language=uk>.



The ground plan of the Dansk Jødisk Museum, courtesy Dansk Jødisk Museum, Photo Torben Seidel.

The state had supported the building with some nine million Danish Crowns and the rest was collected by the Museum foundation itself. Following the erection, the museum now receives an annual support from the Copenhagen municipality as a municipal museum. It aims to represent the entire 400 years of Danish Jewish history. Naturally the part that deals with the persecution and the flight of the Danish Jews is in this context the most interesting one. This part is called Mitzvah. The 'good deed' or the duty to good deed' stands here, as shown above on the example of the master plan, for the Danish rescue efforts and as an example for a good deed. The Danish Jewish Museum thus acknowledges the 'good story' which this joint effort of Danes offers. The exhibits on the time in question explain in detail the not only the rescue but also the fate of those captured and deported and of course their rescue with the *White Buses*. The texts keep a critical outlook and awareness of the snares of heroisation and are up-to-date with the newest research. The museum's webpage introduces the chapter with a lengthy quotation from Bo Lidegaard's already cited book *Overleveren*. The last paragraph of this quotation might serve here as representative of the exhibition's general layout:

"The story of the Danish people's spontaneous reaction and help at this critical time in history has been told and retold and still lives in the memory of many who survived or are affected by the Holocaust. However, our understanding of the events will never be complete unless we understand the importance of the Danish, Swedish and - perhaps especially - German authorities' actions and positions. With time, the story has attained mythical proportions. However, many factors, amongst these German duplicity, contributed to the high degree of success of the rescue operation."¹¹⁷²

¹¹⁷² Dansk Jødisk Museum, Udstillingen, Mitzvah, http://www.jewmus.dk/mitzvah_1.asp.

All in all the exhibition delivers a fairly balanced and new account of the events of October 1943 without a tendency of mytholization or heroisation and yet it keeps the success story of the rescue at its core.

Though not seen as the most important part of occupation history, the rescue of the Jews is of course also part of the most successful TV programme on the war – Matador. Here in episode 18 that deals with the year 1943, the effort to save the Jews is actually reserved to the bank manager's wife. The 'village's Jew', Mr Stein, is brought to Sweden by a transport organized by the otherwise rather selfish Mrs Maude Varnæs. She helps to rescue the accountant of her husband's bank together with a couple of other villagers. The rescue is not very spectacularly described, except for the German attempt to seize Mr Stein in the bank, the deportations and the rescue are not very visible. The money paid to the fishermen is actually mentioned. The doctor who helps with the transportation of Mr Stein to the harbour, since he is the only one who is allowed to drive, gives him the money and some extra for a new start in Sweden. All people involved are acting immediately and spontaneously – the bank manager who is in total agreement with his wife's action once he gets to know the whole story, had already at the beginning of the episode shown his respect and sympathy for Stein after anti-Semitic graffiti was painted on the bank's facade. Though the whole episode is entitled "Hr. Stein", his story does not take up more than half of the programme, a lot is dedicated to the Germans intruding Danish life more and more and the daily difficulties under the conditionings of food rationing. Also sabotage, clandestine press and fraternisation are incorporated into the story via the stories of the younger people. The Danish population's indignation at the German takeover becomes clearly visible – even though the break-up of the collaboration policy and the resignation of the government is all but a prominent part of this episode. The programme reflects the basic narrative without a scratch of doubt as could be expected then. The wildly popular series thereby contributed to spreading the traditional version of the events and by choosing the otherwise rather selfish character of the programme as the helper, the rescue and help stand out even stronger as the joint effort of all Danes. In the education programme by Janus Madsen the story is supplemented by more information. The tasks for the students contain questions like: "What is a Jew, what kind of traditions do Jews have?" or on the nature of the Nazi persecution in Germany and also on further reaching questions on the situation of refugees in Denmark. Just one out of seven questions deals with the historical event in Denmark itself and that question is: "Why would the Germans have an interest to divulge the action against the Jews in Denmark so

that they could leave the country and flee?"¹¹⁷³ So the material does indeed reflect the ongoing discourse in 1998.

Unlike in Norway, the story of the Holocaust was part of the basic narrative in Denmark – albeit as a positive and successful story. Most instruments of the historical culture and since the 1990s also of the memory culture, incorporate the Danish Jews and their rescue in the narratives which they mediate. The extent to which this serves as a means of identification as a 'good' people though is ambiguous. Some scholars saw signs of a certain smugness, others surprisingly deny that notion. The FM has not dedicated an unproportionately large space to October 1943, neither have the other agents of memory politics. The DJM seems to be the only institution that does indeed devote a greater part of its resources to the topic. Maybe because it is somehow a 'Jewish' institution. As I have shown above, the Jewish Community also celebrated the event far more intensively than non-Jewish Denmark. It was in the 1990s that in the wake of a debate on aspects of the story, more research was done, something that is though totally in the harmony with trends all over the world. Therkel Stræde suggested that though the story is also inside Denmark seen as "the greatest hour in Danish history", for a long time it did not make it to be the source of reflection or ethical inspiration.¹¹⁷⁴ That has changed in the last two decades. It was the last decade that brought more and more difficult questions to the narrative. The historization of the rescue effort has allowed a more complex view of October 1943. This view includes that the fishermen were paid for the tours and that the Germans, military and Gestapo, were more or less passive. Both 1993 and 2003 brought in the wake of the anniversaries of the events new trends and new books on the market place of interpretations.¹¹⁷⁵ That these questions were totally absent before would be a misinterpretation since there had been comments on the 'difficult' parts of the story throughout the decades. Aage Bertelsen, who was himself a very important figure in the network of the helpers, wrote as early as in the 1950s already in his account on the events about the money that was paid, and cases of treason and betrayal among Danes who pretended to be helpers. His book *October 43* was reprinted several times – the latest issue is from 1993, so just in time for the 50th anniversary.¹¹⁷⁶ He takes all these issues up but in the end softens them by marking them either as isolated cases or by using narrative techniques. His account revolves a great deal around money – about how it was donated by virtually

¹¹⁷³ Madsen, Janus, *Matador og besættelsestiden - et undervisningsmateriale baseret på tv-serien*. Kopimappe, København:DR Multimedie 1998, p.26

¹¹⁷⁴ Stræde, Schwierige Erinnerung, p. 139. The quote is taken by Stræde from a speech of congressman Tom Lantos at the opening of an exhibition on October 1943 in the Congress in Washington in 2001.

¹¹⁷⁵ Sode-Madsen, Hans (ed.), *Føreren Har Befalte! Jødeaktionen Oktober 1943*, København: Samleren 1993 and Sode-Madsen, Hans (ed.), *I Hitler-Tysklands skygge. Dramaet om de danske jøder 1933-1945*, København: Aschehoug, 2003.

everyone, about its procurement from several sources, its distribution and its use as payment to the skippers. As one of the foremost helpers he was quite aware that a great deal of the clandestine work was connected to these 'menial' tasks of dealing with the money. His vision of it though is not spoiled by doubts that almost everything went correctly and that the amounts paid were fair. He complains at the end of his chapter on *Profiteers* (Fidusmagere): "In the end, to suffer scars in one civil reputation was maybe the greatest danger for those who fought Nazism in the service of the helpers. If one rightfully talks about the sacrifices brought by Danish compatriots in the days of the persecution of the Jews – this definitely is one of the greatest."¹¹⁷⁷

In 2002 Hans Kirchhoff summarized the development of the narrative on the rescue of the Danish Jews in the introduction of an anthology of contributions that resulted from a conference as public image that "holds many traits of mythology, and that is quite resistant to the analyses and results of historians, because it serves pedagogical, political and psychological functions."¹¹⁷⁸ Inside the book all the historians that had been involved in critical research in the last decade were represented with contribution. Sofie Lene Bak wrote about the the Nazi policies in Denmark and their aims, Kirchhoff himself wrote about a hitherto rather unknown plan of the Danish authorities to intern the Jews to protect them from German access – something that in seen in today's light luckily was never carried out – Michael Mogensen wrote on the sources he found on the Swedish side of the Sound and Therkel Stræde wrote about new tendencies in Holocaust research and what they would mean to the Danish understanding of the rescue. The book was called *New Light on October 1943* suggesting that there had been a relative darkness on the topic before. Like Sofie Bak, the editor and the contributors claim that for a long time there had been a "national consensus on the main interpretation" of the events that had been created by Hæstrup and Yahil despite their disagreement on the details of the events. Now these questions became more imminent and took a greater space – and were taken up by more and more people. They certainly did not change the basic narrative of the Danes, probably because the story is in reality too good. Where life has been rescued there is not much space for fundamental criticism. But, how much the Holocaust has also become in Denmark the measure of judgement as in a lot of other countries in Europe and throughout the world can also easily be seen from the apology delivered by Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen in 2005

¹¹⁷⁶ Bertelsen, Aage, Oktober 1943. Oplevelser og tilstande under jødeforfølgelsen i Danmark, København: Gyldendal ⁵1993.

