

ISABEL HEINEMANN, *Towards an "Ethnic reconstruction" of occupied Europe : SS plans and racial policies*, in «Annali dell'Istituto storico italo-germanico in Trento» (ISSN: 0392-0011), 27 (2001), pp. 493-517.

Url: <https://heyjoe.fbk.eu/index.php/anisig>

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# Towards an «Ethnic Reconstruction» of Occupied Europe: SS Plans and Racial Policies

by Isabel Heinemann

## 1. Introduction

In a speech before SS- and Party-officials that he gave in Posen, Warthegau, on October 24, 1943, Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler described the new regime Germany would establish in the East after the war:

«By then, a 120 million people of Germanic origin [*Germanen*] instead of the 90 million Germans will be the central power in Europe. For this entire Germanic people [*germanisches Volk*] we will have a settlement ground in the East which gives us enough air and space to live ... The East needs to be the plantation [*Pflanzgarten*] of pure Germanic blood, the melting-pot of all German and Germanic tribes. And this goal will help us, on the base of the singular and decisive racial worth [*einmaliger und ausschlaggebender rassischer Wert*] of those whom we settle here, to reach the necessary numbers of settlers»<sup>1</sup>.

When Himmler made this declaration, it was already obvious that Germany would not be able to win the war. The German Army was facing defeat on the Eastern front, Mussolini was overthrown, the «axis» had ceased to exist, and the Western Allies (already present on the continent in Sicily and Italy) were preparing their landing on the French coastline. At the same time, the Nazi regime was completely unfolding its murderous potential, as the civilian population in the occupied countries, especially in the East, faced hunger and starvation, millions of slave laborers were exploited for the German war-time production and armament industry, and a considerable part of the Jews of Europe had already perished in the extermination camps. Nonetheless, this «positive» vision of race and space in the colonialized East developed by Himmler was more than an expression of fatalism. Himmler described one of the fundamental goals of Nazi occupation policy since 1939, the ideal of a greater German (or, later, «Germanic») settlement space in the East.

<sup>1</sup> Secret speech by Heinrich Himmler in Posen, Warthegau, on October 24, 1943, in J. ACKERMANN, *Heinrich Himmler als Ideologe*, Göttingen 1970, pp. 291-296, p. 293.

The annexation of «living space» (*Lebensraum*), the idea of a «necessary Germanization» of the occupied territories, and the resettlement carried out to this end represented a driving force behind National Socialist extermination policy. According to the far-reaching plans, the population of occupied Europe should undergo a «restructuring» based on the criteria of supposed «racial quality». Germans and people of high «racial value» should settle especially in the occupied Eastern parts of Europe, whereas the local population would face specific treatment depending on its «racial quality» – deportation, exploitation as slave labor or extermination. Not all the plans saw their full implementation during the Second World War, but the Nazi occupants nonetheless were responsible for large-scale forced population movements, namely the expulsion and resettlement of millions of civilians. Most important, these population policies demonstrated the alleged necessity for and lead to the mass murder of the European Jewry.

One institution soon emerged as the key agency for the implementation of National Socialist population policy in the East: The SS under its chief Heinrich Himmler. On October 7, 1939 Adolf Hitler officially appointed Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler to organize the return of ethnic Germans from abroad and the «Germanization» of the occupied Western part of Poland. Himmler was to provide for the «creation of new settlement areas through resettlement» and also for «the elimination of the harmful influence of alien segments of the population which pose a threat to the Reich and the German ethnic community»<sup>2</sup>. Himmler then chose the title «Reich Commissar for the Strengthening of the Germanic Peoples» (*Reichskommissar für die Festigung deutschen Volkstums, RKF*) for himself and set up his own organization, the Central Office of the RKF (*Stabshauptamt RKF*). In the following months, this institution developed into one of the coordinating centers and «think-tanks» of Nazi population policy in occupied Europe<sup>3</sup>. Besides the RKF, two other SS-organizations need to be mentioned explicitly: the Reich Security Police<sup>4</sup> and the SS-Race and

<sup>2</sup> *Erlaß Adolf Hitlers zur Festigung deutschen Volkstums vom 7.10.1939*, in *Der Prozeß gegen die Hauptkriegsverbrecher vor dem Internationalen Militärgerichtshof* (hereafter: IMT), Nürnberg 1947, NO - 26, pp. 255-257, vol. 3075.

<sup>3</sup> Holocaust historiography still lacks a complete study of the RKF-system. For a first orientation see Robert Koehl's study that is mainly based on court material of the Nuremberg Trial number VIII: R.L. KOEHL, *R.K.f.d.V. German Settlement and Population Policy. A Study of the Reich Commission for the Strengthening of Germandom*, Cambridge MA 1957.

<sup>4</sup> See U. HERBERT, *Best: Biographische Studien über Radikalismus, Weltanschauung und Vernunft, 1903-1989*, Bonn 1996; M. WILDT, *Generation des Unbedingten. Das Führungskorps des Reichssicherheitshauptamts*, Hamburg 2002.

Settlement Main Office (RuSHA)<sup>5</sup>. The Reichssicherheitshauptamt's twin agencies Central Immigration Office and Central Resettlement Office (Einwandererzentralstelle and Umwandererzentralstelle) emerged in Western Poland, but later became active also in other regions under occupation (France, Southern Europe, Eastern Poland). The Immigration Office (EWZ) directed the registration and screening of the incoming ethnic Germans of Eastern Europe, whereas the Resettlement Office coordinated the expulsion and registration of the local Polish population expelled to gain «settlement space» needed for German resettlers in the course of «Germanization»<sup>6</sup>.

Finally, the SS-experts in race and settlement of RuSHA played a significant role in the ethnic reconstruction of the occupied regions<sup>7</sup>. Their contribution to the processes of expulsion and resettlement is far less known than for instance the role of the police forces, but nevertheless was quite crucial. As leaders of local SS settlement task forces (SS-Ansiedlungs- und Arbeitsstäbe), these experts assumed responsibility not only for the resettlement of the ethnic Germans in the newly annexed Polish West but also for the coordination and planning of the expulsion of parts of the local Polish population<sup>8</sup>. Other RuSHA-experts served in the abovementioned Einwandererzentralstelle and Umwandererzentralstelle where they racially screened ethnic Germans and Poles. The result of this racial selection decided over the future treatment of ethnic Germans and Poles. Furthermore, specific race and settlement experts (SS-Führer im Rasse- und Siedlungswesen) were integrated into the staff of each Higher SS and Police

<sup>5</sup> On this institution, its racial ideology, and its impact on National Socialist population policy in occupied Europe, see I. HEINEMANN, «Rasse, Siedlung, deutsches Blut»: Das Rasse- und Siedlungshauptamt der SS und die nationalsozialistische Rassenpolitik im besetzten Europa, 1939-1945, forthcoming.

<sup>6</sup> On the activities of EWZ and UWZ in occupied Western Poland, see G. ALY, «Endlösung». Völkerverschiebung und der Mord an den europäischen Juden, Frankfurt a.M. 1995 and especially P. RUTHERFORD, *Race, Space and the «Polish Question». Nazi Deportation Policy in Reichsgau Wartheland, 1939-1941*, PhD, University of Pennsylvania, 2000.

<sup>7</sup> On this specific group of perpetrators, see I. HEINEMANN, «Another Type of Perpetrator»: The SS Racial Experts and Forced Population Movements in the Occupied Regions, in «Holocaust and Genocide Studies», 15, 2001, pp. 387-411; I. HEINEMANN, *Ambivalente Sozialingenieure? Die Rasseexperten der SS*, in G. HIRSCHFELD (ed.), *Ambivalente Funktionäre. Zur Rolle von Funktionseliten im NS-System* (forthcoming).

<sup>8</sup> On the activities of SS-Ansiedlungs- und Arbeitsstäbe and the successful cooperation of various institutions and experts during the expulsions, see I. HEINEMANN, «Ethnic Resettlement» and Inter-Agency Cooperation in the Occupied Eastern Territories, in G.D. FELDMAN - W. SEIBEL (eds), *Networks of Persecution. The Holocaust as a Division-of-Labor-based Crime*, New York 2002.

Leader (Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer, HSSPF) in the occupied regions. They carried out further racial selections on a local scale, for instance of Prisoners of War or of forced laborers. During the war, about 500 SS racial experts coordinated racial policies all over occupied Europe, from The Hague and Oslo to Kiev and Mogilev. For example, in Western Poland at least 50 higher-ranking SS-officers from RuSHA were at work in the different districts since the beginning of 1940<sup>9</sup>.

