

# HITLER’S “GARDEN OF EDEN” IN UKRAINE

*Nazi Colonialism, Volksdeutsche,  
and the Holocaust, 1941–1944*

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The “New Order,” as the Nazis conceived it, entailed a racial classification and “cleansing” of Europe. Although Nazi population policies were aimed at all peoples who fell into German hands, Nazi leaders focused their resettlement and colonization programs on Eastern Europe, which was designated the ideal German “living space.” They were not only extremely exclusionary in their taxonomies of people but also narrowly selective in their view of “fertile” geographic spaces where Germans would thrive. As historian Gerhard Weinberg and others have stressed, the joining of race and space was central to the Nazi *Weltanschauung*.<sup>1</sup>

During World War II, the Germans implemented experimental colonial schemes in Poland and Ukraine. In Ukraine they concentrated their efforts in the central region of Zhytomyr at the Hegewald colony and in the southern regions of Dnepropetrovsk and Nikoleav at the Halbstadt and Nikopol colonies. The Hegewald colony was situated strategically in the “backyard” of Himmler and Hitler’s secret field headquarters at Vinnytsia and Zhytomyr. The Halbstadt and Nikopol colonies stretched across German civilian-

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and military-administered territories in southeastern Ukraine; additional SS-controlled German colonies dotted the Romanian-occupied area of former Soviet Ukraine, which was named Transnistria. In the latter half of 1941 and early 1942 these colonies were “ethnically cleansed” of their Jewish populations. Nearly all of the Jews who resided there for generations were massacred; the Ukrainians who were not retained as forced laborers on the *Volksdeutsche* (ethnic German) and SS-police colonies were deported to labor camps in eastern Ukraine or to the Reich. *Prima facie*, the logic of this destruction seems quite clear and consistent with a European pattern of imperial conquest, mass migration, forced deportations, and a genocidal “displacement” of the “native” population. However, the ideological and causal links between Nazi resettlement programs and the Holocaust were more tenuous even in the colonial context of Ukraine.

This essay focuses on the ambiguous relationship between Hitler’s utopian vision of the eastern territories as, in his words, a “Garden of Eden” and the concrete, “on-the-ground” reality of the implementation of the Holocaust and Nazi colonization programs in Ukraine.<sup>2</sup> It explores Nazi *Lebensraum* fantasies and colonialist ambitions in light of German anti-Jewish policies and *Volksdeutsche* resettlement. To what extent can we deepen understanding of the history of the Shoah by contextualizing it within a narrative of Nazi colonialism?

### Nazi Colonialist Thinking Toward Ukraine and Eastern Europe

Only a few works, such as Raphael Lemkin’s unpublished history of genocide and Hannah Arendt’s *Origins of Totalitarianism*, explored the relationship between Nazi imperialism, colonialism, and the Holocaust and its basis in European history. Ostensibly, in the pre-Hitler era the German race for colonies was a short-lived endeavor dating roughly from the Bismarckian era



Wartime film footage of the *Volksdeutsche* Colony Halbstadt, Nazi occupied Ukraine, date unknown. The author is grateful to David Furber, Regina Longo and Joshua Binder for bringing the German film to my attention and helping to secure these stills from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Film Archive. Reproduced with permission of the Buudesarchiv, Filmarchiv/Transit Film GmbH.

to the German defeat in World War I. Yet, as recent sociocultural studies in German history have shown, colonialist thinking in Germany developed from a longer European history of exploration, conquest, migration, and mass destruction of indigenous peoples.<sup>3</sup> Thus one finds in the speeches and writings about *Lebensraum* by Hitler, the leader of the SS Heinrich Himmler, and Reich Minister for the Eastern Territories Alfred Rosenberg references to the North American frontier, the British Empire in India, and the European exploitation of Africa's resources in the late nineteenth century.

The continuity of colonial metaphors of race and frontier combined with hierarchical population schemes and exploitive economic policies (especially forced labor practices) is indeed striking. Heinrich Himmler and his coterie of General Plan East planners described Eastern Europe as Germany's Californian paradise. Alfred Rosenberg encouraged his regional commissars in Ukraine to read colonial travelogues such as Nazi supporter Kurt Freber's *With My Backpack to India* (1927) and Schulz's *In the African Jungle* alongside antisemitic tracts such as Esser's *The Jewish World Plague* (1939).<sup>4</sup> In 1942, children in Hitler's Germany played a board game in which armed farmers competed for the fertile "black earth" of Ukraine.<sup>5</sup> Much more has been written about the colonial roots of Nazi racial science stemming from anthropologists and eugenicists who viewed Africa and Southeast Asia as their laboratories, namely, Eugen Fischer, whose early "fieldwork" included examining the skulls of slain Rehobother Bastards in German Southwest Africa. In the colonies the first debates over intermarriage or "racial mixing" between Germans and "inferior" Africans emerged in 1892, which gave rise to the notion of *Mischlinge*.<sup>6</sup>

The forced labor *Erziehung zur Arbeit* practices in the colonies and exploitive population policies of Wilhelmine colonial lobbyists such as Paul Rohrbach (1869–1956) also reappeared in a modified, more extreme form in Nazi-occupied Europe.<sup>7</sup> In 1942/43 Nazi economic developers established the Togo Ost Society in Zhytomyr, Ukraine, bringing state-controlled agricultural models from Africa to Eastern Europe. In addition to frontier fantasies, economic models, and ideas of race, the Nazis also transferred German Africans to Eastern Europe. In September 1943, as the Red Army advanced toward Poland, Nazi colonial enthusiasts "imported" German settlers from eastern Africa to the Warthegau. According to an account in the *Litzmannstädter Zeitung*, the German Africanists were happy to leave behind the monoculture farming of Africa and enjoy the rich soil and diverse crops of Polish farms. As model pioneers they were supposed to inspire European Germans who were reluctant to relocate to Poland.<sup>8</sup>

Militarily, the German Army and SS-police's application of total and guerrilla-style warfare and their overall veneration of violence had its antecedents in the colonial wars of Kaiser Wilhelm II's General Staff and World War I. During the Great War the Germans occupied Eastern Europe under General Ludendorff's *Ober Ost* administration and pursued empire building through social engineering. According to the recent study of Vejas Liulevicius, Ludendorff's *Verkehrspolitik* furthered the notion that the eastern

territories were not a “complicated weaving of lands and peoples, but of spaces and races to be ordered by German mastery and organization.”<sup>9</sup> Twenty years later Ludendorff’s successors in Hitler’s Third Reich returned to Eastern Europe to impose their own racial ordering of society. Nazi leaders may have drawn from European models of imperialism to develop their own revolutionary, criminal approach to colonization, but their fantasies, motivations, and policies were more closely tied to Germany’s own history of migration, especially to Eastern Europe.