¹¹⁷⁷ Bertelsen, Oktober 43, p. 75.

¹¹⁷⁸ Kirchhoff, Hans, Indledning, in: Kirchhoff, Hans (ed.), *Nyt Lys Over Oktober 1943*, Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag, 2002, University of Southern Denmark Studies in History and the Social Sciences, no. 257, pp. 9-14, p. 9.

on the occasion of the Liberation Day for the extradition of 21 Jews to Germany and certain death. Even in Denmark, where the the rescue of 7,000 men and women occurred, it is now possible that a leading politician feels obliged to apologize for the certainly tragic fate of relatively few.

Summary

As could be seen, the question on how to deal with the Holocaust brought very different responses in both countries. The differing trajectories led to different narratives and challenges of them. Both countries though were faced with hitherto un-asked questions and re-evaluations and re-interpretations of the existing narratives in the 1990s. In Norway that led to a growing acceptance of the fact that a number of Norwegians had been directly involved in the deportations and to the compensation of victims and the erection of the HL-senteret. The acknowledgment of the Holocaust as a part of the nation's own war history was necessarily linked to a discussion of the features of the basic narrative. If the Norwegians had been part of the persecution machinerie beyond the narrow group of NS members and if anti-Semitism as a fact also in occupied Norway was acknowledged, did that not challenge the basic narrative? As could be seen, there has been opposition against such acknowledgements and some people had the feeling that the memory of the resistance would get blotted. The feeling that the strong and entirely positive example of the southern neighbour Denmark was used as an accusation was strong enough to cause a resistance on the side of the veterans, who put up a fierce resistance in the media and through other statements against new findings and interpretations. The urgency and insistence with which the Holocaust centre pushes the point of Norwegian complicity is telling about the opposition this point has met. That there had been and maybe still is a tendency to forget those Norwegians who successfully, and under a much greater threat for their own lives and freedom, have helped Jews to safe Sweden is less obvious but can be assumed from some of the reactions of the veterans. Norway had not dealt with this part of his war history in an open and complex manner for some time. The international trends of Holocaust research and the introduction of the Genocide on the European Jewry not only as the most important point of reference for the understanding of Hitler's war of destruction but also as the benchmark for the conduct of nations has brought the issue up in Norway, which could not escape either these developments or the questions brought up outside Norway. The challenge to the self-perception has been assimilated into the narrative and re-interpreted as a positive process of 'living up to the responsibilities' of the political mainstream. How much that has meant for the common

Norwegian is of course harder to assess. The number of Jews that fell victim to the Nazi murder was maybe relatively too 'small' to cause major scrutiny of the tradition. The moral coming to terms with the victims through legal and parliamentary processes had been escorted with a growing interest for Jews in literature and the arts. Astonishingly, both helped to integrate the feeling of guilt and shame into the basic narrative. These feelings could be re-interpreted as a positive process of 'facing the awful truth' and thereby be neutralized. A country that faces such events in such a way could only be good in the end. The main narrative survived without more than a few scratches – a blow on the understanding of the war history could not come from the deportees of the D/S Donau.

In Denmark, the story is more complex than it seems. The success that the rescue of 7,000 lives obviously represents was certainly made part of the war narrative. For Danes it represented the truth about their country and people and complemented the other features of the dominant version, like the David-against-Goliath-theme. The rescue was seen as the manifestation of the true feelings of the Danes vis-à-vis the Germans and the collaboration policy and somehow as taken for granted. The country could revel in the widespread admiration and gratefulness in the world especially with the important partner USA, and the rescue certainly as one of the decisive reasons for Denmark's intact reputation after the war and for the inclusion of Denmark in the group of allied countries. Not only politically but certainly also psychologically, the story of the rescue of the Danish Jews by a joint effort of all Danes had its benefits. The overwhelmingly good outcome of the rescue of so many human lives allowed for quiet warnings of delusions of grandeur. The question of money and of informers was raised several times but never became important enough to threaten the warm feeling of the good deed – the mitzvah. The 1990s then brought not only a cautious historization of the events resulting in a new and more complex explanations of the success story, but also with their politically motivated re-evaluation of the collaboration policy a new priority for the question of national conduct during the occupation. The tradition had to a new moralism that now blamed the Danes not only of moral offences but also of a decade-long self-denial. The supposedly new and awful revelations are often less new and less shocking than media and publishers or the historians themselves make believe. Often they have been part of the narrative but on a lesser scale or with less moralistic implications. That they are now made part of the debate shows how much Denmark followed an international trend in the development of the narrative of the Holocaust and the timid efforts to contextualize its history with respect to the persecution of Jews.

The Jewish communities in both countries were as public bodies seldomly active in the revision of the narratives but rather downplayed conflicts. Why, is hard to assess but the fear of

endangering generally good relations with governments and the interest groups and the fear to be connected to 'dark stories', seems to have been at the core of this reticency. The anxiety to cause prejudice by remembering fault lines in the self-perception was strong. In the Danish case the gratitude felt towards the helpers by the rescued and returned was so strong that they did not allow themselves to let the memory be besmirched. A Jewish refugee is quoted in a recent publication on the matter with the words: "Seen from our side, we owe a debt of gratitude that would be impossibel to ever pay back."¹¹⁷⁹

¹¹⁷⁹ Cited in Mogensen, Michael, October 1943 - The Rescue of the Danish Jews, in: Jensen, Mette Bastholm, Jensen, Steven L. B. (eds.), Denmark and the Holocaust, København: Institute for International Studies, Department for Holocaust and genocide Studies, 2003, pp. 33-61, p. 47.