This enormous population transfer rested on a fundamental racist consensus that went far beyond the circle of ultra-racist hardliners in the SS. Nazi racism, the belief in the existence of different «race types» and the alleged «racial superiority» of the Nordic race gave Nazi population policy its rationale as well as its specific dynamics. Each attempt to «reorganize» the population of the various occupied territories by means of expulsion, resettlement, forced labor and finally extermination that was made by the RKF or the Security Police also aimed at a «racial reconstruction» of the population. This overall acceptance of the criterion of «racial value» in the field of population policies was, to an important extent, the result of the work of SS racial experts. Alternatively, to put it in other words, National Socialist «population policies» always were «racial policies». This aspect has not received much attention in recent Holocaust research, where the radicalization of policies was either explained as a result of polycratic chaos and power struggle<sup>10</sup> and the need to overcome unbearable situations

<sup>9</sup> For a recent definition of the type of «social expert» (*Sozialexperte*) employed here, see L. RAPHAEL, *Experten im Sozialstaat*, in H.G. HOCKERTS (ed.), *Drei Wege deutscher Sozialstaatlichkeit. NS-Diktatur, Bundesrepublik und DDR im Vergleich*, München 1998, pp. 231-258; L. RAPHAEL, *Radikales Ordnungsdenken und die Organisation totalitärer Herrschaft. Weltanschauungseliten und Humanwissenschaftler im NS-Regime*, in «Geschichte und Gesellschaft», 27, 2001, pp. 5-40.

<sup>10</sup> For one structuralist approach in recent holocaust historiography that of course draws on Hans Mommsen's fundamental analysis of the «cumulative radicalisation» within the NS-System and especially of its extermination policy, see J. SCHULTE, *Zwangsarbeit und Vernichtung. Das Wirtschaftsimperium der SS*, Paderborn 2001. The still widespread perception of Hitler as an «absent dictator», especially during the last war years, has been challenged recently by Martin Moll in a contribution on Hitler's governmental practice, who interprets the conferences of the NSDAP party leaders as a «rational factor» in the not always polycratic system: M. MOLL, *Steuerungsinstrument im «Ämterchaos»? Die Tagungen der Reichs- und Gauleiter der NSDAP*, in «Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte», 49, 2001, 2, pp. 215-273. With regard to Nazi population policies also Hans Mommsen concedes the importance of ideological factors. See, for instance, H. MOMMSEN, *Der «Ostraum» in Ideologie und Politik des Nationalsozialismus*, in H. MOMMSEN, *Von Weimar nach Auschwitz. Zur Geschichte Deutschlands in der Weltkriegsepoche. Ausgewählte Aufsätze*, Stuttgart 1999, pp. 283-294; H. MOMMSEN, *Umvolkungspläne des Nationalsozialismus und der Holocaust*,

(«untragbare Zustände»)<sup>11</sup>, or as the outcome of criminal planning of a small group of mostly civilian population planners and experts<sup>12</sup>, or, finally, as the consequence of the willing cooperation of «ordinary men» on the spot<sup>13</sup>. All of these explanations hold true – to a certain extent. Without taking into account the specific and genuinely racist component of all the resettlement plans (*Umvolkungspläne*), one cannot, however, fully explain the specific dynamic of Nazi population policy.

Consequently, this article proposes a re-evaluation of Nazi racial policies in the context of forced resettlement and expulsions in occupied Europe<sup>14</sup>. I will first describe the specific «racial doctrine of the SS» and highlight the link between ideological foundation and implementation of the population transfer. Next, I will discuss the different steps of resettlement planning issued by the Main Office of the RKF as the coordinating institution in charge. Finally, I am going to give an overview of the results of «ethnic resettlement» on the spot, in annexed Western Poland, the General Government, South-Eastern Europe, Ukraine and Alsace-Lorraine.

## 2. «German blood» and «racial purity»: The racial doctrine of the SS and its implementation into population policy

The notion of «race» and «racial selection» as practiced by the Nazi Party and especially the SS needs to be considered in the context of a biological

in H. GRABITZ - K. BÄSTLEIN - J. TUCHEL (eds), *Die Normalität des Verbrechens. Bilanz und Perspektiven der Forschung zu den nationalsozialistischen Gewaltverbrechen. Festschrift für Wolfgang Scheffler zum 65. Geburtstag*, Berlin 1994, pp. 68-84. For a modern functionalist approach that also takes categories such as efficient cooperation on the spot and ideology into consideration, see the contributions in G.D. FELDMAN - W. SEIBEL (eds), *Networks of Persecution*.

<sup>11</sup> G. ALY, *Endlösung*, see especially pp. 394-400.

<sup>12</sup> G. ALY - S. HEIM, *Vordenker der Vernichtung. Auschwitz und die deutschen Pläne für eine neue europäische Ordnung*, Frankfurt a.M. 1991; C. GERLACH, *Kalkulierte Morde. Die deutsche Wirtschafts- und Vernichtungspolitik in Weißrußland 1941 bis 1944*, Hamburg 1999.

<sup>13</sup> C. BROWNING, «Ordinary Men»: *Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*, New York 1992.

<sup>14</sup> For the Old Reich, an interesting approach has been recently made by Wolfram Pytha in a study on rural settlement planning and racist population policies: W. PYTHA, «Menschenökonomie». *Das Ineinandergreifen von ländlicher Sozialraumgestaltung und rassenbiologischer Bevölkerungspolitik im NS-Staat*, in «Historische Zeitschrift», 273, 2001, pp. 31-94.

paradigm developed by the German political right in the inter-war years: the objective of a «racial improvement» of the German Volk, perceived as menaced by racial decomposition. The principle of «racial melioration» (*Aufartung*) combined methods of cattle breeding with a vulgarization of Darwin's theory and the findings of modern genetics. By this, it could apply for scientific credibility. In general, the European-wide tradition of «modern» thinking in terms of «races» and «mixed types» can be traced back to the second half of the 19th Century<sup>15</sup>. Drawing on these theories, the thinkers of the German radical right and the «new nationalism» in the Republic of Weimar declared that «racial traits» served as indicator for an individual's general worth. Consequently, they defined their ideal of the German nation (*Volk*) by categories of blood and «racial value» (*Blutsgemeinschaft*)<sup>16</sup>. Within the framework of these «orders of inequality» (Stefan Breuer), Nazi ideologues and especially the SS experts developed their specific racism and racial theory.

Richard Walther Darré, agrarian expert, SS-General and Nazi minister of Agriculture, was one of the most important prethinkers of the racial ideal of the SS<sup>17</sup>. He did not only create the expression of «blood and soil» (*Blut und Boden*), but he also propagated the «Nordic Ideal» of anthropologists like Hans Friedrich Karl Günther for Himmler's «new order», which he then combined with a vision of agrarian re-settlement, especially at Germany's Eastern borders<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> See C. DARWIN, *On the Origin of Species*, New York 1988 (1859<sup>1</sup>); C. DARWIN, *The Decent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex*, New York 1989 (1871<sup>1</sup>); A. COMTE DE GOBINEAU, *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines*, Paris 1933 (1853<sup>1</sup>); H.S. CHAMBERLAIN, *Die Grundlagen des Neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, München 1935 (1899<sup>1</sup>). On the perception of these theories in German biology at the end of the 19th Century, see O. AMMON, *Die Gesellschaftsordnung und ihre natürlichen Grundlagen*, Jena 1900<sup>3</sup> (1895<sup>1</sup>); W. SCHALLMAYER, *Vererbung und Auslese im Lebenslauf der Völker*, Jena 1910<sup>2</sup>; A. PLOETZ, *Die Tüchtigkeit unserer Rasse und der Schutz der Schwachen*, Berlin 1895.

<sup>16</sup> U. HERBERT, *Traditionen des Rassismus*, in L. NIETHAMMER (ed.), *Bürgerliche Gesellschaft in Deutschland. Historische Einblicke, Fragen, Perspektiven*, Frankfurt a.M. 1990, pp. 472-488; U. PUSCHNER, *Die völkische Bewegung im wilhelminischen Kaiserreich: Sprache, Rasse, Religion*, Darmstadt 2001; S. BREUER, *Ordnungen der Ungleichheit. Die deutsche Rechte im Widerstreit ihrer Ideen 1871-1945*, Darmstadt 2001.

<sup>17</sup> On Richard Walther Darré see G. CORNI, *Richard Walther Darré – der «Blut und Boden»-Ideologe*, in R. SMELSER - R. ZITELMANN (eds), *Die braune Elite*, Darmstadt 1989, vol. 1, pp. 15-27. See also the source collection by G. CORNI - H. GIES (eds), *«Blut und Boden»: Rassenideologie und Agrarpolitik im Staat Hitlers*, Idstein 1984.