In the coveted breadbasket of Ukraine the Nazis found territory ripe for German agricultural settlements.<sup>10</sup> Already in the early 1920s, Hitler and his cohorts argued for a new German foreign policy, which they described as a “soil policy of the future” rooted in Germany’s medieval history of migration to the east. In *Mein Kampf* Hitler wrote,

We National Socialists consciously draw a line beneath the foreign policy of our pre-War period. We take up where we broke off six hundred years ago. We stop the endless German movement to the south and west, and turn our gaze to the east. At long last we break off the colonial and commercial policy of the pre-War period and shift to the soil policy of the future.<sup>11</sup>

Combining atavistic “blood and soil” notions of utopia with modern state structures and methods, Hitler, Darré, and other Nazi ideologues played down overseas colonialism and concentrated instead on contiguous German settlements in Eastern Europe and especially Ukraine where the Aryan “soldier-peasant” tilled the soil with a weapon at his side, ready to defend the farm from the “Asian hordes.” As for the Ukrainians whom the Nazis pejoratively branded “Negroes,” Hitler remarked that the Germans would supply them “with scarves, glass beads and everything that colonial peoples like.”<sup>12</sup> After the Germans defeated Poland in autumn of 1939, the newly appointed Reich Commissar for the Strengthening of Germandom, Heinrich Himmler, was instructed “to give shape to the new German areas of colonization” by “eliminating harmful, alien elements from the German Volk and its living space,” and “to carry out the settlement of the *Volksdeutsche* on the designated lands.”<sup>13</sup> The concept and process of Germanization as Himmler described it was “not in the old sense of bringing the German languages and German laws to the people dwelling in that area, but to ensure that in the east only people of genuinely German, Teutonic blood shall live.”<sup>14</sup> As Germany and its allies unleashed the “war of destruction” against the Soviet Union, Hitler asserted in October 1941,

Ukraine will be a home for twenty million inhabitants besides the natives. In three hundred years, the country will be one of the loveliest gardens in the world. As for the natives, we’ll have to screen them carefully. The Jew, that destroyer, we shall drive out . . . our colonizing penetration must be constantly progressive, until it reaches the stage where our own colonists far outnumber the local inhabitants.<sup>15</sup>

## The Holocaust and Nazi *Volksdeutsche* Programs in Ukraine, June 1941–42

What was the causal relationship between these two Nazi missions—the colonization of the *Lebensraum* and the destruction of the Jews? Scholars such as Czeslaw Madajczyk and Götz Aly have stressed the importance of Poland in Himmler's General Plan East, which was the Nazi blueprint for "Germanizing" Eastern Europe. When compared with other parts of Nazi-occupied Europe, the causal links between ethnic German resettlement and anti-Jewish practices were strongest in Poland. From the start, the Nazi leadership portrayed the Polish invasion in September 1939 as a rescue mission on behalf of the *Volksdeutsche*.

As Alexander Rossino's *Hitler Strikes Poland* has deftly demonstrated, the Germans often legitimized their anti-Polish and anti-Jewish brutality as acts of revenge for the persecution or murder of *Volksdeutsche*, for example in Bromberg (Bydgoszcz). In Poland where Reinhard Heydrich's *Einwandererzentralstelle* (Immigration Center) and Adolf Eichmann's *Umwandererzentralstelle* (Relocation Center) engineered the deportation machinery of ethnic German resettlement and the Holocaust, the two programs literally intersected. For example, in January 1940 trains of Jewish deportees to Hrubieszow collided with trainloads of Volhynian Germans moving to Lodz. Jews unloaded the baggage of the *Volksdeutsche* arrivees, cleaned out their homes prior to their arrival, and "cared for the resettlers' horses and other livestock."<sup>16</sup>

Ukraine has been largely left out of the postwar studies of SS-police resettlement plans for the East. The omission is odd because it was precisely in Ukraine where Himmler left his individual mark as a colonizer and where Europe's largest Jewish population, after Poland, resided and was destroyed in the Holocaust. According to Himmler's schemes, Ukraine was not to be 100 percent Germanized like the annexed territories of the Reich in the Polish Warthegau. Instead, Himmler's planners conceived of Ukraine as a land of *Siedlungsmarken und Stützpunkte*, or patches of German settlements. They aimed to consolidate the scattered communities of Volhynian Germans located in west-central Ukraine and residing in the Zhytomyr Commissariat, and the so-called Black Sea Germans located in southern Ukraine, including in Crimea (which Hitler dreamed of as a Nazi Riviera). The ethnic German settlements and farms were to be placed along the new autobahns and railway lines running east-west and north-south. On the eve of the Nazi invasion most ethnic Germans who were left in Soviet Ukraine lived in the poorest rural areas and not in the major towns.<sup>17</sup>

The Germans occupied most of Ukraine between the end of June 1941 and early 1942, renaming the area of civilian administration the Reichskommissariat Ukraine (RKU). The Reichskommissariat was home to about two hundred thousand ethnic Germans (out of a total population of 16.9 million civilians). Actually this was about half of the prewar population of



*Volksdeutsche* in Ukraine because tens of thousands had been deported by Stalin and thousands, particularly the Volhynian Germans, were brought "home to the Reich" after Hitler and Stalin carved up Poland in autumn of 1939. The much larger minority population in Ukraine at this time was the Jewish one, comprising 30 to 50 percent of the population in what was formerly the tsarist empire's Pale of Settlement.<sup>18</sup>

The systematic mass murder of Jews began in Ukraine and the Soviet territories, not in Poland. As of 22 June 1941 the *Wehrmacht* and SS-police arrived in Ukraine with a license to shoot male Jews, which quickly expanded to all Jews, who were vilified as the racial bearers of Bolshevism. The Germans and their accomplices killed between 1.2 and 1.4 million Jews in Ukraine. The survival rate for Jews was less than 4 percent. Most Jews died in or near their hometowns. In a historical Jewish center such as Berdychiv, which was occupied by the *Wehrmacht* on 7 July 1941, the Germans registered approximately thirty thousand Jews (the town's overall population did not exceed sixty thousand). When the Red Army liberated the town in January 1944, only fifteen Jews emerged from the rubble; most had been killed on one day in mid-September 1941.<sup>19</sup> Did the presence of *Volksdeutsche* or plans for Nazi resettlement schemes in these and other parts of Ukraine affect the course of the Holocaust or increase anti-Jewish violence?