5. TWO COUNTRIES – DIFFERING CHALLENGES?

There is no need to jump ahead of the general conclusion that follows in the next chapter. But it seems necessary to quickly summarize what has been examined in this second part, which dealt with topics and debates, that in one way or another challenged the basic narratives established in both countries. As in the first part, I have examined the alternative versions, memories and acts of politics of remembrance with respect to the reactions of the agents of memory production in historical research, the museums and the anniversaries. My leading questions were: How did the institutions and agents of politics of remembrance fight, ignore or assimilate the alternative versions and whether new agents made their way into the cultures of remembrance. The comparative method was again, I claim, helpful, especially since the comparison was carried out in a more direct way. Certainly some aspects that challenge the basic narrative are common to both countries and would naturally call for comparative studies or for combined Norwegian-Danish research efforts. The structure of the military collaboration of the SS volunteers could be one of those cases where a joint effort might result in more fruitful results than a narrow 'national' approach. The Norwegian research that is now slowly under way could for example gain from the extensive work already done in Denmark.¹¹⁸⁰

As became clear, both countries have had and still have to deal with very similar but also very different challenges. The similarities stem from the features of the war trajectory that they have in common. The differences though are the effect of the variations in the course of the occupation history and its immediate aftermath. Whereas in Denmark the question of active collaboration of parts of the population was widely shrouded through the thin balance achieved after the war which nobody had an interest to jeopardise, it was not of any interest in Norway since the legal purge had once and for all straightened out who was a collaborator and who had displayed a patriotic attitude. First when the transitional justice was under attack and the compromise was not anymore a necessary part of the democratic self-perception and revelations would not endanger the populations trust any longer, could the whole story be told. In Norway this also played a role when dealing with the liquidations. The postwar government and the nation's elite was staffed with the very people who had ordered the liquidations or had taken all the responsibility. There was no way anybody would doubt their legitimacy and attack the heroes that still steered the country. The only ones that did so came from the side of the former Hitler-minions and their credibility was for good reasons gone. Only when others, unburdened with guilt, started research could those sides be included. Similar processes also barred the

¹¹⁸⁰ Interview with Øystein Sørensen at Oslo University on 7 August 2006.

communist resistance from entering the narrative. Albeit among the first groups to actively resist, the Cold War prevented their story being told, the new villain had a difficult time to make its story of national solidarity heard. That was not less problematic in Denmark than in Norway, but the Danish communists had a better start than their Norwegian comrades – they at least had been included in the liberation government and therefore their contribution could not be denied afterwards. *Frydenholm* and other stories never lost their popularity despite the changing perception of the Soviet Union during the Cold War. In the 1990s with the threat of the global antagonism of systems vanishing, it felt safe to recognise communist resistance groups.

Another group that had been silenced for decades – but to the same extent in both countries – was the group of the *tyskerpiger*. Their fate did not depend on the change of systems or the politics of governments but on less susceptible developments as a general change in the perception of gender. The acknowledgement of their suffering and the understanding that they had not necessarily failed in their behaviour to the occupier was therefore rather similar in both countries and followed the developments in the Scandinavian welfare states' changing approach towards femininity and gender equality. And yet in both countries the rapprochement had to take the detour via the children. Today their fate is widely researched and had at least in Norway led to an apology of the administration on behalf of the state and a restitution scheme, both not under way in Denmark. Not that there had been no mobbing; the research clearly showed that the children of German fathers had at times significant disadvantages following the exclusion of their mothers from the mainstream society but the responsibility of the state is not discussed. Maybe the early apologies are missing, which could encourage more vigilant apologies. This responsibility is also at the core of the debate about a possible collaboration in the destruction of Jewish life. Whereas this topic is of no significance for the Danish narrative it became an object of discussion in Norway. Restitution following the acknowledgement of Norwegians taking part in the persecution, or in turn, an acknowledgement of the collaboration as a result of the research done for the restitution process have engaged Norwegian society for a couple of years when the history of the war is discussed. In Denmark the necessity is obviously less strong but also here research has produced less flattering insides. The picture stays widely intact but new moments are added. This time they even resulted in an apology on behalf of the state for the expulsion of Jews by the Danish prime minister. Also here the memory-political dimension is clearly visible.

Certainly one of the main differences between the two countries' reaction to the challenges to the main narrative is the sensitivity to the origin of any challenge. In Norway the 'other side' was defined and excluded from the main body of the nation. In Denmark such a distinction was not

possible, the differences between collaboration and active military resistance and civil disobedience or 'cold shoulder' were far less clear.

MAKING MEMORIES

"WHO CONTROLS THE PAST CONTROLS THE FUTURE – WHO CONTROLS THE
PRESENT CONTROLS THE PAST"
George Orwell, Nineteen-eighty-four

Writing about the representations of history is rewarding for any historian since it brings him back to the very foundations of his trade. It challenges his own understanding about his profession and gives insights not only into the processes of historical writing but into the course of history itself. On the other hand it is unsatisfactory since it maybe shows more drastically how unfinished any project must necessarily be. At the time these words are written, debates about the occupation past are ongoing in Norway and Denmark. The agents of these debates have changed a bit but the approaches just barely deviate from the immediate postwar years. In the methodological introduction I have tried to mark out the field of research and to position my own examination with regard to earlier work done, especially in Germany and Scandinavia. By following the development of memory studies from the early methodological deliberations to the latest discussions in Germany's very active research in the field I have tried to give the reader an understanding of the heterogeneity of terms and approaches and to raise an awareness of the limits of models and the complexity of the field. What becomes clear is the need to understand memory and history not only as constructed but also as narratives that are very susceptible to use and influence by politics. The acknowledgement of the existence of deliberate politics of remembrance that continuously shape our history cultures is essential for a deeper understanding of history as such and its representations in society.

One of the purposes of this project has been to identify agency and agenda setting in the production of memory – also in western liberal societies. The examination of the politics of remembrance in two countries that are democratic and widely seen as models for participation and equality also served the purpose of removing the label of abuse of history from the mechanisms of such politics. The agents identified in the project are by absolutely no means villains and liars, by no means they are distorting the truth. The idea behind the use of the concept of a basic narrative was to find ways to understand the fine workings of these politics of remembrance. By checking the mechanisms of the construction of the narrative against the approaches to challenge or change it, I attempted to understand the chances and limits of negotiating memory and history. So, on the previous pages I first discussed the genesis of agents of memory politics which court the favour of the public and the political agendas resulting from those memories. The outcomes of those deliberate acts – their narratives – were meant to

dominate the discourse and the following memory production of the other members of the social groups. It became clear that in both cases certain – identifiable – agents used specific mechanisms to spread the messages or to make their narratives 'official'. In order to fulfil the comparative aim of the project, I concentrated on a set of instruments of politics of remembrance with which the messages were distributed. Besides historiography aimed at the broader public as well as at the multipliers within their societies, museums and rituals were the subject of examination. These instruments proved to be valuable units of comparison because they constitute in both countries lieux de mémoire which were and are open to memory political use. Unfortunately I had to realize that a strict differentiation between agents and instruments was hardly possible but instead a twilight zone between the two exists.

In my description not only the development of historical writing on the war but specifically the origin and the development of Norges Hjemmefrontmuseet and Frihedsmuseet were reflected on the background of a changing world and the continuous production of research on the occupation. I have described the self-perception of the founders and how it is expressed in the exhibitions in texts, images and space. I tried to reconstruct the narrative and examine how this narrative is kept fit for use in today's changing world. Not much to my surprise I found out how closely related the makers of the museums were to those responsible for the planning of the official celebrations of the liberation in both countries. That the veterans would have a say in it was to be expected. But in Scandinavia I came across personal unions of functions that were striking. Alas, maybe the size of the communities supply explanations. Afterwards I showed which issues became the dents where the alternative versions the counter-narratives could drive their provocative wedges into the basic narrative and when this happened. The main focus here was also on the question of how the research, the museums and the celebrations reacted to that and whether they were able to integrate the counter narratives or if they even could be used by the challenging narratives.