<sup>18</sup> H.F.K. GÜNTHER, *Der nordische Gedanke unter den Deutschen*, München 1927<sup>2</sup>; H.F.K. GÜNTHER, *Kleine Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes*, München 1933<sup>3</sup>; R.W. DARRÉ, *Neuadel*



Already in 1936, Darré declared in a secret speech he held before agrarian functionaries that the

«axis of all National Socialist thinking [was] National Socialism's faith in blood, e.g. in race. You can also say: the confession to the fact that human nature and features are inherited is the essential of National Socialism»<sup>19</sup>.

The specific racism expressed here by Darré became the guideline of Nazi politics. This holds true for the persecution and mass murder of the Jews of Europe, the persecution of Sinti and Roma, the mentally ill, homosexuals, criminals and the so-called «anti-social». However, racism also determined the processes of resettlement and expulsion in occupied Eastern Europe. In Western Poland, not only the Polish evacuees, but also the local ethnic Germans and the incoming ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe who were following Hitler's call to return «home to the Reich» (*heim ins Reich*) faced a specific racial selection by SS racial experts of the Race and Settlement Main Office (RuSHA)<sup>20</sup>. This selection procedure was originally designed to guarantee the racial value of «the new order of the SS» – and, thus, at first exclusively applied to SS men and their spouses. With his marriage order of the SS («Verlobungs- und Heiratsbefehl der SS») of December 1931, Heinrich Himmler himself had demanded a selection of SS-candidates and their brides due to racial categories and declared the foundation of the «Race Office of the SS», the later Race and Settlement Main Office<sup>21</sup>. Race experts of RuSHA under its first head, Richard Walther Darré, set up the concrete selection procedure during the following years.

*aus Blut und Boden*, München 1930; R.W. DARRÉ, *Das Blut als Lebensquell der nordischen Rasse*, München 1933<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>19</sup> Secret speech by Richard Walther Darré in Weimar, cf. A. D'ONOFRIO, *Rassenzucht und Lebensraum: zwei Grundlagen im Blut- und Bodengedanken von Richard Walther Darré*, in «Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft», 49, 2001, pp. 141-157.

<sup>20</sup> The population transfer of ethnic Germans from the Soviet sphere of interest to the *Altreich* was a rather voluntary one, settled in a secret agreement by the two foreign ministers Ribbentrop and Molotov in September 1939. In October 1939 bilateral agreements on population exchange were sealed with Estonia and Latvia. *Deutsch-sowjetischer Grenz- und Freundschaftsvertrag* of September 28, 1939 and its secret additional note of the same day, in *Reichsgesetzblatt II*, 1940, p. 4. See also, H. MICHAELIS - E. SCHRAEPLER (eds), *Ursachen und Folgen. Vom Zusammenbruch 1918 und 1945 zur staatlichen Neuordnung in der Gegenwart. Eine Urkunden- und Quellensammlung zur Zeitgeschichte*, 25 vols, Berlin 1958-1977, vol. 24: *Das Dritte Reich. Der Angriff auf Polen. Die Ereignisse Winter 1939-1940*, pp. 47-48, 90-99.

<sup>21</sup> *Verlobungs- und Heiratsbefehl des Reichsführers SS*, SS-Befehl A N. 65 vom 31.12.1931, Bundesarchiv (hereafter: BA), Berlin, NS 2/174, p. 125.

The classification took into account rather basic features like color of the hair, of the eyes, of the skin, shape of the skull, ears and nose, height, weight et cetera. These features were registered on a special form, the so-called «race card» (*Rassenkarte*) and transformed into the «race formula» (*Rassenformel*) that corresponded to the alleged «racial worth» of the individual. For example, an SS-candidate had to meet at least the formula A III, which meant that he was considered a «well-balanced mixed-breed with Dinarian or Western racial elements and acceptable physique» («ausgeglichenen Mischling mit dinarisch oder westischen Rassenanteilen mit genügendem Körperbau»)<sup>22</sup>.

After the Polish Campaign the same racial selection procedure was applied to masses of civilians and became an important element in the plan to reconstruct and redefine the annexed regions of Western Poland as exclusively German. By the means of selection it was decided who should be considered «German» and who had to undergo «re-Germanization» due to his «racial value», or, in the words of the experts, who should be considered «wanted or unwanted population addition» («erwünschter oder unerwünschter Bevölkerungszuwachs»). Whereas SS racial experts had elaborated the concrete procedure and were responsible for the implementation on the spot Himmler himself had declared the necessity of such racial selections. At the end of 1939 already, during a visit at Łódź/Litzmannstadt, he had claimed:

«The racial selection should prevent the development of mongolian types in the newly colonized East. I plan to create a blond-haired country».

In his secret memorandum «On the treatment of alien peoples in the East» of May 28, 1940, the SS-Chief and RKF had requested that the «ethnic stew [*Völkerbrei*] of 15 million people in the General Government and of 8 millions in the Eastern provinces» should be «dissolved». Himmler wanted

«to select the racially valuable of this stew and send them to Germany for assimilation – based on the method of racial selection which has to be the foundation of all our planning»<sup>23</sup>.

Finally, in his order «on the screening and the selection of the population of the annexed territories» of September 12, 1940, the SS-Chief officially

<sup>22</sup> *Schema für die Bewertung des Erscheinungsbildes des SS-Bewerbers*, 30.3.1937, BA, NS 2/174, p. 60.

<sup>23</sup> Secret memo by H. HIMMLER, *Einige Gedanken über die Behandlung der Fremdvölkischen im Osten*, dated May 28, 1940, in H. MICHAELIS - E. SCHRAEPLER (eds), *Ursachen und Folgen*, vol. 24, pp. 128-131.

declared the racial selections the guideline of population policy in the annexed territories and in the General Government<sup>24</sup>.

The concept that inspired these large-scale racial selections of civilians was rather simple – but efficient and to a certain extent flexible. A fundamental and aggressive anti-Semitism was combined with the belief in a strictly hierarchical system of «racial value». Specifically, these SS experts preferred their notion of «measurable», and, thus, «rational racial value» to the more traditional category of *Volkszugehörigkeit*<sup>25</sup>. They considered a tall blond blue – eyed Pole suitable for re-Germanization due to his alleged German roots.

Furthermore, this ideology of racially based «Germandom» served to justify the ongoing «ethnic reconstruction» which comprised the expulsion and deportation of many – in the name of a Greater Germany, racially pure, with German settlements to secure its Eastern borders. Nevertheless, one must keep in mind that this implementation of racial ideology into concrete population policy took place under the conditions of war and had to be synchronized with the requests of occupation policy.

### 3. *The Plans made by the RKF and the Security Police for the «ethnic reconstruction» of occupied Europe and the principle of racial selection*

On May 28, 1942, the agricultural scientist and settlement planner Konrad Meyer, head of the planning office of the RKF, sent Heinrich Himmler a brief summary of his far-reaching plan for the ethnic-political reorganization of Eastern Europe, entitled *Kurze Zusammenfassung der Denkschrift Generalplan Ost*. The original memo, entitled *Generalplan Ost. Rechtliche, wirtschaftliche und räumliche Grundlagen des Ostaufbaus*, reached Himmler

<sup>24</sup> H. HIMMLER, *Erlaß für die Überprüfung und Aussonderung der Bevölkerung in den eingegliederten Ostgebieten*, dated September 12, 1940, in: United States Holocaust Museum, RG-48.005, *Selected Records of the State Archive in Prag, Office of the Reichsprotector*, I - 3b 5090, carton 365.

<sup>25</sup> Which, due to National Socialist point of view, could be assumed if the person in question spoke the German language, was of protestant faith and a member of Nazi organizations. Especially the representatives of the Party and civil administration adhered to this concept of «Germandom», whereas the SS tried to impose their harsher racial criteria. See, for instance, Gauleiter Albert Forster's concept of Germanization policy in Danzig-Western Prussia and Heinrich Himmler's effort to get the reluctant Gauleiter «back in line»: D. SCHENK, *Hitlers Mann in Danzig: Albert Forster und die NS-Verbrechen in Danzig-Westpreußen*, Bonn 2000, pp. 205-212.

a few days later<sup>26</sup>. Himmler, SS-Chief and RKF, had asked Konrad Meyer to develop this plan to promote the Germanization of the occupied territories.