In addition to the now well-known *Einsatzgruppen* that invaded the Soviet territories under Reinhard Heydrich's command in the summer of 1941, on 11 July Himmler activated secret task forces, also labeled *Einsatzgruppen*, as part of a special mission code-named "*Sonderkommando Russland*." The "special commando Russia" was tasked with secret colonization activities that began with the registration of the *Volksdeutsche*. The commando carried out their work with the assistance of personnel from *Einsatzgruppe C* and *Einsatzgruppe D*. According to historian Isabel Heinemann's latest research, there were 277 SS-policemen assigned to *Sonderkommando Russland*, and they represented a conglomeration of SS and police agencies—the Reich Commission for the Strengthening of Germanism (RKF), the Race and Settlement Main Office (RuSHA), the Economic and Administrative Main Office (WVHA), the Ethnic German Liaison Office (VoMi), and the Security Service (SD). Many had worked the previous two years in Poland on resettlement programs. They established headquarters first in Zhytomyr then Odessa, Nikoleav, Crimea, and Kiev.<sup>20</sup> Thus, while the Sipo-SD *Einsatzgruppen* (C and D) focused on security and intelligence operations, above all anti-Jewish measures, these other SS colonization task forces concentrated on three activities: (1) determination of valuable German blood; (2) survey and registration of the land for later SS colonization; and (3) coordination of colonization work with other Himmler agencies in order to secure SS-police strongholds in Ukraine.<sup>21</sup>

Did these two SS-police task forces with distinct missions jointly plan and implement the Holocaust? To what extent did their antisemitic and pro-*Volksdeutsche* activities overlap? Before *Sonderkommando Russland* staff arrived in Zhytomyr in early September 1941, a subunit of *Einsatzgruppe*

C (*Sonderkommando* 4a) began to register the ethnic Germans according to the German People's List.<sup>22</sup> Members of Heydrich's secret police units also reported the first news about the dismal state of the *Volksdeutsche* who had survived Stalin's terror.

According to these first reports, the *Volksdeutsche* were scattered around the Zhytomyr region. They were impoverished; few could speak German and grasped what the arrival of the *Wehrmacht* meant.<sup>23</sup> Although 40 percent of the forty thousand ethnic Germans in the region were day laborers and lacked skills, regional German commanders placed them in leading administrative positions, much to the ire of the rest of the population of non-Germans.<sup>24</sup> Those who could serve as translators were immediately put to use by the Nazis. In Vasily Grossman's account of the destruction of Berdychiv's Jewish community, he stressed that the new ethnic German mayor of Berdychiv, Reder, and his Ukrainian chief of police, Koroliuk, "took an active part in organizing and conducting the execution."<sup>25</sup> One of the more notorious ethnic Germans in *Einsatzgruppe* C was Dr. Arthur Boss; he was a 33-year-old neurologist originally from Odessa who spoke Russian and German. He helped Paul Blobel's *Sonderkommando* 4a with the planning and implementation of the massacre of Zhytomyr's Jews on 19 September, when they shot more than three thousand men, women, and children. According to eyewitness accounts, Boss was Blobel's right-hand man, identifying the Jews, accompanying Blobel to the mass shooting pits, and afterward helping with the distribution of Jewish clothing and linens to Zhytomyr's ethnic German population. Boss also set up a medical practice in Zhytomyr and provided Paul Blobel's shooters with injections to calm their nerves after killing actions.<sup>26</sup> Like Arthur Boss, the Becker brothers, Paul and Edmund, who were both in their late teens and came from an ethnic German community near the city called Alter Huette, were also picked up by the SD and put to use in the implementation of the "Final Solution." The Beckers were transferred in the fall of 1941 to the SS training center at Trawniki, where they learned how to be guards at the ghettos and death camps in Poland.<sup>27</sup>

Unlike in Poland, however, Heydrich's *Einsatzgruppen* in Ukraine rarely exploited their campaign to rescue the *Volksdeutsche* to stir up anti-Jewish or anti-Ukrainian violence. In one rare case in Zhytomyr on 7 August 1941, regional SS-police and military leaders publicly hanged two Jewish men in the marketplace and displayed a poster on the gallows that claimed the two men were former members of the Soviet secret police and as such had killed more than one thousand *Volksdeutsche* and Ukrainians.<sup>28</sup> Instead of using pro-*Volksdeutsche* rationales to incite violence against Jews, the Germans used the more popular anti-Bolshevik themes to inflame local antisemitism, themes that appealed to the Ukrainian, Polish, and *Volksdeutsche* population. At the highest levels of the leadership, Reich Minister Rosenberg lobbied to Hitler (in early September 1941) that all Central European Jews should be dumped in the East in retaliation for Stalin's order to deport the Volga Germans.<sup>29</sup> While in the killing fields of Ukraine perpetrators seldom



argued that the Jews should pay the price for the sorry plight of the ethnic Germans.