One of my main textual sources has certainly been the museum exhibition. As I have explained earlier, the museum exhibition is a text with numerous subtexts on very different levels and meant for very different receptors. Therefore their 'hyper' text offers plenty of possibilities to reflect on the narrative and at the same time to react to it or to represent the challenges. At the same time, a museum is often a very slow institution, which might be related to one of the most important tasks for a museum – to conserve. If a museum is also designed as a memorial this conservative character is emphasized. The museums in Copenhagen and Oslo have not (yet?) become forums of negotiations of the basic narratives. The question is whether they could. They certainly were not meant to be by their respective founders. Created as memorials they are

intrinsically not open to change. This fact clearly contributes to the reluctance for revision of the exhibition and the persistency of the basic narrative. Memorials enjoy a certain protection by the supernatural since they are reminders of sacrifice and the dead. Their original layout, especially if made by those who suffered themselves, guarantees their longevity. I have shown which conflicts arose when the Frihedsmuseet was about to be revised. That not only Danish or Norwegian veterans do not see the revision of their museum with favour became obvious just this spring when Canadian veterans became aware of a sign in the newly built Canadian War Museum which dealt with the allied strategic bombing on Germany. The makers of the new exhibition which is since 2005 on display in the modern new museum had written that the bomb war had caused massive destruction and the loss of civilian lives and that both the moral legitimacy and the efficiency could be debated. The veterans and their main association the Royal Canadian Legion were outraged and called for a boycott of the museum which had until then already attracted hundreds of thousands of visitors.¹¹⁸¹ The veterans' opposition was fierce. They feared that the text would dishonour their comrades in the bombing squads. In a letter to the editor one explained his opposition with: "To introduce controversial or unproved moral issues can unfairly blemish the reputation of those who should be honoured for their service to Canada."¹¹⁸² For them, the museum was not to give space for discussion or criticism but just to preserve and to collect. The museum's curators had to give in and changed the text. It is now without a reference to the number of victims and the video and pictures do not show the destruction and victims anymore but only aerial views from the planes.¹¹⁸³

The Danish veterans, as previously mentioned, never thought of the Frihedsmuseet as something that would last longer than thirty or forty years when they handed it over to the state and in Norway the Hjemmefrontmuseum faces attempts to dissolve its current independence and to integrate its exhibition into the Museum of the Armed Forces. Yet they still exist. Their stories do not seem to be outdated. The emergence of new museums on the war and/or violence throughout the continent and abroad as well as their popularity in the last decade could be interpreted as either a symptom of the aforementioned memory boom or a sign that there is a need for the old narratives in a world where the explanations of the Cold War lost their power of explanation. On the other hand, the exhibition Spærretid has shown a possible approach to such a role as a forum in its dealing with the memory of the occupation and the research on it. But not by chance this part has been an appendix to the actual exhibition and outside of it. The question of whether or not museums should become forums of remembrance(s) or be the storytellers of a

¹¹⁸¹ Dixon, Guy, Ross, Vall, Veterans escalate museum protest, *The Globe and Mail*, 13 March 2007.

¹¹⁸² Peterson, William Donald, Collect and Preserve, *The Globe and Mail*, 15 March 2007.

¹¹⁸³ Medicus, Thomas, Helden, nicht Opfer sehen, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 23 March 2007.

history of resistance is of utmost relevance. It is here that the role of the individual – the maker and the consumer of representations of history comes back into the picture. The maker usually wants to teach a lesson and the consumer in turn expects to get one. Makers of exhibitions have to surrender to the fact that the will to entertain or to engage in debates is not prevalent with the majority of the visitors. A stringent story is therefore needed.

And, coming back to the memorial character of war museums, the memory of the martyrs can not change – and a legitimate question is whether it should. The cause of the veterans was to free the country of an occupier which had violated all democratic values of the respective cultures. This rightfulness in the aims of the resistance was also reflected in the celebrations and there is no reason to doubt it. As long as survivors of the struggle are alive any attempt to understand the complexity of the personal backgrounds or the different paths into the opposition to the Germans and their henchman necessarily had to cause fierce opposition by those for whom the fight retrospectively meant all. Also the celebrations have retained a very stable character and proved relatively immune against changes. An explanation for this might be the fact that central events are tied to commemoration ceremonies over the fallen or the victims or even held at the respective memorials. The connection to the dead and those 'who gave their lives' is a protection against putting the event into perspective since one cannot ignore the dead. The ceremonies get a religious character.¹¹⁸⁴ It is hard for any counter-narrative to break this solemn character – integration is the only possibility. Most of the difficult issues were somehow integrated into the celebrations – either through often publicly founded research and publications around the anniversaries, the choice of speakers or public apologies. Certainly this integration was dependent on time and political situation. The years of the Cold War and international confrontation were not facilitating the integration of the communist neither were the tyskerpiger or women in the resistance a conceivable issue before a movement the second wave of women's emancipation and a rethinking of gender roles. To understand the resistance as being multifaceted and capable of mistakes is something that highly depends on the appearance of veterans in the public and their power of persuasion, which is likely to diminish further.

But doubts were needed. The challenges discussed in the second part of the project are proof of the existence of basic narratives in both countries and that the narratives did not or could not include everyone. At certain times, different groups or painful memories burst through the surface of the dominant version and demanded attention, and just like the surface of a lake when disruption causes waves which sprawl across a lake, these challenges have caused debates that spread and sometimes ebbed out, sometimes came back and the surface was jolty for a while.

¹¹⁸⁴ Eriksen, *Det var noe annet*, p. 25.

The challenges in both countries came from similar and different angles but the reactions were often different. All in all the debates in Denmark seemed in the last two decades less violent than in Norway which is due to the nature of the originators of the challenges – historians and not revisionists. The debates in Norway, however, resulted very early in the most painful of all political rituals – the public acknowledgement and the solemn apology.

What about the alleged entanglements and mutual influences between the two countries that are culturally related to such an extent? To be blunt: I was not able to prove that the discourse in one of the two countries had a lasting effect on the other, but there is evidence in the simultaneousness of the developments. The close relation of the two countries seemed to be a perfect playground for a transfer of concepts and the entanglement of developments. The mediators of this transfer are at hand, the Scandinavian scholarly environment is comparably small but the inter-Scandinavian relations well developed, making the exchange of ideas easier than in other regions of the western world – also because of a largely absent language barrier. Sebastian Conrad examined the history cultures of Germany and Japan and came to the conclusion that 'entangled memories' exist between these two countries claiming that a transfer of ideas and mechanisms or trigger effects in facing the own past can be traced in a comparison of Japanese and German trajectories of history culture.¹¹⁸⁵ For Scandinavia, this was not directly possible. The two cousins in the north do share the same channels of transmission of historical knowledge and the same democratic structures. The populations are able to understand each other and are frequently in contact with each other through informal but also official networks. Historians and social scientists can draw from institutionalized exchanges and the interest in each other seems great – even greater at times than in other regions within Europe. A certain feeling of being at the periphery and a shared past is strong and supplies bonds. Also on a personal level the networks are comparatively tight. And yet, one conclusion of the project must be that in the field of history culture the entanglements are scarce. However, there are hints at connections. Even though coincidence is possible, evidence suggests that certain discussions and challenges to the basic narrative in one country triggered off the same in the other or that the discourse in one served as the others as blueprint. It became clear that although Danes and Norwegians acknowledge the existence of certain debates in the other country, this must not automatically result in a self-scrutiny. On the contrary, if challenged with developments in the other country, professionals sometimes tended to ascribe them solely to the specific trajectory of the war history of this neighbour. This tendency of regarding one's own history as absolutely unique has for example resulted in a historical research that was less comparative, less trans-

¹¹⁸⁵ Conrad, *Entangled Memories*, p. 98.

national and more concentrated on their own country than was to be expected. The veterans met, the historians met, but the narrative remained 'national'. In some cases it was even explicitly stated that discourses in the other country did not apply to home. The founders of Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum did visit Copenhagen and did examine the Frihedsmuseum – albeit they seem not to have been too impressed. In a letter to Magne Skodvin, Jens Christian Hauge reports that Paal Brunsvig and Knut Haugland went to Copenhagen and came back with the conclusion that the Norwegian concept had to be wider in order to show the "spiritual struggle" that lay behind the Norwegian resistance.¹¹⁸⁶ In a later protocol of the meeting of the board this point was raised again and Knut Haugland is reported to have said that the Danish exhibition was missing a "philosophy on what is important to show: that is the question of what the struggle was all about."¹¹⁸⁷ When talking about the liquidations of the resistance the look to Denmark meant demarcation for scholars involved in the discussion in Norway – not rapprochement. Direct lines and influences are hard to ascertain. Indications for a transfer of ideas and debates are at the most assumptions. What could be established though are similarities in the timing of discussions. Some of the debates of and challenges to the basic narratives flared up simultaneously in both countries. However, often these did not need to be influenced by the other but could have been expressions of a more general, European or even global development. The new interest in the fate of the Jews during the occupation, in domestic anti-Semitism and the involvement in the persecution could be observed everywhere in Europe. The fate of the *tyskerpiger* and their children likewise follows a new view on women which has to be seen on the background of a changing understanding of gender and gender roles. Also here the Scandinavian countries' new interest in the treatment of these women could not have emerged without a change of mentalities which can be observed almost everywhere. In the case of the *tyskerpiger* and their children it is even clearer that the Danish case served as an inspiration to Norwegian associations which were able to push the debate further in Norway, even to compensation.