Due to the resettlement planners in Konrad Meyer's staff, wide-range expulsions and economic exploitation of the local population (of occupied Poland, parts of the Soviet Union and the Baltics) were necessary as well as the settlement of ethnic Germans or Germans from the Old Reich in the regions in question. These measures were designed to enforce and preserve the German dominance in the respective areas. Whereas the Nazis considered the enslavement and starvation of millions of civilians a side effect of this policy, they insisted on the extermination of the entire Jewish population of the territories in question as the basic requirement of population policy.

What we call the «Generalplan Ost» is in fact a larger complex of resettlement planning set up by the planning office of the RKF under the direction of Konrad Meyer and by the Office for ethnic questions of the Reich Security Main Office (Amt III B Volkstum). We need to distinguish at least four different steps of planning: First, the *Planungsgrundlagen für den Aufbau der Ostgebiete* elaborated by the RKF at the beginning of 1940 targeted an «ethnic reconstruction» of the annexed Polish West<sup>27</sup>. Second, we have the *Generalplan Ost* of the RSHA of November 1941, which proposed racial selections and expulsions of the local population of Eastern Poland, the Baltic, Belarus, and Ukraine. The original is lost, but we possess a detailed record of this RSHA-concept written by Erhard Wetzel, a resettlement expert of the Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories (Reichsministerium für die besetzten Ostgebiete, RMO)<sup>28</sup>. Third, there is the above-mentioned *Generalplan Ost* of the RKF of Mai 1942 offering a resettlement-concept for all of Eastern Europe. Finally, the so-called *Generalsiedlungsplan* (General Settlement Plan) of the RKF of

<sup>26</sup> *Kurze Zusammenfassung der Denkschrift Generalplan Ost*, attached to a letter by Konrad Meyer to Himmler, dated May 28, 1942; *Generalplan Ost. Rechtliche, wirtschaftliche und räumliche Grundlagen des Ostaufbaus*, sent to Himmler on June 2, 1942 via Ulrich Greifelt, the head of the RKF Main Office, in C. MADAJCZYK, *Vom Generalplan Ost zum Generalsiedlungsplan*, München 1994, pp. 85-130.

<sup>27</sup> *Planungsgrundlagen für den Aufbau der Ostgebiete*, in C. MADAJCZYK, *Generalplan Ost*, pp. 1-14.

<sup>28</sup> Secret memo by the racial expert of the RMO, E. WETZEL, *Stellungnahme und Gedanken zum Generalplan Ost des Reichsführers SS*, dated April 27, 1942, in C. MADAJCZYK, *Generalplan Ost*, pp. 50-81.

1942/43 that was finished only in part integrated parts of Western and South Eastern Europe in to the Germanization proposals<sup>29</sup>.

All four concepts make use of three main arguments. First, they reflect an ultra-racism and plan large-scale expulsions of people of «low racial value» either to far-away regions of Eastern Europe – with a maximum of about 31 million people – or projected forced resettlements on the spot. Second, they propose the settlement of Germans and people of «German descent» as well as the enslavement of the local population. One of the texts demands that 14 million slave laborers should be exploited in favor of Germanism. Finally, they do not explicitly mention the fate of the Jewish population. As the plans were set up for a period of 20 to 30 years, the planners expected «the Jewish problem» to be solved by then. Thus, the Jews would not need any settlement space at all<sup>30</sup>.

In order to analyze the extent to which the whole concept of «ethnic settlement» rested on the categories of «racial value» it is necessary to take into account the different phases of the planning. Since winter 1939, racial screening took place in Western Poland as the fundamental guideline of «Germanization» policy. The first document to propose racial selections also for the inhabitants of entire Eastern Europe was the *Generalplan Ost* of the RSHA of November 1941 as reported by Erhard Wetzel. This concept targeted the «Germanization» of Western Poland, the General Government and the region of Białystok, the Baltics, Western Ukraine, and the Western part of Belorussia (Weißruthenien) within the next 30 years. No less than 4,5 million German settler families should settle in these territories. At the same time about 31 (of 45) million racially unwanted people of non-German origin («rassisch unerwünschte Fremdvölkische») were to be deported, mainly to labor camps in Western Siberia under control of the Security Police<sup>31</sup>. Those considered fit for re-Germanization

<sup>29</sup> *Material zum Generalsiedlungsplan und Unterlagen für einen Generalsiedlungsplan*, sent to Himmler by the Stabshauptamt RKF on December 23, 1942, in C. MADAJCZYK, *Generalplan Ost*, pp. 234-255.

<sup>30</sup> See, for instance, the memo by Erhard Wetzel dated April 1942, who argues that no further planning for the expulsion and resettlement of the Jewish population was needed due to the ongoing «final solution of the Jewish question», in C. MADAJCZYK, *Generalplan Ost*, p. 60.

<sup>31</sup> As stated by Erhard Wetzel, the document provided the following deportation quotas: 80-85 % of the Poles, 65 % of the Ukrainians (Western Ukraine) and 75 % of the inhabitants of Western Belarus (Weißruthenien), Wetzel-Memo dated April 1942, in C. MADAJCZYK, *Der Generalplan Ost*.

due to their alleged «racial value» should be given permission to remain in their country of origin – other than the «racially valuable Poles» of Western Poland whom the SS sent to Germany for re-education and labor service<sup>32</sup>.

This RSHA-draft was the result of an intensive exchange of views of the settlement experts of the SS. For example, the head of the Resettlement Central Office (UWZ) in Poznań, Rolf-Heinz Höppner, had suggested already in autumn 1941 that a greater German settlement space should be created in Eastern Europe by means of racial selection and consequent expulsion of the unwanted and the resettlement of Germans. In addition to the «final solution of the Jewish question» he demanded the «expulsion of those parts of the Eastern and South-Eastern population [*Ost und Südost-Völker*] that were deemed racially unfit for Germanization [*rassisch nicht rückdeutschungsfähig*]». Furthermore, Höppner requested pre-registration of the entire population of the regions under occupation on racial grounds. By this, he wanted to make sure that all people considered «racially unwanted» as well as those considered «anti-social», sick or unfit for work were evacuated immediately. Although he took into account the needs of economy and labor, Höppner nevertheless insisted that the criterion of «racial value» was the most important guideline of the resettlement process. The only unsolved question remained the fate of the unwanted Slavs and people of South-Eastern Europe. Höppner demanded a decision

«whether it is the objective of our policy to guarantee these people a modest existence or if they all are assigned for extermination»<sup>33</sup>.

We can retain from these remarks that, in autumn 1941, – when the fate of the European Jewry was already sealed – it was by no means clear how to deal with millions of unwanted Slavs, the two options being either extermination or resettlement in Siberia<sup>34</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> Wetzel-Memo dated April 1942, cf. C. MADAJCZYK, *Der Generalplan Ost*.

<sup>33</sup> SS-Sturmabführer Rolf-Heinz Höppner on September 2, 1941 on the organization of the UWZ, in C. MADAJCZYK, *Generalplan Ost*, pp. 392-398.

<sup>34</sup> For the current state of the historiographical debate around the decision-making-process towards the «final solution» in autumn and winter 1941, see C. BROWNING, *The Path to Genocide. Essays on Launching the Final Solution*, Cambridge MA 1992; P. LONGERICH, *Politik der Vernichtung. Eine Gesamtdarstellung der nationalsozialistischen Judenverfolgung*, München - Zürich 1998; P. LONGERICH, *Der ungeschriebene Befehl. Hitler und der Weg zur «Endlösung»*, München - Zürich 2002; C. GERLACH, *Die Wannsee-Konferenz, das Schicksal der deutschen Juden und Hitlers politische Grundsatzentscheidung, alle Juden Europas zu ermorden*, in «*Werkstatt Geschichte*», 18, 1997, pp. 7-44.

At the beginning of 1942, a group of settlement experts from RSHA, RuSHA, RKF and the Reich Ministry of the Occupied Eastern Territories discussed this problem with regard to the planned «Germanization» of the Baltics. RuSHA-official Bruno Kurt Schultz demanded that the «racially unwanted» should be sent to Siberia and met the consent of his SS-colleagues. Thereby, SS-planners opposed the suggestion of the Reich Ministry to exploit and then kill the racially unwanted Balts «on the spot» as forced labor («die Unerwünschten an Ort und Stelle zu verschrotten»). Instead, they preferred the idea of an «evacuation to Siberia» that should be declared «voluntary resettlement». In the far-away regions of Western Siberia the unwanted Balts should serve as a kind of «middle class» – superior to the Russian Slavs and subordinate to the «German master-race»<sup>35</sup>.