### The "Black Sea Germans" and the Holocaust in Transnistria (Romanian-Occupied Ukraine)

In southern Ukraine along the Black Sea and in the territory between the Bug and Dniester rivers, *Einsatzgruppe D* under Otto Ohlendorf actively implemented the Holocaust and recruited local ethnic Germans into the Sipo-SD to assist in the mass murder of Jews. One such ethnic German was named Alfons J. Goetzfried. At first he helped with the gassings of Jews in Simferopol; then Goetzfried participated in the ghetto and camp liquidations in Galicia. His career as a Holocaust perpetrator culminated with his dispatch to Lublin (Majdanek) where he participated in the final massacres of Jews in the General Government during early November 1943.<sup>30</sup>

In southern Ukraine, *Sonderkommando Russland* task forces (under Dr. Klaus Siebert's command) registered Ukraine's largest population of so-called Black Sea Germans. More than 130,000 Black Sea Germans greeted the *Wehrmacht*, SS-police, and Romanian troops in July and August 1941.<sup>31</sup> *Sonderkommando Russland* set up its headquarters in Landau, a historic ethnic German settlement that was about fifty kilometers northwest of Nikoleav. From here Siebert's staff established fourteen settlement centers (*Bereichkommandos*) that stretched across German military and civilian and Romanian-occupied territory. According to the Tighina Agreement of 30 August 1941 and a November 1941 pact between Romanian foreign minister Mihai Antonescu and German ambassador to Romania Manfred von Killinger, the *Volksdeutsche* colonies in Romanian territory (formerly in Soviet Ukraine) came under the authority of the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle* (VoMi), which deployed its SS personnel to the historic settlements of Rastatt, Lichtenfeld, Hoffnungsthal, and Bergdorf, among others. Most of these German communities originated with the migrations of Germans to Russia in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>32</sup> The settlements contained ethnic German mayors, schools, and farms and semi-autonomous German police forces known as *Selbstschutz*.<sup>33</sup>

With minimal prodding from the Reich German and Romanian authorities, the ethnic German auxiliary police forces massacred Jews (and Roma gypsies) who lived in or near the colonies. *Volksdeutsche* farmers exploited Roma laborers, forcing them to live in pigsties and providing them with little to no food in exchange for work. Starving Roma searched for bits of food in the animals' troughs and feces. According to testimony of a former Romanian prefect in Transnistria, in 1942 the inhabitants of the ethnic German colony Schonfeld killed and burned gypsies on their farms.<sup>34</sup>

In the winter of 1941/42, as many as thirty thousand Jews were brought from Odessa to Beresowka, which was not far from a cluster of ethnic German colonies. Romanian and German documents as well as eyewitness accounts



reveal that a combination of ethnic German *Selbstschutz*, colonists, Ukrainian militia, and Romanian gendarmes shot eighteen thousand Jews at the death camp of Domanowka south of the Bug River. At the Romanian camp of Bogdanowka, where another forty-eight thousand Jews were forcibly marched, tens of thousands were killed in continuous mass shootings and barn burnings and with hand grenades. Many succumbed in the freezing temperatures to typhus and famine-related illnesses.<sup>35</sup> In summer and autumn of 1942, while Himmler was stationed at his Ukrainian headquarters near Zhytomyr, he and his staff toured the *Volksdeutsche* communities and were so impressed with the work of the *Selbstschutz* in southern Ukraine and Transnistria that they formed similar police training schools and activated *Volksdeutsche* police and *Waffen-SS* units for antipartisan actions in the Reich Commissariat Ukraine.<sup>36</sup>

East of Transnistria, however, Himmler's resettlement staff encountered recurring problems that caused conflicts between the SS-police and *Wehrmacht*. The Nikoleav and Dnepropetrovsk districts contained fluid borders. Steady streams of refugees flowed in from the battle zones. Consequently, local Germanization campaigns were often interrupted, for example, in March 1942 when half of the Halbstadt settlement near Melitopol was suddenly placed under military administration for ten days. At this time twenty-five thousand ethnic Germans found themselves under General von Kleist's rule while fifteen thousand remained in the civilian zone of the Commissariat. The *Wehrmacht* quickly snatched up ethnic Germans to serve as



Reich Führer of the SS and Police Map of the Reich Commissariat Ukraine, May 1942. Original in the Central State Archives, Minsk 393-1-1. Copy courtesy of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Film Archives (RG 53.002M, reel 4).

translators or drafted the able-bodied men into cavalry troops, which infuriated Himmler because he wanted these men for his own SS-police forces. By contrast it was westward from the front around the secured elite headquarters at Zhytomyr and Vinnytsia where Himmler made Ukraine's first colonial experiment a priority during the summer and autumn of 1942.

### ***Volksdeutsche* in the Reich Commissariat Ukraine, the Holocaust, and Nazi Germanization Experiments in Zhytomyr, Summer 1942–44**

By late summer of 1942 most of Ukraine's urban Jews living east of the Zhytomyr district had been killed. Roughly 270,000 remained in ghettos and camps in western centers of the Reich Commissariat Ukraine such as in Rivne, Pinsk, Luts'k, Kowel, and Letychiv. Thousands were scattered in small rural ghettos, and hundreds of individuals and broken families roamed the countryside in search of food and shelter.<sup>37</sup> For the continued implementation of Nazi anti-Jewish measures, the SS-police and civilian rulers known as commissars sought out ethnic Germans to serve as translators and police auxiliaries in the gendarmerie. As unit leaders of the rural units known as *Schutzmannschaften*, ethnic Germans carried out anti-Jewish manhunts in the Commissariat's vast fields and forests. The ethnic German police were relatively few in number but locally quite powerful, usually commanding Ukrainian units and managing the countryside where German *Gebietskommissare* rarely ventured. They communicated Nazi orders to the villagers. Many helped identify individual Jews and Jewish families; some were directly involved in the killing. A female ethnic German translator on the staff of a gendarme post in the Kholmil'nyk district shot Jewish children during the ghetto liquidation there. When the ethnic German chief of a *Schutzmannschaft* unit in Ruzhyn, near Zhytomyr, found Jews in hiding in May 1942, he pulled out his own revolver and shot them on the spot.<sup>38</sup>

Historian Martin Dean, whose work appears in this volume, recently traced the career and criminal activities of an ethnic German policeman, Ernst Hering, from the Ustynivka district in the Nikoleav Commissariat. In spring of 1942, after serving a few months in the police, the nineteen-year-old Hering was asked to shoot the Jews from his hometown. Hering's unit rounded up and killed about twenty-five Jewish men, women, and children and twenty half-Jewish children and babies from the smaller villages in the area. The rural police in Ustynivka worked under two ethnic German supervisors: the rayon (county) leader Friedrich Strohmeier and local police chief Alexander Huebner. Hering's cousin Gustav was also in the local police.