Ole Kristian Grimnes pointed out in an interview with *Aftenposten* that Denmark had a scrutiny of the legal purge and that Norway should have one too.¹¹⁸⁸ Most of what had been written was written by those involved in the war and the transitional justice itself and therefore it would be just logic if with the disappearance of the witnesses there would be another examination of the legal processes. Grimnes was directly referring to the Danish example and indeed the alert

¹¹⁸⁶ Hauge, Jens Christian. Letter to Skodvin, Magne, 3 January 1963, NHM-Arkiv, 195 Ddc - 0001, 204.1 Hovedkomiteen.

¹¹⁸⁷ Haugland, Knut M., Rapport Fra Rådsmøte 24. April i Oslo Militære Samfund, 1964, NHM Arkiv, 195 Ddc - 0001, 204.1 Hovedkomiteen, p. 5.

observer can see signs that the debate on the liquidations in Denmark restarted a new one on the matter in Norway that had seemingly closed its own discussion earlier. Comparative studies on the war history are scarce but Danes tended to look to Norway to find references in that seemingly simpler case for their own trajectory. 'Norske tilstande' – Norwegian conditions – that was what the resistance in Denmark wanted to establish: clear lines and non-cooperation. After the war Danes longed for a past that was so clear and clean and not besmirched by the odour of collaboration – norske tilstande that is. Again, entanglements in the ways the interpretation of the war was developed and promulgated are not that clearly visible; just resemblances.¹¹⁸⁹

What about other countries? Scandinavian development of the public memory or the inclusion of various themes into the historical cultures seems 'delayed' in certain respects, when compared to countries like France or Germany. The reasons are hard to find. One reason might be the exceptionally stabile democratic development during the whole postwar period. The homogenous composition of the Scandinavian societies with an ever developing welfare state and prosperity has contributed to a societal equilibrium that; once achieved, might have helped to plaster the differences. The existing differences during the war time could be addressed at a time when this equilibrium was challenged. In Denmark an ongoing debate on the future of the welfare state and immigration policies has widened the rifts between groups in society and caused conflicts that in turn may have facilitated further negotiations on the foundations of the nation. Here the most important point of debate certainly is the question on how to judge collaboration and resistance with regard to the benefits for Denmark and moral. In Norway the leading wartime heroes became respected members of the postwar politics and elite. After a hard time during the reconstruction of the country, a relatively unified narrative could be established on the feeling that the whole people had won – visibly represented by the heroes in public life. The first and most difficult provocations came certainly from within the one group that rightfully had forfeited their right to participate in the discourse. The other gentle efforts to understand the war as having been more complex than the basic narrative would make believe were unfortunately too easily regarded as allied with the former NS members. This interpretation and the legal purge, which drew such a hard line between those who had a clean slate and those who were criminals, has helped to preserve fringe groups that do not exist in Denmark and can not poison the debate to that extent.

And of course one might as well ask the question whether there is indeed a benchmark for the processes described? The German (of the Federal Republic of Germany before and after the

¹¹⁸⁸ Folgerø, Arnt, Historieprofessor: Bør se på retsoppgjøret på nytt, Aftenposten 4 September 2001.

¹¹⁸⁹ Interview with Øystein Sørensen at Oslo University on 7 August 2006.

collapse of the Wall) way of dealing with a traumatic past has been referred to as a model and a challenge to other societies dealings with the war past. Those who did so pointed especially at the partly successful educational programmes of the late 1980s and the Historikerstreit as a public discourse. German academics in the field certainly wanted to believe that and yet doubts crept up about the success and the sustainability of these efforts. It is paradoxical that of all warring nations one of the two postwar Germanies would be seen as an example. Not without good reason these claims have often be made in comparison with either Japan's or Italy's politics of remembrance. It seems that a nation's self-perception can be positively influenced by 'superior' politics of remembrance. In Scandinavia, however, the way and the timing with which alternative versions of a past took to enter the narrative were often connected to the psychological needs or repression. Notwithstanding that there are moments and mechanisms that deserve this category due to their similarity to psychological processes, the transfer of the notion of repression too often leads to a negative interpretation of the developments. There might have been times in which suppression had served the purpose of a safety mechanism. This function has often been seen as just the outcome of deliberate politics of elites incriminated by their past actions or with a negative agenda. But maybe such a non-use, to use Klas-Göran Karlsson's word, was necessary. The question of what was allowed to the narrative, what could be talked about is not a teleological development to the better and a success story of democratic evolution. Sometimes it could be and that certain people were heard is very important. But at the same time a suspicion grows that the inclusion of hitherto forgotten groups and difficult memories could have a cost on the other side as well. One of my main concerns was not to write an account of a teleological development or a 'history of progress', but to understand with the eyes of the contemporaries what was conceivable at the time, what was 'tellable'. The trap of such a heuristic demand is obvious though. Most readers will have grown up with an understanding of modern psychoanalysis that claims that suppression hinders the process of coming to term with traumatic events and that the unspoken is a harm to the individual and the community. If understood solely this way, the development of the basic narratives about the occupation in Scandinavia since the end of the Second World War must necessarily be seen as a trajectory of betterment albeit still unfinished and armed with traps and barriers for alternative versions. However, I doubt that such an understanding does do right to neither the agents of a dominant nor those of alternative versions. The processes are too interwoven, too complex to be broken down to a story of an oppressive dominant basic narrative fighting against the challenges of differing experiences and interpretations. For individuals that fell victim to harsh treatment and who felt unrightfully silenced a public acknowledgement is certainly of great importance. The

fact that any acknowledgement might occur at another group's expenses, however, renders the whole a zero-sum game on the wider level. When guilt and misconduct are defining the discursive field, other parts of the narrative risk being excluded for some time. Esben Kjeldbæk had, as mentioned before, tried to identify three phases in the representation of the occupation history. He called under reference to Hans Kirchhoff the current paradigm new-moralist and contrasted it to earlier phases like a patriotic and a revisionist paradigm.¹¹⁹⁰ This new-moralism compensated for the loss of the explanations that were valid during the Cold War and the antagonism of ideologies.

Not exactly the same but similar to Kjeldbæk's new moralism is what Arnfinn Moland had described already ten years earlier with the notion of a 50-year-crisis. The *femtiårskrise* is according to Moland what the war history had endured in relation to the media from the latter half of the 1980s.¹¹⁹¹ Hitherto reputable newspapers and publishing houses had started lowering themselves to help the dissemination of allegations concerning the occupation. Moland was referring to the disputed books of Fjørtoft and Ulateig and the debate on the liquidations but combined with the word of Kjeldbæk, the central and important message is that not all the new and so-called critical research and revisionism is necessarily a valuable enrichment of the picture but that some are either fired by a media greedy for scoops, others by a memory political agenda connected to the former villains or an expression of a deeper trend of exaggerated self scrutiny. In his understanding the crisis is what he observes as a lack of appreciation of what the struggle and the war was actually about paired with a missing knowledge about the historical facts. The generation of 1968 had felt a need to declare their solidarity with groups that were perceived as challenges to the tradition.¹¹⁹² The resulting self scrutiny is in my opinion part of a wider trend of hypermnesia powered by the desire to restore a moral balance by exposing oneself to public judgement. Wherever we look in the Western world, government, organisations and individuals are digging into their past. Whether it is the Swedish government's efforts in the field of Holocaust education, British cities and American presidents apologizing for past slavery or the fact that Japan's government is judged by the way it handles the question of the former forced prostitutes in Korea and China – wherever we look, the way a group is trying to come to terms with its past is becoming the benchmark for its reputation. In a globalized world the West becomes aware how much its own actions influence the rest of the world, aware of its past as the oppressor and imperialist and in a need to restore oneself as being

¹¹⁹⁰ Kjeldbæk, Esben, *Erindringer om besættelsen*, in: Nationalmuseet (ed.), *Spærretid. Hverdag under besættelsen 1940-45* (Catalogue), København: Nationalmuseet 2005, pp. 10-15.