Compared to the RSHA-plan of November 1941, the *Generalplan Ost* of the RKF of Mai 1942 planned in a more moderate way. Konrad Meyer and his settlement experts focused on three settlement areas (*Siedlungsmarken*) for the Baltics, Ukraine, and the region around Leningrad and proposed a chain of 36 settlement bases throughout Eastern Europe. In order to make these territories German (including the annexed Polish West) they requested a total of 4,8 million German settlers during a period of 25 years. To meet this demand for settlers, the planners relied on a «resettler reserve» of allegedly no less then 5,65 million settlers, consisting of settlers from the Old Reich, ethnic Germans, Germanic settlers, Balts, and a specific fraction of the population of Eastern Poland (a «mountain race» called «Goralen» which was considered of high racial standard).

In their calculations, the RKF-planners were more generous than their colleagues from the RSHA, who had estimated a smaller number of German settlers available. The main difference between the two settlement plans consisted in the treatment they proposed for the «unwanted». The RKF-planners did not demand extensive expulsions of the local population but planned to strictly reduce the urban population and to resettle some of the farmers on land confiscated from the former Soviet state farms. The guideline for the reduction of the local population now shifted from «evacuation to Siberia» to extermination as forced labor and through

<sup>35</sup> Secret memo by the racial expert of the RMO, E. WETZEL, *Über die Sitzung am 4.2.1942 bei Dr. Kleist über die Fragen der Eindeutschung, insbesondere in den baltischen Ländern*, dated February 7, 1942, NO - 2585, in H. HEIBER, *Der Generalplan Ost*, in «Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte», 6, 1958, pp. 292-296.

starvation. For the region of Leningrad alone, a reduction of the population of no less than 3 million people was foreseen<sup>36</sup>.

Immediately after having read the *Generalplan Ost* of May/June 1942, which found his principal consent, Himmler asked Konrad Meyer to expand the concept towards an «European settlement plan» (Europäischer Gesamtsiedlungsplan). Himmler wanted to include not only the annexed Western Polish territories, the General Government, the Baltics, and parts of the Soviet Union, but also Alsace-Lorraine, Upper Carnolia, and South Styria as well as Bohemia and Moravia. Furthermore, he ordered the complete «Germanization» of Estonia, Latvia and the General Government – only Lithuania with its population of «especially low racial value» was not considered. The SS-Chief urged the planners to reduce the settlement period foreseen (25 to 30 years) to a new maximum of 20 years<sup>37</sup>. The «general settlement planning» set up in the following months was a synthesis of the former proposals of RSHA and RKF on a broader scale. But not everything ran smoothly. In the second half of 1942 the fundamental gap between the number of settlers needed for the «Germanization» process and the modest number of Germans available or willing to settle in the «German East» began to endanger the whole planning. The only possible solution at this point was to rely more and more ruthlessly on the exploitation of the local population – as did the planners. The population of the occupied regions was forced to participate in the «reconstruction of the territories» (*Aufbauwerk*) – either as forced labor or as «future Germans», carefully selected and designed for assimilation. This was the hour of SS racial experts<sup>38</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> See *Kurze Zusammenfassung der Denkschrift Generalplan Ost* and *Generalplan Ost. Rechtliche, wirtschaftliche und räumliche Grundlagen des Ostaufbaus*, in C. MADAJCZYK, *Generalplan Ost*, pp. 85-130.

<sup>37</sup> See Himmler's letter to the head of the Stabshauptamt RKF, Ulrich Greifelt, of June 12, 1942 on the *Generalplan Ost*, in IMT, NO - 2255, see also C. MADAJCZYK, *Generalplan Ost*, pp. 133-134. The most important fragments of the general settlement plan are the drafts *Material zum Generalsiedlungsplan* and *Unterlagen für einen Generalsiedlungsplan*, sent to Himmler on December 23, 1942 by the Stabshauptamt RKF. Officially, the planning was stopped no earlier than August 1943.

<sup>38</sup> The draft *Aufgaben und Aufgabenverteilung zur Weiterbearbeitung des Generalplanes Ost* of Juli 28, 1942 listed the different areas of the planning and recorded contribution of the various SS-institutions. The SD, for example, had to define the new settlement grounds for the unwanted and to control the expulsion of the unwanted non-Germans of the German settlement areas. The RuSHA had to decide if some of the non-Germans were «racially suitable for Germanization». Cf. S. RÖSSLER - S. SCHLEIERMACHER (eds), «*Der Generalplan*



Heinrich Himmler himself reflected this position when he presented his revised settlement concept for the Eastern territories during a speech at his field headquarter near Shitomir, Ukraine in September 1942. He explained to the local SS- and police chiefs that in the next 20 years he wanted to establish German settlements not only in the annexed Polish West and the General Government, but also in the Western parts of Belarus, as well as in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, the region around Leningrad and the Crimea. For the other occupied regions of the Soviet Union, Himmler ordered the construction of fortified German settlement posts at crossings of roads and railways («deutsche Siedlungsperlen»). Himmler demanded:

«This German East as far as the Ural has to be the nursery/plantation [*Pflanzstätte*] of German blood so that in 400 to 500 years there will live 500 to 600 million Germans and Germanic people instead of 120 million»<sup>39</sup>.

This concept of Germanization and «settlement pearls» – as Himmler put it – had three main features. First, Himmler planned the enslavement and exploitation of the local population. Second, he wanted to assimilate all persons of «racial value» and transform them into a «greater Germanic people». Third, the SS-Chief urged the Germans in these areas to protect and the same time pass on their «German blood» and to expand the «German master race». He told his Police Leaders:

«The first guideline you have to retain is the following: If you happen to find a drop of 'good blood' somewhere in the East, you either have to win him for the German people or you have to kill him».

In making the «racial value» of a person the decisive factor for his further treatment by the German occupiers, Himmler once again stressed the priority of the SS *vis-à-vis* the civil government – as all racial selections were the task of the race experts of the SS. Himmler's Shitomir speech as well as his guidelines for a European *Generalsiedlungsplan* demonstrate that SS settlement experts had adopted a rather global perspective by the end of 1942. Unaffected by the numerous practical problems the experts made plans for a Greater Europe under German domination with German settlements from Alsace-Lorraine up to the Ural. With regard to the existing settler shortage and the needs of wartime economy, they proposed even a stricter racial selection to filter settlers, soldiers, and slave laborers out of the local population.

*Ost». Hauptlinien der nationalsozialistischen Planungs- und Vernichtungspolitik*, Berlin 1993, pp. 20-24.

<sup>39</sup> Speech by Heinrich Himmler in front of the SS- and Police Leaders in Russia South at Hegewald, Ukraine, BA, NS, 19, 4009.

#### 4. *Implementation of the «ethnic resettlement»: racial selection, expulsion, extermination*

Obviously, not all of these far-reaching plans were fully implemented. But nevertheless, the settlement plans of the SS did lead to large-scale forced population movements all over occupied Europe in order to «make the occupied territories German».

In the process of «ethnic cleansing» resettlement and extermination went hand in hand<sup>40</sup>. In order to «win back for the German people» the annexed Western Polish territories by means of German settlement, Poles and Jews were ruthlessly evicted from their property. More than half a million Jews from the annexed Polish West lost their lives during Nazi occupation, they were deported to the General Government, crowded into ghettos and later killed in extermination camps<sup>41</sup>. The Poles were forced above all to leave the rural regions of the new Eastern *Gau*. They were either deported to the General Government, sent to the Old Reich as forced labor or at least deprived of their property, which was handed over to German settlers, and left in their *Gau*.

For example, during World War II, about 800,000 Poles from annexed Western Poland lost their homes and property because of the attempts of «ethnic homogenization»<sup>42</sup>. Some 250,000 had been deported to the General Government, a further 310,000 being simply «displaced to relatives in the same Gau». One of the former was Anton W., farmer in Emilow in

<sup>40</sup> For a recent definition of the term «ethnic cleansing» as it is employed here, see N. NAIMARK, *Fires of Hatred. Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe*, Cambridge MA - London 2001, pp. 2-5.

<sup>41</sup> Frank Gloczewski gives the figure of about 550,000 Jews living in the Polish West in 1939, only some ten thousands of whom survived. Another 200,000 Jews of the Białystok district that became part of eastern Prussia in 1941 were killed as well. In all, nearly three million Polish Jews were killed by the Nazis, more than two million in extermination camps, only about 300,000 Jews from Poland survived the Holocaust. F. GOLCZEWSKI, *Polen*, in W. BENZ (ed.), *Dimensionen des Völkermords. Die Zahl der jüdischen Opfer des Nationalsozialismus*, München 1996, p. 495; M. GILBERT, «*Endlösung*» *Die Vertreibung und Vernichtung der Juden*. Ein Atlas, Reinbeck bei Hamburg 1995, pp. 242-244, R. HILBERG, *Die Vernichtung der europäischen Juden*, vol. 3, Frankfurt a.M. 1997, p. 1293.