Reich German leaders in the Commissariat's field offices tried to integrate the *Volksdeutsche* into the new Nazi racial hierarchy, but most questioned the loyalty of the ethnic Germans. They were skeptical for a number of reasons, not the least of which was that the *Volksdeutsche* were ideologically heterogeneous and on the whole destitute. They were not as expected

a unified caste of superior "Aryan" leaders. Under Stalin assimilation was preferable, even a matter of survival. Thus ethnic Germans had intermarried with Ukrainians. Many clung to traditional religious faiths while others embraced new secular ones: they were Catholic, Protestant, Lutheran, Baptist, Mennonite, communist, and socialist. To bring the *Volksdeutsche* into line ideologically and make them more useful in fighting for the Nazi cause, Himmler and his agencies along with representatives of the Nazi Party's Welfare Society (NSV) introduced educational programs that combined ideological indoctrination, racial hygiene, and vocational training.<sup>39</sup>

Ideological indoctrination of the ethnic German police was of great concern to Himmler because he wanted to create an all-German police force in Ukraine and therefore rely less on Ukrainian policemen.<sup>40</sup> In June 1942 Himmler issued a memorandum on the ideological assessment of order police auxiliaries. Accordingly, the chief of police training programs in Kiev provided his regional offices with the educational themes for training local ethnic German and Ukrainian auxiliaries. The themes are striking because they reveal how lower-level police combined Germany's conquest of the East with the so-called war against Judeo-Bolshevism, mimicking the distortions of German history and virulent antisemitism found in the Nazi leadership's writings and speeches. As this Kiev-based police trainer explained it to his men,

A large part of the blood sacrifice of the German people was given up over the centuries in the incessant battles over the borders of Eastern Europe. What is happening today in the East is already part of the New Order of Europe. German politics in the East are inspired by the memory of Eastern Europe as a land of settlement. When the Germanic-German colonists and merchants penetrated Eastern European countries over the course of centuries, they were called by the rulers of the peoples who lived there. They did not bring robbery and destruction, fire and murder, death and ruin; instead the successes of their works were fertile fields, blooming cities, outstanding buildings, and artistic [and] scholarly works of the highest value.

By contrast, the culture-negating and people-destroying forces of Bolshevism have only failed to promote the cultures that were there and the free development of European peoples in Russia. The Bolshevism that the Lithuanian, Estonian, Latvian, Byelorussian, and Ukrainian people were confronted with was not European, and also not actually Russian in character, but Jewish and Asian in its nature. The Jews brought Bolshevism to power through a tyranny of terror, hunger, crime. . . .<sup>41</sup>

One of the recipients of this memorandum was the *Schutzpolizei* leader in Berdychiv named Albrecht. In his assessment Albrecht wrote that the themes are suitable and effective, but that the ethnic Germans were only slowly becoming convinced of their superiority. The education process was somewhat hindered by the fact that regional SS-police leaders had to rely on Ukrainian teachers and Ukrainian language materials to convey these pro-German messages. Of special interest to our fresh ethnic German and Ukrainian police recruits, he wrote, was the German approach to the Jew-



ish problem. As Albrecht put it, all they had to do is point out that Berdychiv was 72 percent Jewish before the Germans arrived, that most are now gone, and that no one wants to have anything to do with Jews: "Even the prisoners in our labor camps refuse to work side by side with Jews or half Jews." As Albrecht's report suggests, Ukrainian and ethnic German police recruits viewed the Holocaust as an "achievement," one that increased their loyalty if not gratitude toward Hitler's Reich.<sup>42</sup> In other words, Nazi regional leaders discovered that the Holocaust was not to be kept secret. On the contrary, it was a powerful tool for forging closer bonds between Reich Germans and *Volksdeutsche* as well as between Germans and Ukrainians.

### Himmler's Experimental Hegewald Colony, September 1942–November 1943

Before Himmler announced his plans to form a *Volksdeutsche* colony at Hegewald in September 1942, the district German leaders in and around Zhytomyr had concentrated the region's forty-five thousand ethnic Germans into small communities. They supplied the ethnic Germans with food, clothing, and housing, as well as German history and language books.<sup>43</sup> While Rosenberg's ethnographers and commissars went from village to village compiling population surveys and local histories, Himmler's men tried to turn the *Volksdeutsche* men into productive, armed farmers who could defend the SS estates and collective farms.<sup>44</sup> The NSV provided missionary-style relief workers, many of them women, who served as kindergarten teachers, nurses, and midwives.<sup>45</sup> These three main "Germanizers" operating in the field worked side by side but not in unison. They vied for the support of the local civilian leaders, the commissars, who controlled the plunder depots, and they competed with one another for recognition from Nazi headquarters in Zhytomyr, Vinnytsia, Rivne, and Berlin. Yet, outside of this core group of activists, the majority of Reich Germans posted to the region doubted the wisdom of and even advised against initiating major resettlement operations until after the war, because the population upheaval increased anti-German sentiment within the Ukrainian majority and interfered with the economy. In short, many local officials viewed the *Volksdeutsche* as more of a welfare burden than a "racial" asset.<sup>46</sup>

By contrast, Heinrich Himmler, who had the upper hand in ethnic German policy-making and exerted his direct influence over the Zhytomyr region, pushed through the resettlement action around his Hegewald headquarters—of course, only after he had gained Hitler's approval. In August 1942 Himmler sought to convince Hitler that his personnel, not Rosenberg's commissars, were best equipped to colonize the Hegewald area. Himmler argued that partisan attackers jeopardized the ethnic German families scattered around the Zhytomyr region and that the *Volksdeutsche* needed to be protected by concentrating them into a settlement around their headquarters. With the fleet of trucks and SS forces at Himmler's disposal he could

quickly move the population into the area. Hitler agreed. At his Zhytomyr headquarters Himmler convened his top SS officials (including Dr. Konrad Meyer) to introduce the scheme and initiate implementation plans. Under the direction of the RKF chief Ulrich Greifelt, Ukraine's senior SS-police leader Hans Adolf Pruetzmann, and the SS regional chief of resettlement actions in Zhytomyr, Theo Henschel, local gendarme and VoMi officials rounded up eighteen thousand Ukrainians who lived in the designated space for resettlement. They crammed them onto freight cars and dumped them in labor camps in southern Russia and neighboring regions. Meanwhile, treks of ethnic Germans totaling more than ten thousand persons were moved under police guard by foot and in carriages to the designated colony. At the rest areas along the journey's path, the SS-police forces had cleared the villages of their Ukrainian inhabitants and left many of them in transit camps destined to go to the Reich as forced laborers.<sup>47</sup>