¹¹⁹¹ Moland, *Over grensen?*, p. 315.

¹¹⁹² Interview with Arnfinn Moland at Norges Hjemmefrontmuseet on 10 August 2006.

on the good side by acknowledging wrongdoing. Once the apology is out the moral balance is recreated. As seen in the introductory chapters, it is difficult to compare these political functions with mechanisms of the psychology of the individual and yet their similarities are obvious. Once an individual has apologized it is freed from the initial allegations – children learn this very early. Maybe nation states have learned it too now. In his book on apologies in politics, Hermann Lübbe, called these rituals of penance besides the sometime obvious constraints and needs of high diplomacy, the new "civil religion."¹¹⁹³ He observes an internationalisation of such practices of politics of the past, which originally served a German sense of pride connected to the compliance with a duty to remember and acknowledge – something that easily capsized into a Pharisaic disposition to reprimand other nations with reservations to apologies. Indeed, there are, in my view, pitfalls to ritualized apologies. And any ritualization of apologies can turn into what I would call the 'apologisation' of politics.

Excuses include logically the moment of exculpation from sins and the act itself is hard to achieve on both sides of the ritual, the victims but also the culprit. But apologies have two faces: on the one hand they are the ultimate acknowledgement of guilt and the re-establishment of the rule of justice. Their enunciation constitutes at times situations where the injured have the right for claims for restitution. On the other hand, apologies are can also become the final stroke of a given discussion. "I have asked for forgiveness, now you have to leave me alone." – would be the translation of such an interpretation. They also re-establish the personal balance and rightfulness. In this respect, apologies should also been viewed with a critical eye. Politicians who on behalf of the nation apologize, very often simply enable the nation to preserve the feeling of being 'on the right side'. They demonstrate the intrinsically good nature of the people and are also very good instruments of foreign policy. In the case of the restitution of the Norwegian Jews this moment was certainly important.

Complex processes and inner struggles have to be fought that have their analogy in individual psychology, in mechanisms of repression. If one exchanges repression with a concept of latency or functional latencies or communicative latencies these concepts can also be transferred to societies, as Werner Bergmann has suggested. Following the thoughts of Niklas Luhmann on the function of latencies for societies he applies processes of communicative latencies to nations. They block a communication that could potentially lead to the destruction of a system. This structural protection via latencies is not static but a process. A permanent consolidation of democratic structures allows the step by step the removal of the protective latency and issues are raised that were hitherto not articulated. Certainly latencies are never undisputed; on the

¹¹⁹³ Lübbe, Hermann, Ich entschuldige mich. Das neue politische Bußritual, Berlin: BvT 2003, p. 29.

contrary they produce a steady stream of efforts to breach them.¹¹⁹⁴ The conversation of latencies has to be constantly secured. Åsa Linderborg, in her work about the way the Swedish Social Democrats have influenced historiography, has used concepts like a pursuit of hegemony in the description of mechanisms of using history-writing as a power resource.¹¹⁹⁵ In her analysis about the ways in which individuals and collectives or institutions write their own history, she drew from the writings of Gramsci and Plechanov. According to her synthesis the state has a decisive function in the perpetuation and the reproduction of a hegemony especially in its institutions dedicated to the education. Certainly, she states, these hegemonies encounter counter-hegemonies which in a continuous process are neutralized or reduced by compromises. Hence they are not equal to consensus but rather the outcome of a dialectic process. Traditions are the most important expression of the pressure of hegemonies, they are a version of the past that ties the present together and gives a feeling of predetermined continuity, thereby legitimizing the present order.¹¹⁹⁶ Both the concepts of functional latency and the concept of hegemony could equally be invoked when referring to the processes of politics of remembrance as were described above. Sometimes the realization of the painful memories trickled through in society, at other times it came as a shock. Both concepts to varying degrees include the notion of mechanisms of silencing groups memories, albeit they combine it with a 'good cause'. Maybe the narrative of a united people fighting the cruel Nazi oppressor is still a narrative to preserve and to teach? In my mind this question that came up during the whole project has to remain unanswered. And anyway the politics of remembrance and their agents were at the core of the thesis. The museums and celebrations were at times open to only to the traditions but at times to challenges too. Their events and speeches could have a conserving effect on the narrative as well as an enlightening one. It depended on the strength of the role that was given to the veterans and of course also to the influence the veterans deliberately managed to secure. Here I could provide solid evidence that for the most part of the postwar period certain veterans, that can be called by their names from a very small circle managed via personal relations and at times imperious behaviour to preserve a stable control function in the memory production of Norway and Denmark. Their memory-political acts manifested itself in archival sources. But, were their efforts really successful beyond the official sphere? And how successful are politics of remembrance really? The main challenge of this project was as often the problem of reception.

¹¹⁹⁴ Bergmann, Werner, Kommunikationslatenz und Vergangenheitsbewältigung, in: König, Helmut, Kohlstruck, Michael, Wöll, Andreas (eds.), *Vergangenheitsbewältigung am Ende des Zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts*, Opladen/Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag 1998, pp. 393-408, p. 396-397.

¹¹⁹⁵ Linderborg, Åsa, *Socialdemokraterna skriver historia. Historieskrivning som ideologisk maktresurs 1892-2000*, Stockholm: Atlas 2001.

¹¹⁹⁶ Linderborg, *Socialdemokraterna*, p. 34.

It is impossible to know how much of the basic narrative is 'believed' or to say it bluntly 'swallowed'. The thesis therefore merely intends to show what agents have tried to impart and, starting from that, to understand what people might believe. What does it tell if the main Danish newspapers call for the 'living lights' to be lit on the windowsills in May 2005 and I myself, wandering in the streets of Copenhagen, find only a very few windows illuminated by candles? In most European countries after the 1960s signs of wear became apparent on the basic narratives. They changed, and at times even drastically. The new memory of the war did not concentrate on the heroic deeds anymore but focussed on the painful and traumatic memories. There was even a trend from a patriotic memory to a memory of genocide. A duty to remember was created.¹¹⁹⁷ Scandinavia though seemed unblemished by these paradigmatical changes in the European memory fibre. It is not more than a decade that Scandinavia has discovered the Holocaust as a parameter of remembrance and follows the international trend. In Norway the recourse to the means of politics of the past by legal methods of coping with their own Holocaust become apparent in the compensations. Simultaneously, a "pluralisation of cultures of remembrance" and a transnationalization of its movements and shapes" takes place.¹¹⁹⁸

One question has not yet been addressed but was underlying during the whole examination: What will happen in the years to come and on that day when the last resistance veteran has passed or the last son or daughter of the veterans has passed? My guess is that the war will serve as point of reference and as image that can be evoked in politics and as representation of certain attitudes for an indefinite time. As we have learned from the wars in the Balkans, battles and defeats could serve in the political game, even after centuries and in cases when the historical events are not as established and researched as in the case of the war in Denmark. (The Battle at Kosovo polje on the side of Serbian nationalism). The next question is what will happen to the celebrations and the museums. In both countries the celebrations in 1995 (some had already said the same about 1985) were widely regarded as the last big celebrations, others have talked just about the last big celebrations with the veterans still present. But I could sense a distinct feeling among all those involved that with the fading of the veterans the celebrations will fade as well. Of course the 100th anniversary might be celebrated again and maybe even the bicentennial. The example of the celebrations in France on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of the French Revolution, as could be argued, show the long durée of the importance of certain holidays, albeit the French Revolution could as well be considered as being of greater overall cultural importance for French identity than the occupation for Norway or Denmark. We might get an

¹¹⁹⁷ François, *Meistererzählungen*, p.19.