<sup>42</sup> A number of nearly one million expelled Poles is offered by Czesław Madajczyk in his fundamental study on Nazi Occupation Policy in Poland. But this figure comprises at least 110,000 Jewish deportees of the first phase of expulsions and another 110,000 evacuees of the Zamóść region in the General Gouvernment. See C. MADAJCZYK, *Die Okkupationspolitik Nazideutschlands in Polen, 1939-1945*, Berlin 1987, chart 15.

the Warthegau. In the summer of 1940, his farmstead was sequestered by the SS and turned over to an ethnic German family from Wolhynia. Anton and his wife and daughter were deported to the General Government to Szydłów near Petrikau, where they had to work as farmhands. When Anton came back to his village in the Warthegau to visit his old farm and to see his son, whom he had left with his sister, the local police arrested Anton. Any kind of return was strictly forbidden<sup>43</sup>. Another 200,000 persons had been transferred to the Old Reich as labor supply and a small group of about 35,000 had been selected as «racially superior» and sent to Germany for re-education<sup>44</sup>. These *Wiedereindeutschungsfähige* came to the Old Reich hoping for better living conditions and treatment as Germans – as the racial experts and settlement personnel had promised them. In most cases, as we know from a collection of more than 1,000 letters sent to the RuSHA in Łódź, their hopes were bitterly disappointed and their German employers treated them simply as Polish labor force. One farmer from the Warthegau who was now working as a farmhand on a farm in Württemberg reported in 1941:

«With sorrow and regret I have to let you know that he [the German Farmer, I. Heinemann] has slapped me in the face shouting 'you damned Pole [*verdammter Polacke*]'. If he continues to treat me this way, I will immediately ask for deportation to the General Government. There nobody will discriminate us»<sup>45</sup>.

Furthermore, in return for the Poles and Jews, about one million ethnic Germans from abroad arrived in the annexed territories during the war<sup>46</sup>. Only some of them were settled on farms, which had previously belonged to Polish farmers, most of them had to face years in provisional resettler-

<sup>43</sup> Interrogation of Anton W. by the Gendarmerieposten Belchatow, Distrikt Lask, of October 10, 1940, Archiwum Państwowe (hereafter: AP) w Łodzi, 205, 2/24 // L-3664, p. 20.

<sup>44</sup> Letter of RSHA, III B 4 to RuSHA and RKF, *Bericht über die Eindeutschung von rassistisch wertvollen Fremdstämmigen*, dated December 19, 1942, Archiwum Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu (hereafter: AGK), Warszawa 167/38, pp. 11-21; Letter by Ulrich Greifelt of the RKF Staff Main Office to the HSSPF on the treatment of persons deemed «fit for re-Germanization» (*Wiedereindeutschungsfähige*), BA, R 49/73, pp. 142-143; see also the monthly reports of the RuSHA Branch Office in Łódź from December 31, 1941 to April 31, 1944, AGK, 167/6.

<sup>45</sup> Letter by Heinrich S. from Ulmenhofen, Württemberg, to the RuSHA Branch Office in Łódź on January 1, 1941, AGK, 167/32, p. 1.

<sup>46</sup> The Chief of Sipo and SD, EWZ, II B 1, *Durchschleusungsergebnisse der Einwandererzentralstelle, Stand vom 30. November 1944*, dated December 11, 1944, AP w Łodzi 204, 2/11, p. 74.

camps in the annexed territories or in the Old Reich<sup>47</sup>. Another two million ethnic Germans already living in the occupied Western Polish territories were registered in the Ethnic German People's List (Deutsche Volksliste, DVL) and many of them had to face classification on racial grounds by the SS experts, especially in the Warthegau and Eastern Prussia<sup>48</sup>.

Although most efforts of «strengthening the German people» occurred there, forced resettlement and expulsion was nevertheless not limited to Western Poland. Corresponding to the overall range of the planning, other European regions were affected by forced population movements as well. In the General Government, especially in the Lublin District and in the region of Zamóść, at least 50,000 people were expelled in the course of «Germanization» measures from the end of 1942 until mid 1943<sup>49</sup>. The troops of the ruthless SS- and Police Chief Odilo Globocnik crowded the people of the Zamość region into camps, SS experts screened them racially and decided whether they should be sent to the Old Reich as laborers or assigned for exploitation and extermination<sup>50</sup>. Some were kept as labor

<sup>47</sup> See V.O. LUMANS, *Himmler's Auxiliaries: the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle and the German National Minorities of Europe, 1933-1945*, Chapel Hill NC - London 1993; D. BERGEN, *Family Ties. Volksdeutsche of Men in the SS*, Paper given on the 25th Conference of the German Studies Association in Washington DC 2001. On the treatment of ethnic Germans see also the contribution of Rainer U.W. Schultze in this volume.

<sup>48</sup> On the racial selection of the members of Group III and IV of the German People's List (DVL), see I. HEINEMANN, *Rassenpolitik*, and *Another Type of Perpetrator*. On the German People's List in general, see the source-collection by K.M. POSPIEZALSKI, *Niemiecka Lista Narodowa w «Kraju Warthy»* (Documenta Occupationis, 4), Poznań 1949.

<sup>49</sup> Some historians have even provided the number of 100,000 which I consider exaggerated. See C. MADAJCZYK, *Okkupationspolitik*, chart 15; B. WASSER, *Himmlers Raumplanung im Osten: der Generalplan Ost in Polen 1940-1944*, Basel u.a. 1993. Bruno Wasser argues that the Zamóść-experiment needs to be considered the first implementation phase of the *Generalplan Ost*. It was the first big settlement action not carried out in the Western Polish territories and characterized by extreme brutality, leading to ruthless «anti-partisan» measures against entire villages. Wasser distinguishes two periods, the period of extermination and the period of pacification. B. WASSER, *Die «Germanisierung» im Distrikt Lublin als Generalprobe und erste Realisierungsphase des «Generalplans Ost»*, in M. RÖSSLER - S. SCHLEIERMACHER (eds), *Der «Generalplan Ost»*, pp. 271-293.

<sup>50</sup> On the crucial role of police-chief Odilo Globocnik who had elaborated his own concept of making the General Government a German territory and who received considerable support by Heinrich Himmler, see B. MUSIAL, *The Origins of «Operation Reinhard»: The Decision-Making Process for the Mass Murder of the Jews in the Generalgouvernement*, in «Yad Vashem Studies», 27, 2000, pp. 113-153; M. ESCH, *Das SS-Mannschaftsbaus in Lublin und die Forschungsstelle für Ostunterkünfte*, in G. AIX et al. (eds), *Modelle für ein deutsches Europa. Ökonomie und Herrschaft im Großwirtschaftsraum* (Beiträge zur nationalsozialistischen

force in the district or deported to the concentration camps of Auschwitz and Majdanek for forced labor and later annihilation. The Polish doctor Josef Rembacz reported on his expulsion during his interrogation before a Polish court in 1946:

«Poles from the Zamość region were expelled by force in October 1942. Me, together with other Poles from Skierbiszowo (where I lived and worked as doctor at the local health office) were brought to the camp of Zamość. A commission, consisting of numerous members, effectuated a racial screening in this camp ... The people were divided into four groups. I and II were the following groups: *Nordisch* and *Fälisch, Süddinarisch*; these two groups were brought into the ethnic German resettler camp in Łódź for special examination. Group III consisted of 'racial mixed-breeds' [*Mischrasen*], this group was turned over to a commission of the labor administration and the families were split up and sent to Germany for work ... Group IV, people with hereditary diseases or physical deformations as well as unwanted races (Jews, Sinti and Roma, Mongoles) were sent to a unknown destination, most likely to Auschwitz. I know, that nobody of this group ever returned»<sup>51</sup>.

The outcome of this resettlement action was an increase in terror and exploitation of the civil population, but not the large German settlement originally intended. Entire villages were devastated and the former inhabitants rounded up as forced labor. Instead of 50 to 60,000 settler families, as the SS had planned, barely 10,000 ethnic German settlers moved into the former homes of the Polish evacuees.