The ethnic Germans who arrived at Hegewald were organized into, as Hitler and Himmler described them, "settlement pearls," which were stretched along the Zhytomyr-Vinnytsia autobahn like a *Kette* or string of pearls. To start, the *Volksdeutsche* who were assigned to the SS-run collective farms were given private plots of land, about one hectare per family. If they proved their diligence they could receive up to twenty-five hectares. The ethnic German farms were subjected to high SS quotas and random confiscations of milk and other produce. Ukrainian and Byelorussian prisoners and forced laborers tilled the reserve farmland not allotted to the German and SS farmers. The entire Hegewald district of two hundred square miles, consisting of twenty-eight villages and collective farms, was administered by ethnic German mayors, SS-policemen, agricultural specialists, and Nazi Party welfare workers and not by Rosenberg's commissars. Thus, on paper Rosenberg's administration provided the administrative framework for governing the eastern territories, yet in reality population policies and the future of colonization experiments lay in the hands of Himmler's SS-police agencies and the Nazi Party.

Photo spreads and articles in the official newspaper of the RKU, the *Deutsche Ukraine Zeitung*, celebrated the Hegewald settlement, proclaiming it a success. However, the reality was quite different. When viewed from the ground, the entire campaign was, as one local official described it, "eine Schweinerei" (an awful mess). The Nazis could not fulfill the propagandized promises to the *Volksdeutsche*, who represented a dislocated population with few skills and resources. Regular and substantial shipments of Jewish belongings arrived in Hegewald from the plunder depots at Lublin, Auschwitz, and even France. Ethnic Germans at Hegewald wore the clothing and slept on the bedding of these Jewish victims of the Holocaust.

But these plundered goods, which the Nazis presented as Christmas gifts to the *Volksdeutsche*, were not enough to make Nazi colonization schemes successful. About six hundred "racially valuable" children, who had been kidnapped according to Himmler's instructions, could not be adequately cared for in the crowded orphanages in and around Zhytomyr. For one

community of 3,500 *Volksdeutsche*, SS-police officials established one produce shop. Rations were not available, and when items did arrive they were not distributed with the kind of efficiency that one normally attributes to the Nazi system of destruction. Nazi forced labor raiders swept through the villages and grabbed *Volksdeutsche* who were not supposed to be included among the deportees to the Reich. Soviet partisans targeted the settlements, ransacked the farms, and killed their inhabitants. In the wake of such attacks the ethnic German *Selbstschutz* units at Hegewald took revenge on neighboring Ukrainian villages.<sup>48</sup>

In Ukraine the military setbacks of 1943 compelled Nazi leaders to reduce *Volksdeutsche* programs to regional initiatives and then to abandon them altogether. The evacuation of the Hegewald settlement was hastily carried out a few weeks before the Red Army arrived in November 1943. The Ukrainians and ethnic Germans who were assigned to escort the treks of evacuees heading west were prone to, as the SS-police reported, "plundering and other offensive excesses." Also, Soviet forces overtook and massacred hundreds of ethnic Germans who were trudging westward. By the end of November 1943, *Volksdeutsche* from the settlements in Ukraine were arriving in western Ukraine and Poland where they remained in camps run by the VoMi. When the Red Army uncovered these camps in early 1945, thousands of these *Volksdeutsche* were branded collaborators and deported to Soviet camps in the trans-Ural region.<sup>49</sup>

## Conclusion

The formation of Hegewald (as well as other resettlement actions in Dnepropetrovsk and Nikoleav) did not go as smoothly as Nazi leaders had expected. The Nazis were unable to construct colonies based on the pseudo-scientific and mythic notions of race. Many of the contradictions and tensions that lay beneath Hitler and Himmler's fantasies of an Aryan living space in the East revealed themselves at the local level of praxis.<sup>50</sup>

The same regional commissars, SS-policemen who rarely questioned the morality or rationality of eradicating those deemed inferior, remained uncertain, skeptical, and less enthusiastic about their role and the general aim of creating utopian colonies out of ethnic German settlements. Nazi leaders tried to inspire their underlings with pep talks about the unlimited opportunities in the East and praised them as "pioneers of Germanism in the East."<sup>51</sup> They compared them to frontiersmen who settled the American West. However, in reality the German colonizer had no choice about where he settled, which farm he received, or what he could do with it. This was decided by Himmler's proliferating agencies of race and space planning. The German pioneer in the East was racially selected by the state and placed into an artificial society that had been ethnically "cleansed" by Himmler's SS-police killing units.<sup>52</sup>



Besides demonstrating that Nazi racial policy was a devastating failure, the history of Himmler's creation of an experimental colony at Hegewald shows that once under way, resettlement actions in Ukraine were not directly linked to the unfolding of anti-Jewish policy there. The *Volksdeutsche* actions caused the mass deportations of Ukrainian farmers and their families, not of Jews, because by the time these *Volksdeutsche* resettlement actions began, most Jews who resided on the designated colonial spaces were already dead or in camps. Moreover, the earlier anti-Jewish massacres do not seem to have been motivated by widespread empathy for the *Volksdeutsche* or committed as acts of revenge on behalf of the *Volksdeutsche*.

More than an ideological motivator, the *Volksdeutsche* in Ukraine offered Nazi regional leaders with a critical source of labor for carrying out the Holocaust. The *Volksdeutsche* minority had access to a newfound power especially within the lower ranks of the Nazi system where the genocide was actually realized. Some, such as the Becker brothers and Arthur Boss, became perpetrators rather than victims of circumstance, and, as the Nazi leaders desired, were integrated parts of the whole system of destruction.

The Germans were able to carry out the first step in their larger plan of remapping and Germanizing Europe—the destruction of the Jews whom they considered their greatest threat. Of the estimated six million Jews killed in the Holocaust, about five million resided in the eastern regions intended to be the new German "living space." Nazi leaders, ideologues, technocrats, engineers, economic developers, SS-police, military personnel, and academicians accepted or rationalized the Holocaust as a means to a much larger end of securing a German empire in Europe and beyond. On the other hand, many Germans, including the *Volksdeutsche* and certainly most non-German collaborators who participated in the Holocaust and carried out the most horrific atrocities against Jewish women and children, were not motivated by a vague notion of an Aryan *Lebensraum* or guided by a broader vision of a "Germanized" Europe. They supported a genocidal "Final Solution" as an end unto itself.