¹¹⁹⁸ François, *Meistererzählungen*, p.22-23.

idea of the future development by looking carefully in the coming decade at the celebrations regarding the First World War, especially in Britain and France.

As well, I hope that in the thesis at hand I was able to show how a comparative approach on a public discourse on the war can be applied to the two countries of Denmark and Norway and how it can help to shed light on the ways the narrative and self-image is shaped and challenged. By contrasting the two cases and pointing out the similarities and the differing features, I was able to find explanations for the distinct character of the collective traditions and the mechanisms that shaped them. I argue that there are strong hints that the similarities are striking. The events that led to the present situation resemble each other a lot, occasionally even to the level of exchangeability.¹¹⁹⁹ A threefold humiliating experience of unprecedented military defeat, a cruel occupation with multiple forms of treason and resistance and finally the liberation by foreign armies or rather the defeat of the German aggressor by others. The sometimes differing responses to the German threat then led to the few but nevertheless existing features of distinctiveness in both countries. In the confrontation of the two cases, I hope I was able to show that there are general mechanisms that cause specific reactions to traumatic events like war and occupation to safeguard national identity, help the moral recovery and reach a postwar national consensus and which conditions determine these mechanisms.¹²⁰⁰

The previous pages hopefully did not only help to close a gap in the historical research on the nature of memory production in Scandinavia, where despite a richness of publications on the individual cases, a comparative research is still missing, but may have contributed also in helping to understand the complex structure of agents and interests in this field of history in Western societies as such. Of course an endeavour such as this one includes risks as well as chances. The fact that not just one case but several are incorporated and the eagerness of the person writing to include as many facets of the topic as possible to pay due respect to the complexity of societal structures and life as such bears in itself the risk that profound study is exchanged with scratching just the surface. Complexity and clarity are often trade-offs. One of the greatest risks is to get lost in the amount of available sources. Some might say that at several points the thesis at hand, due to the sheer number of dates incorporated, fails to get into the due detail of some of the most important periods of Scandinavian history. Others might say that important and telling sources were regrettably left out. I would like to mention one of these

¹¹⁹⁹ Author's draft to a at that time not yet published article. Dahl, Hans Frederik, *Besættelsen, dansk og norsk*, in: *Historie*, No. 2, 2001.

¹²⁰⁰ A comparable work including the three countries France, Belgium and the Netherlands was written by Peter Lagrou who found strong evidence for the necessity to stress 'patriotic memories' for the fostering of the 'national recovery'. Lagrou, Pieter, *The Legacy of Nazi Occupation. Patriotic Memories and National Recovery in Western Europe, 1945-1965*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2000.

source-genres which I am very aware of. It would have been a great contribution to the task of the thesis if I had included schoolbooks into the systematic comparison. The field of school-book studies is wide and constitutes a useful contribution for the deeper understanding of the ways historical consciousness is produced and changed. And yet, they were left out simply for the lack of time and resources. Hope is that there will be another time or person to approach this certainly important source material.

One important aspect of the politics of remembrance has so far not been explicitly mentioned – the forgotten narratives of resistance. Initially I had planned on including at least two more narratives that had difficulties entering the basic narrative in Denmark and Norway. These two were the story of the women fighters in the resistance and resistant women and the story of those Scandinavian sailors sailing for the allies. In a number of countries the female partisan became the icon of the resistance.¹²⁰¹ Not though in Denmark or Norway. Women sure enough fought both as armed resistance fighters as well as couriers and distributors of clandestine newspapers on all levels of the resistance organisations. But this contribution did not fit the gendered perception of resistance nor did it suit the struggle about the concepts of gender that were highly contested after the exceptional circumstances of the war. In the historiography on the war in Norway, for a long time women were not treated as a factor in the resistance or in society on an equal footing with men. Anne Eriksen claims, that on the contrary, the traditional gender roles were in fact strengthened. Whereas men "went into the hills", i.e., into hiding, and fought, women are portrayed as mere supporters of their male counterparts, who were more or less completely occupied with gathering food and mending the clothes.¹²⁰² Women were mainly described as passive objects either of the men's protection or as betraying 'tyskertøser'. The third possible role assigned to women was the one of the good mother serving as symbol for the nation, but that role was rather rare. Sigrid Steinnes (Løkse) was the only female member of the Hjemmefrontens Ledelse. She delivered the speech on behalf of the resistance on the celebrations of liberation day in 1989 at the monument for the fallen patriots at Akershus fortress. She was the first person to ever mention women at this occasion. She remembered all who took part in the struggle, men and women and expressed her gratitude to the mothers who kept the family and provided food and clothing in those troubled times. In her speech she touched upon a contribution of women to the resistance which at that time did not receive the

¹²⁰¹ Bredekamp, Bildakte, p. 34.

¹²⁰² Lenz, Claudia. *Haushaltspflicht und Widerstand. Erzählungen norwegischer Frauen über die deutsche Besatzung 1940-1945 im Lichte nationaler Vergangenheitskonstruktionen*, Tübingen: edition diskord 2003 and Lenz, Flintenweiber.

attention it deserved.¹²⁰³ Only in 1995, as reported above, the women's contribution to the resistance was stressed by the committee and the Queen in her public appearances during the celebrations. In Denmark the picture was not different at all. Lis Mellemsgaard, a Danish woman and member of the resistance group Holger Danske, describes in her autobiographical description of the war times, that she was selected right after the war during which she also had received weapon instruction to become a bodyguard to the head of the Frihedsrådet Frode Jakobsen. When Jakobsen became aware that a woman was standing armed guard duty he had her exchanged for a man.¹²⁰⁴ Besides male chauvinism, the problem was that the definition of the term 'resistance' has for years been a very narrow one. Resistance was defined as something active, something military. In the last decade, the term has been revised and a wider notion has gathered support. Resistance now encompasses more acts of a different kind and the military part is less stressed. Consequently more acts of women that hitherto have been described as normal 'duty' have been incorporated. The mechanisms that led to the increased inclusion of the female aspect of the war trajectory have not yet been described in a comprehensive and comparative manner.

In both countries it appears to the outsider that the master narrative is to a great extent, also based on the fact that the most important contribution of both nations to the allied war effort was the merchant fleet. The seamen who lost their lives serving the allies is surmounts most other groups of war victims. Their sacrifice was considerably great – as was their contribution to the war effort. Some even claimed that without the Norwegian ships, carrying arms supplies and fuel for the British troop across the Atlantic, the British war effort would virtually have dried up.¹²⁰⁵ In general, this chapter of the war is seen as a source of pride, since it was a direct contribution to the war effort and sailors lost their lives in action on the crossings. In a booklet that was published by the US-American Ministry of Defence and that contains all kinds of citations from allied Army Officers and politicians on Norway during the war and that was supposed to bolster the pride of the Norwegian role as ally, the performance of the merchant fleet is among the most frequent references and was even mentioned in the introduction. Amongst other citations there is for example the one of the American admiral of the fleet that in September 1942 said that the Norwegian fleet was worth more than one million men.¹²⁰⁶ The

¹²⁰³ The speech was provided for by Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum's archive.

¹²⁰⁴ Mellemsgaard, Lis, *Pige i modstandskampen. Glimt fra min glemmebog*, København: Museum Tusulanum 1998, p. 99.