It is also important to note that the Zamość-operation was closely linked to the «final solution» in the General Government. When Himmler came to Lublin in Juli 1942, he discussed not only the plans to transform the district into a German settlement (he wanted a German quarter in the city of Lublin and the concentration of the ethnic German population in the regions of Zamość and Lublin). The Reichsführer-SS also set up the schedule for the annihilation of the Jewish inhabitants of the district with Globocnik and Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, the HSSPF of the General Government. He insisted on a speedy termination of the «Aktion Reinhard», the mass murder of the Jews of the General Government that had started

Gesundheits- und Sozialpolitik, 10), Berlin 1992, pp. 206-207. On Himmlers support for the Germanization of the Lublin District, see his *Dienstkalender* for the dates of 20.7.1941, 18.-20.7.1942, in P. WITTE (ed.), *Der Dienstkalender Heinrich Himmlers 1941/42*, Hamburg 1999, pp. 185-188, 493-497. On the racial selections of the Polish civilians and their fate ranging from deportation to the Auschwitz labor camp to transport to the Old Reich for Germanization, see AGK, 167/6 and I. HEINEMANN, *Rassenpolitik*.

<sup>51</sup> Interrogation of Dr. Josef Rembacz before the central commission for the investigation of German crimes in Poland in Łódź on April 25, 1946, Staatsarchiv Nürnberg, NO - 5266.

already in spring 1942<sup>52</sup>. Himmler ordered Krüger to make sure «that the resettlement of the entire Jewish Population of the General Government is implemented and completed by December 31, 1942»<sup>53</sup>. As Peter Witte has recently demonstrated, in December 1942 nearly 1,3 million Polish Jews had already perished in the extermination camps of the General Government, Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka and in Majdanek<sup>54</sup>. When the expulsion of the Poles began in the Zamość region, the Jews of the district were no longer there – a devilish precondition for the «Germanization» experiment.

In the Shitomir district in Ukraine, close to Himmler's field headquarter Hegewald, another settlement experiment took place in 1942/43<sup>55</sup>. Instead of making the entire Shitomir district German territory, Himmler planned to create German «settlement pearls» corresponding to the already existing SS- and police bases (SS- und Polizeistützpunkte) in Western Ukraine. Even under the conditions of total war the settlement experts of RKF concentrated over 30,000 ethnic Germans from German villages all over Ukraine in two German settlement complexes near Shitomir, Hegewald and Försterstadt. To free dwellings and villages for the ethnic Germans, the SS and police forces expelled about 15.000 Ukrainians, mostly to the district of Dnjepopetrowsk<sup>56</sup>. Again, the Jews of the region had already been killed before settlement began in November 1942<sup>57</sup>. During the expulsions,

<sup>52</sup> On the mass murder of the Jews in the General Government see B. MUSIAL, *Origins of the «Operation Reinhard»*; B. MUSIAL, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung und Judenverfolgung im Generalgouvernement. Eine Fallstudie zum Distrikt Lublin 1939-1944*, Wiesbaden 1999; D. POHL, *Von der «Judenpolitik» zum Judenmord. Der Distrikt Lublin des Generalgouvernements 1939-1944*, Frankfurt a.M. 1993.

<sup>53</sup> Order by Heinrich Himmler to Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger of Juli 19, 1942, cf. *Dienstkalender*, p. 496.

<sup>54</sup> The exact number that Hermann Höfle, SS-Sturmabführer in Odilo Globocniks SSPF-Staff in Lublin, reported to Eichmann and to the *Sipo* in Cracow was 1,274,166 Jewish victims by the end of December 1942, P. WITTE - S. THYAS, *A New Document on the Deportation and Murder of Jews during «Einsatz Reinhardt» 1942*, in «Holocaust and Genocide Studies», 15, 2001, 3, pp. 468-486.

<sup>55</sup> W. LOWER, *A New Ordering of Space and Race: Nazi Colonial Dreams in Zhytomyr, Ukraine (1941-1944)*, forthcoming.

<sup>56</sup> Report of the RKF-official in Hegewald, SS-Standartenführer Theodor Henschel to Heinrich Himmler on November 25, 1942 on the resettlement measures in the Generalbezirk Shitomir, BA, R 49/2427.

<sup>57</sup> D. POHL, *Einsatzgruppe C*, in P. KLEIN (ed.), *Die Einsatzgruppen in der besetzten Sowjetunion, Die Tätigkeits- und Lageberichte der Chefs der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD 1941/42*,

the Ukrainian farmers lost most of their possessions and were left without any means to earn their living. As an immediate consequence, partisan activity in the region increased considerably<sup>58</sup>. Further settlement efforts were made at the Crimea 1942/43, where a SS-task force tried to lay the groundwork for further German settlement after the war and established German schools and training farms (SS-Lehrbetriebe)<sup>59</sup>.

Different waves of mass expulsions to France occurred in Alsace and Lorraine. First, the Jewish population was sent to the concentration camps in Vichy France in autumn 1942, comprising a total of 22,000 Jews from Alsace and several hundreds from Lorraine<sup>60</sup>. Second, parts of the French population and those who were considered «hostile to the German occupants» were deported to France in November 1940, altogether about 200,000 persons (95,000 Lorrainers, 120,000 Alsations; comprising the Jews). Finally, 20,000 to 30,000 Alsations and Lorrainers considered «racially fit for Germanization» were sent to the Old Reich where they were kept in re-education camps in a second wave of expulsions and deportations from October 1942 to mid-1943<sup>61</sup>. One of them was Marie-Louise Roth-Zimmermann, who experienced deportation from Alsace to a «re-Germanization camp» in Württemberg in October 1942 together with her parents. They were pro-French Alsations, but considered «of high racial value», and the SS brought them to Germany to make «proper Germans» of them again. In the camp of Schelklingen near Ulm, where she spent more than half a year, young Marie-Louise experienced ideological indoctrination as well as

Berlin 1997, pp. 71-87; M. DEAN, *Collaboration in the Holocaust. Crimes of the Local Police in Belorussia and Ukraine, 1941-44*, New York 2000, pp. 81-83, 169.

<sup>58</sup> Report by the RKF-official Theodor Henschel on his meeting with the Generalkommissar in Shitomir on March 19, 1943, BA, R 49/768; report by the Chief of the Försterstadt settlement on the partisan activity in his settlement region dated July 27, 1943, BA, R 49/760.

<sup>59</sup> Report of the SSPF Krim, Volksdeutsche Leitstelle, signed by SS-Sturmabführer Heinze on Mai 31, 1944, *Bericht über die Arbeitsergebnisse des vom R.f.d.F.d.V. dem SS-u. Polizeiführer f. d. Krim zugeteilten Kommandos zur Wahrnehmung der Aufgaben des Reichskommissars für die Festigung deutschen Volkstums in der Zeit vom Winter 1942/43 bis zum Frühjahr 1944*, BA, R 70 SU/35, pp. 2-27.

<sup>60</sup> R. HILBERG, *Vernichtung*, p. 647; D. WOLFANGER, *Die nationalsozialistische Politik in Lothringen (1940-1945)*, PhD, University of Saarbrücken, 1977, p. 146; L. KETTENACKER, *Nationalsozialistische Volkstumspolitik im Elsaß*, Stuttgart 1973, p. 252.

<sup>61</sup> Report by the chief of the SS-Bodenamt in Metz, Friedrich Brehm, on the expulsions in Lorraine of February 25, 1943, BA, R 49/79, pp. 5-25. Note of RKF-official Dr. Stier on a meeting of SS population experts where the treatment of expelled Alsations was discussed, dated August 7, 1941, IMT, 38, 114-R, pp. 330-334.

the difficult camp life behind barbed wire, which she described in a biographical report 50 years after the war<sup>62</sup>. Although the *Wiedereindeutschungsfähige* in this SS-camp (SS-Umerziehungslager) received a kind of preferred treatment that was not comparable to the fate of concentration camp inmates, they were nonetheless deprived of their personal freedom and belongings and obliged to work within the camp. Roth-Zimmermann recalls the speech held by camp major when they arrived at Schelklingen:

«He explained, since October 1942 Alsatian evacuees [*Absiedler*] were brought to the camp; it was a re-education camp for ethnic Germans that were of 'undeclared German origin' [*ungeklärt deutsch*] but considered 'suitable for re-Germanization' [*eindeutschungsfähig*]. We had acted pro-French and, thus, had to face a purification [*Läuterung*] ... The camp, as a re-education camp, would be a good school, we would work in teams on farms, in factories, or in the camp itself, to learn order and discipline»<sup>63</sup>.