## Notes

1. The Nazi worldview derived from various strands of thought that had become especially popular as of the late nineteenth century. The imperialist threads can be found in the writings of political geographer Friedrich Raetz, Weimar geopolitical theorist Karl Haushofer, and Nazi ideologue Walter Darré, who was famous for his *Blut und Boden* (blood and soil) theory. In addition to Woodruff Smith's work *The Ideological Origins of Nazi Imperialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), see Holger Herwig's "Geopolitik: Haushofer, Hitler and Lebensraum," *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 22 (June/September 1999), 218–241, and Alan Steinweis's "Eastern Europe and the Notion of the 'Frontier' in Germany to 1945," in Keith Bullivant, Geoffrey Giles, and Walter Pape, eds., *Germany and Eastern Europe: Cultural Identities and Cultural Differences* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999). On the Nazis' territorial ambitions and agricultural policies, see Uwe Mai's "*Rasse und Raum*": Agrarpolitik, Sozial- und Raumplanung im NS-Staat

- (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schoeningh, 2002). In *Mein Kampf* Hitler revealed his aim to acquire more "living space" for Germans by conquering Eastern Europe and Bolshevik Russia. He did not promote acquisition of colonies (territory abroad) but rather land for resettlement that bordered the Reich to "enhance the area of the mother country." See the edition translated by Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971), 652.
2. As Hitler put it to his subordinates: "Out of the eastern territories, we must make a Garden of Eden; they [the eastern territories] are vital to us . . . [overseas] colonies play an entirely subordinate role." See Bormann's notes of the 16 July 1941 meeting when Hitler spoke with Rosenberg, Keitel, Lammers, Göring, and Bormann about the political plan of action for the Soviet territories. U.S. National Archives and Record Administration (NARA), Record Group 238, International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg, Document 221-L, reprinted in volume 38, 86–94.
  3. Sara Lennox, Sara Friedrichsmeyer, and Susanne Zantop, eds., *The Imperialist Imagination: German Colonialism and Its Legacy* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998). Also see David Furber, "Going East: Colonialism and German Life in Nazi-Occupied Poland," Ph.D. thesis, State University of New York at Buffalo, June 2003.
  4. See Zhytomyr Commissar's memo about books offered by the Nazi Party to the staff. Books listed included P. H. Kuntze, *Das Volksbuch unserer Kolonien* (1938, rev. ed. 1941), Lettow-Vorbeck, *Um Vaterland und Kolonie* (1919), K. Haenel, *Der belgische Kongo*, H. Richter, *Buntes Afrika* (1939), H. Schulz, *Im afrikanischen Dschungel*, K. Freber, *Mit dem Rucksack nach Indien* (1927), and Esser, *Die Jüdische Weltpest* (1939). General Commissar Klemm memo to district commissars dated 27 February 1942, Zhytomyr State Archives, Zhytomyr, Ukraine (hereafter ZSA), P-1151c-1-21. Books for administrators in the Nazi Party library listed in ZSA, P-1151-1-104.
  5. According to Götz Aly, the East was a laboratory for establishing the *Volksgemeinschaft*, the space where all Germans regardless of class fulfilled socialist as well as racial dreams of prosperity. This thesis and reference to the children's game "Wehrbauer im Schwarzerdegebiet" in Götz Aly, "Hitlers Volkstaat," in *Rasse und Klasse: Nachforschungen zum deutschen Wesen* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2003), 230–44.
  6. Hitler appointed Fischer the rector of the University of Berlin, and the SS commissioned racial studies from him. On Eugen Fischer's research and influence on Nazi and SS racial policies, see Paul Weindling, *Health, Race and German Politics Between National Unification and Nazism, 1870–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), and Isabel Heinemann, "*Rasse, Siedlung, deutsches Blut*": *Das Rasse- & Siedlungshauptamt der SS und die rassenpolitische Neuordnung Europas* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2003), 20–23.
  7. On labor as a "civilizing" form and punitive measure in the Wilhelmine era, see the work of Sebastian Conrad, "Education, Deportation, Extermination: 'Erziehung zur Arbeit' in Colonial Africa and Imperial Germany, 1890–1914," paper presented at the American Historical Association Annual Conference, 9 January 2003, Washington, DC. Paul Rohrbach, a Baltic German and staunch Evangelical Christian, led the Osteuropa movement during World War I, calling for the colonization or Germanization of the Baltics, as well as German settlement in the Middle East and southwest Africa. See Paul Rohrbach's *Deutsche Kolonialwirtschaft* (Berlin, 1907) and *Deutsch Südwest-Afrika ein Ansiedlungs-Gebiet?* (Berlin, 1905, 2nd ed., 1910); also Walter Mogk, *Paul Rohrbach und das "Grössere Deutschland": Ethischer Imperialismus im Wilhelminischen Zeitalter* (Munich: Wilhelm Goldmann Verlag, 1972).
  8. *Litzmannstädter Zeitung*, 26 September 1943, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), Collection of Newspapers from Nazi Occupied Poland, reel 13. I am grateful to David Furber for providing me with a copy of this newspaper article.
  9. At this time the minorities question focused on autonomous rights (self-determination) and the search for a segregationist coexistence of different autonomous entities within nation-states. The strict racial, more social Darwinistic view that saw homogeneous nation-states in a constant struggle became more widespread in the interwar and WWII eras. See Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, *War and Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity*