¹²⁰⁵ For example did a pamphlet that was dropped in occupied Norway by the London-Government with planes claim that the merchant fleet brought all the necessary fuel for the 'battle on England' the air-battles in 1940. See "Stol paa oss! Vi svikter ikke!" (Engl. Trust in us! We do not let you down! or We do not betray!), NHM Arkiv, 948.181.8.

¹²⁰⁶ 'Se på Norge', NHM Arkiv, 948.181.8, p. 5.

sailors on these ships are normally referred to as krigsseiler (war sailors), or in more general terms, as sjøfolk or søfolk (sea folks). They were often under attack by German submarines and fulfilled a dangerous duty. It is a strange paradox that these men (and a few women) who were so important and actually mattered most in the Norwegian contribution and had the heaviest toll in human lives were, on the one hand, used as a source of pride, and, on the other hand totally neglected when it came to actual financial compensation or due respect by the nation at home. Other parts of the resistance or the Armed Forces have their own books on the war history; the krigsseiler had to wait until the middle of the 1990s for an extensive work to be published about their actions.¹²⁰⁷ Around the same time a six-part TV programme was broadcasted on the state channel NRK and dealt not only with the sailors contribution but also with its aftermath. It was called 'Eternal honour' and it is not astonishing that it was broadcasted around the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the liberation.¹²⁰⁸ However, the veterans still feel that they have been forgotten and due respect was never paid to them. Today it seems generally accepted that injustice was done to the sailors and in 1995 Norway's largest newspaper showed the above mentioned TV programme on the topic to some high school students and reported that they were shocked by the facts.¹²⁰⁹ It is plausible to assume that it was the krigsseiler that King Harald V. referred to in his speech at the national monument on Akershus fortress when he said: "Some people that had performed a huge effort in the war did not get the support they were entitled to expect [...]."¹²¹⁰ What is true for Norway is also valid for Denmark. Also here the veterans of the merchant navy perceive their contribution as being ignored for vast parts of the postwar history. Two thirds of the Danish merchant navy was outside Danish territorial waters on 9 April 1940. Most of them reached allied harbours and the majority continued to serve in allied service and after 1943 their ships flew again the Danish flag. Also here the fate of seamen seems not to have attracted much attention over the course of the years. Frihedsmuseet initially had also left out the sailors in the original exhibition. Their veterans seem not to have been included in the team which advised the makers. But after some protest by former sailors a display was included in the southern gallery, where the fallen are commemorated. The present exhibition displays a torpedo in addition to the mine to represent the perils of the submarines during the crossings. And yet, there was considerable dissatisfaction on the veterans' side which reached its climax around the celebrations of the 60th anniversary of the liberation. In the already quoted letter of Esben Kjeldbæk to a member of the board of the association of the sailors, Kjeldbæk reacted to

¹²⁰⁷ Handelsflåten i krig 1939-1945, 5 vols. Oslo: Grøndahl/Dreyer, 1992-1997.

¹²⁰⁸ 'Evig heder...'. NRK Fjernsynets serie om norske sjøfolk i krig og fred, in: Krigsinvaliden, no. 1, 1995, p. 84.

¹²⁰⁹ Høiland, Terje, Unge opprørt, in: Aftenposten May 3rd 1995, p. 37.

considerable criticism of the association of his exhibition. The veterans did not see themselves represented with the due intensity. I do not have the original letter at hand but it is possible to draw conclusions from Kjeldbæk's answer. The veterans not only complained about the exhibition but also blamed the FM for the school material published by the Prime Ministers planning committee on the 60th anniversary of the 29 August 1943 and the liberation celebrations webpage. The webpage was presented in the FM and it seems that some veterans had planned to protest against the perceived lack of interest in their story on that occasion. It seems that Kjeldbæk's letter or other information had soothed their anger because the protest was, to my knowledge, never carried out. And as a matter of fact the sailors were represented on the webpage with a chapter dedicated almost solely to their contribution.¹²¹¹ Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen made mention of the krigssejler in his speech at Ryvangen which I have discussed above. He paid tribute to those who "went down with their ships."¹²¹²

The story of the krigsseiler holds a big contradiction between a role assigned to a certain part of the war history and its bearers and the actual treatment of the same in official politics of remembrance and historiography – or at least the perception of the latter in the eyes of the veterans. The two groups that were just briefly mentioned here were due to a lack of space not integrated in this project either but give a very good reflection of those challenges I have dealt with above, since they strengthen the feeling that became prevalent throughout the work that a decisive moment for the success of politics of remembrance was the relative strength of the politicians of remembrance. Albeit a big group of the resistance or in the case of the women a big segment of society, their representation at the relevant levels of the culture of remembrance was low. The sailors came home when nobody wanted to speak about the war anymore. Their stories were experienced far from home and the terrors of an Atlantic crossing when the enemy is an invisible German submarine were hard to tell. The women's activities were quickly assigned the character of a 'normal' daily life of loyal housewives supporting their husbands struggle. Their military credentials were easily silenced and the anxiety of the day to day resistance tasks they often fulfilled downplayed. Both groups were also missing 'the man' to promote their narrative – to put it bluntly: they had neither a Jens Christian Hauge, a Frode Jakobsen or a Sverre Seehusen, nor any other similarly prominent veteran to help them. At least not the way other groups could rely on the 'man'power. Looking at all the cases above and these

¹²¹⁰ "Mennesker som hadde gjort en stor krigsinnsats, fikk ikke den støtten de hadde grunn til å vente...", H.M.

Kong Harald V, H.M. Kongens tale, Akershus mandag 8. mai 1995, Det Kongelige Hoff, Informasjonsavdeling.

¹²¹¹ Björn Pedersen, Danmarks Undervisningsportal, Danmarks befrielse 5. maj 1945, Krigssejlere og danskere i allieret tjeneste, <http://befrielsen1945.dk/temaer/modstandskamp/allierettjeneste/index.html#indhold2>.

¹²¹² Statsminister Anders Fogh Rasmussen, Statsminister Anders Fogh Rasmussens tale i Mindelunden 4. maj 2005, Statsministeriet, <http://www.stm.dk/Index/dokumenter.asp?o=2&n=0&d=2316&s=1>.

two brings the role of personality back to the field of politics of remembrance. As much as mechanisms of bargaining, social influence or the political history of the postwar years were important in the creation and the perpetuation of the basic narratives – the individuals, the protagonists were of decisive importance as well.

One does certainly not have to go as far as Andreas Hompland, who in 1995 wrote that in Norway in 1945 the Hjemmefront had won the war and that their protagonists – especially Jens Christian Hauge – became "[...] authorized veterans who administered the ownership of the memory and the myths about the war."¹²¹³ But an acknowledgement of the role of the main players on the veteran's side could render interesting results. Historians have argued over the differences, advantages and disadvantages of political history versus a social history. My conclusion is that a political history of individuals in the field of culture of remembrance does give the opportunity to understand the mechanisms of bargaining better than a purely social understanding of memory production. Above all that history is but a history of struggles about the interpretation of history.¹²¹⁴ This interpretation and especially this struggle is carried out by individuals as representatives of groups and narratives and therefore the need is to understand their objectives and their position in the landscapes of memory.

Two quotes frame this thesis. The first one at the beginning by Napoleon Bonaparte served as the portal to the project and today does not need much explanations anymore since historians have agreed on the constructive qualities of history and history writing. But it was also meant as an overture to the theme of the project, the question of agency. The second quote by Orwell at the beginning of the conclusion shall accordingly serve as the seal of the project and the confirmation of the importance of agency in the memory production. Orwell's Winston Smith, the archivist of the *Big Brother*, was certainly in a very different situation than what I have found in the two liberal Scandinavian societies – but nevertheless also in Western democracies, the struggle for and about remembrance is of eminent importance and remains a field of deliberate politics.

¹²¹³ Hompland, Andreas, Den siste krigen, Dagbladet, 6 May 1995.

¹²¹⁴ Winkler, Einleitung, p. 7.

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