In the Schelklingen camp Roth-Zimmermann met other Alsatian families, but also Balts, Poles, and Slovenes, as expulsion and resettlement also had affected some regions of South-Eastern Europe. In Upper Carnolia and Lower Styria, for instance, the SS racial experts racially screened more than half a million Slovenes in 1941, 10% of whom were finally expelled from their homes and crowded into camps in these regions. The SS brought another 10,000 to Germany for re-Germanization, for instance to the camp in Schelklingen<sup>64</sup>. In the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and in the Sudetenland the SS screened more than 50,000 people to check whether they were «fit for re-Germanization» or not. At least 15,000 persons lost their property in the course of the settlement plannings and the construction of military bases – not to count Jewish farmers and citizens who had to face expropriation – and another 6,000 Germans settled on property, which had previously belonged to Jews and Czechs<sup>65</sup>.

<sup>62</sup> M. ROTH-ZIMMERMANN, *Denk ich an Schelklingen ... Erinnerungen einer Elsässerin an die Zeit im SS-Umsiedlungslager (1942-1945)*, St. Ingbert 2001.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 57-58.

<sup>64</sup> Report by SS-Obersturmbannführer Bruno Kurt Schultz, leader of the Einsatzstelle Südost of the SS-Race and Settlement Main Office in Lower Styria, dated September 10, 1941, *Bericht über die Volks- und Rassenverhältnisse in der Untersteiermark*, in T. FERENC (ed.), *Quellen zur nationalsozialistischen Entnationalisierungspolitik in Slowenien 1941-1945*, Maribor 1981, pp. 247-261. Report by SS-Untersturmführer Thyarks on the racial worth of the Slovene population in Upper Carnolia, undated (1941), Státní Ústřední Archiv v Praze (SÚA), URP-dod II-56; report on the results of the racial screening in Upper Carnolia by Hans Koch, undated (1941), in T. FERENC, *Entnationalisierungspolitik*, pp. 348-349.

<sup>65</sup> On the Nazi Germanization Policy in the Protectorate see the forthcoming PhD by C. BRYANT, *Making the Czechlands German: Racism, Identity and the Homogenization of*



In all, millions lost their homes and property due to the processes of resettlement and expulsion and a comparatively small number of ethnic Germans and persons considered fit for «re-Germanization» was resettled onto the confiscated land. Finally, the entire «ethnic homogenization» based on the annihilation of the Jewish population as the fundamental precondition of the planning. Of course, these results of expulsion, resettlement, and extermination, as gruesome as they are, only represent what could be achieved under the conditions of total war.

The kind of total registration of the population (*totale Erfassung*)<sup>66</sup> originally intended by the SS population planners and resettlement experts can be studied, again, in the Warthegau. 37 officials of the Settlement Central Office (UWZ), comprising six SS racial examiners of RuSHA, screened the entire population of the Wollstein district over a period of 45 days in spring 1942. They considered 7% of the population «fit for re-Germanization» and deemed 76% as «only valuable as labor force». Another 8% were considered a «unwanted addition to the population» and 9% labeled «anti-social». Consequently, the SS experts proposed to exploit the biggest part of the Wollstein population simply as slave labor and kill another 17% (the «anti-social» and the «racially dangerous»), whereas the smallest part should «become German». The chief of the Central Settlement Office (UWZ), Hermann Krumei, insisted that only by such a harsh and «overall selection» the «solution of the question of purity of the German blood would be possible»<sup>67</sup>.

Himmler, in his speech of October 1943 in Posen, had in mind precisely this «purity of the German blood» that Krumei wanted to establish by

*Bohemia and Moravia, 1938-1948*, University of California at Berkeley; see also D. BRANDES, *Die Tschechen unter deutschem Protektorat*, 2 vols, München - Wien 1975; A. TEICHOWA, *Instruments of Economic Control and Exploitation: the German Occupation of Bohemia and Moravia*, in R. OVERY - G. OTTO - J. HOUWINK TEN CATE (eds), *Die «Neuordnung» Europas: NS-Wirtschaftspolitik in den besetzten Gebieten*, Berlin 1997, pp. 83-108.

<sup>66</sup> The overall-range of the Nazis' approach to register first the Jewish population of the Old Reich and later the population in the countries under German control has been documented and studied extensively by Götz Aly and Karl-Heinz Roth: G. ALY - K.H. ROTH, *Die restlose Erfassung. Volkszählen, Identifizieren, Aussondern im Nationalsozialismus*, Frankfurt a. M. 2000 (1948<sup>1</sup>); see also the study by Edwin Black on the widespread use of early computer technology (Hollerith, a system produced by DeHoMag, a daughter of IBM) to handle the different card indexes and registers: E. BLACK, *IBM und der Holocaust: die Verstrickung des Weltkonzerns in die Verbrechen der Nazis*, München 2001.

<sup>67</sup> Hermann Krumei, Chief of Sipo and SD, UWZ Posen, Branch Office Litzmannstadt, final report on the work of UWZ in the framework of the third evacuation plan («Dritter Nahplan») of December 31, 1942, BA, R 75/9, pp. 10-11.

overall selections of the non-German population, when he reflected on the East as a *Pflanzgarten* of pure Germanic blood and demanded a complete Germanization of the annexed territories. The only concession the Reichsführer-SS and Reichskommissar für die Festigung deutschen Volkstums wanted to make with regard to the current war effort and political situation was to integrate the «Germanic» people of corresponding «racial value», i.e. the Norwegians and Dutch, into this panorama. Thus, Himmler simply enlarged the notion of a Greater German Reich in the East into the idea of a greater «Germanic settlement», that should have its Eastern boarder up to 1,000 kilometers further east<sup>68</sup>. Despite the far-reaching and rather utopian character of these post-war plans one needs to retain that Himmler's race and settlement experts were making considerable effort to put these plans into practice and to implement «ethnic homogenization» on a large scale – already under the conditions of total war and with murderous consequences, especially for the European Jewry.

## 5. Conclusion

The category of «racial value» served as the central reference for the entire resettlement planning and Germanization policy. Not only the planners of RSHA and the Stabshauptamt RKF widely accepted the procedure of racial selection established by the SS racial experts. The central guidelines for «strengthening the German people» and transforming the occupied countries into a greater German settlement space were issued by Heinrich Himmler himself who also enforced their implementation. In his numerous decrees and speeches, the RKF continued to request the «racial reconstruction» of occupied Europe under the auspices of the SS. Thus, all master plans for population transfer – as for example the different drafts of the famous *Generalplan Ost* – always targeted an ethnic cleansing on a racial scale.

With regard to Nazi occupation policy especially in Eastern Europe but also in some regions of the West, we have to note that forced population movements and racial selections began already under the conditions of war. The most ruthless element in this attempt to establish a «racially purified» Europe was the persecution and finally mass murder of the Jews of Europe. Furthermore, other populations and national groups had to face expulsion,

<sup>68</sup> Secret speech of Heinrich Himmler in Posen, Warthegau, on October 24, 1943, in J. ACKERMANN, *Heinrich Himmler als Ideologe*, pp. 291-296.

deprivation of rights, confiscation of property, starvation, and exploitation as slave labor depending on their alleged «racial quality» as it was defined by the racial experts. Consequently, the «final solution» and the «ethnic reconstruction» of occupied Europe through resettlement and expulsion need to be considered as intertwined processes. For Himmler and his SS planners, the persecution of the Jews was the «negative side» of population policy, whereas «Germanization» and German settlement represented a long-time «positive goal». However, the latter also targeted the annihilation of millions considered of «low racial value» and was, in its racist intention, not necessarily less cruel.

Of course, this does not mean to neglect the singularity of the Holocaust or to question its dimension and criminal character. The fundamental difference between Nazi racial policies against Jews on the one hand and Slavs on the other consisted in the decree of totality that was applied in theory as well as in implementation. First, all Jews should perish without exception, whereas in the case of Poles, Ukrainians and Russians their fate should depend on their «racial worth». Second, the mass murder of the Jews of Europe was carried out to the bitter end, but the «Germanization» plans were only partially put into practice for the time being, as their complete implementation should follow after the war.

In this context, an observation made in one of the Nuremberg Trials still bears significance. During the so-called «RuSHA-case» (1947-1948), where representatives of the RKF and racial experts of the SS were on trial as leading figures of Nazi population policy, the prosecution declared the plans for and attempts of forced population movements and «Germanization» on racial grounds a program of genocide and concluded:

«These techniques of genocide, while neither so quick nor perhaps so simple as outright mass extermination, are by the very nature of things far more cruel and equally effective ... It is the enormity and far-reaching effects of these crimes, that gives this case its significance»<sup>69</sup>.

<sup>69</sup> Opening statement of the Prosecution, in *Trials of War Criminals before the Nuernberg Military Tribunals and Control Council Law N. 10*, München 1979, vol. IV, 2, p. 627.