- ity and German Occupation in World War I (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
10. On the significance of Ukraine in Hitler's foreign policy, see Alexander Dallin, *German Rule in Russia, 1941–1945: A Study of Occupation Policies* (New York: Macmillan, 1957), and Gerhard Weinberg, *The Foreign Policy of Hitler's Germany: 1937–1939* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 475–77, 583.
  11. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 654.
  12. Quote of Adolf Hitler from the Bormann letters, monologue of 17 September 1941. See Adolf Hitler, *Secret Conversations, 1941–1944*, trans. Norman Cameron and R. H. Stevens (New York: Octagon Books, 1972), 29. The lure of the east had its historical antecedents in the medieval-era migrations of Germans to Poland and then the Russian empire under Catherine the Great. But the phrase "Drang nach Osten" became popular in the early twentieth century. Since the late nineteenth century, economic imperialists who espoused the expansionist ideology of *Weltpolitik* also eyed the Ukraine as a new commercial and industrial marketplace. See Wolfgang Wippermann's *Der "Deutsche Drang Nach Osten": Ideologien und Wirklichkeit eine politischen Schlagwortes* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1981).
  13. Valdis Lumans, "A Reassessment of *Volksdeutsche* and Jews in the Volhynia-Galicia-Narew Resettlement," in Alan Steinweis and Daniel Rogers, eds., *The Impact of Nazism: New Perspectives on the Third Reich and Its Legacy* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 85; and Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation, Analyses of Government, Proposals for Redress* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1944), 21.
  14. Lemkin, *Axis Rule*, 21.
  15. Monologue of 17 October 1941, *Hitler's Table Talk, 1941–1944, His Private Conversations*, trans. Cameron and Stevens (London: Enigma, 2000), 68. Also see C. Madajczyk, ed., *Generalny Plan Wschodni: Zbiór dokumentów* (Warsaw, 1990), 69.
  16. Lumans, "A Reassessment," 93. See also Roessler, Schleiermacher, and Tollmien, eds., *Der "Generalplan Ost" Hauptlinien der nationalsozialistischen Planungs- und Vernichtungspolitik* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1993).
  17. Meir Buchsweiler, *Volksdeutsche in der Ukraine am Vorabend und Beginn des Zweiten Weltkrieges—ein Fall doppelter Loyalität?* (Tel Aviv: Bleicher Verlag, 1984).
  18. For example, one of six administrative districts that comprised the Reichskommissariat Ukraine, the Zhytomyr Generalbezirk (which was in area roughly the size of the combined U.S. states of New Hampshire, Vermont, and Massachusetts contained about 2.5 million inhabitants; Ukrainians made up the vast majority, representing 87.4 percent of the population; the largest minority was Jewish, with more than 9 percent of the population, followed by Poles making up 7.4 percent of the population. The Russian minority decreased during the war, while the ethnic German minority doubled, comprising close to 3 percent of the population in 1942. According to the 1939 Soviet census, there were about 266,000 Jews living in and around the region's centers of Zhytomyr, Vinnytsia, and Berdychiv; an average of 30 percent lived in the cities or larger towns. These figures appear in Mordechai Altshuler's *Soviet Jewry on the Eve of the Holocaust: A Social and Demographic Profile* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1998). The German figures for Ukrainians, Poles, Russians, and ethnic Germans were printed in *Holos Volyni*, 17 December 1941, ZSA, newspaper collection. On Jews in the Pale, see Zvi Gitelman, *A Century of Ambivalence: The Jews of Russia and the Soviet Union, 1881 to the Present* (New York: YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, 1988), and John Klier and Shlomo Lambroza, eds., *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
  19. Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman, eds., *The Black Book: The Ruthless Murder of Jews by German Fascist Invaders Throughout the Temporarily Occupied Regions of the Soviet Union and in the Death Camps of Poland During the War of 1941–1945*, trans. John Glad and James Levine (New York: Holocaust Library, 1980), 16. Also see testimonies and segments of the Extraordinary Commission Report in S. Ya. Yelisavetsky,



- Berdichevskaya tragediya* (Kiev, 1991), 81–85. I am grateful to Asya Vaisman for assisting with the Russian translations. Also see Carol and John Garrard, *The Bones of Berdichev: The Life and Fate of Vasily Grossman* (New York: Free Press, 1996), 23–25.
20. On 21 June (the eve of the outbreak of the Nazi war against the Soviet Union), Himmler instructed his staff of the RKF to incorporate the Soviet territories into the General Plan East. On *Sonderkommando Russland*, see Heinemann, "Rasse, Siedlung, deutsches Blut," 418–20. Also see Götz Aly, *Final Solution: Nazi Population Policy and the Murder of the European Jews* (New York: Arnold, 1999), 189.
  21. Priorities as RuSHA chief Otto Hofmann defined them. See Heinemann, "Rasse, Siedlung, deutsches Blut," 422.
  22. The German People's List (DVL) consisted of four categories: Group I, represented those deemed racially Aryan and willing to be Germanized; Group II, racially pure Germans who lacked a will to be Germanized but were capable of being Germanized; Group III those with mixed but predominantly Aryan blood and capable of being Germanized, and who could apply for temporary Reich citizenship and then live under racial political surveillance for ten years before receiving citizenship; and Group IV, those with only some German blood, assimilated to other groups and unwilling to become German citizens or considered unfit for Germanization. Persons in this last category were handed over to the Gestapo, sent to camps, or liquidated on the spot. Those who fit into categories I and II were immediately eligible for Reich German citizenship. See Ingeborg Fleischhauer, "The Ethnic Germans Under Nazi Rule," in Ingeborg Fleischhauer and Benjamin Pinkus, eds., *The Soviet Germans Past and Present* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986), 96–97.
  23. See *Einsatzgruppe C* (EGC) Report, 6 September 1941, "Lage der Volksdeutschen in Shitomir," NARA, RG 242 T-175/R 233/272221-5.
  24. See secret field report of Stepan Bandera's activist near Zhytomyr, "RR," 30 July 1941, ZSA, P1151-1-2.
  25. Ehrenburg and Grossman, eds., *The Black Book*, 18.
  26. See Boss statements of 23 June 1965 and 6 July 1966, Kuno Callsen et al, Ludwigsburg 207 AR-Z 419/62. On the *Volksdeutsche* informant network attached to EGC, see report of 11 September 1941, NARA RG 242 T-175/R 233/2722288. In another case the female ethnic German translator attached to Khmil'nyk gendarme post identified Jews and was also accused of shooting Jewish children during a ghetto clearing action there. See "Abschlussbericht," Litin Commissariat Case, Ludwigsburg 204a ARZ 135/67, 53.
  27. Peter Black, "Police Auxiliaries for Operation *Reinhard*: Shedding Light on the Trawniki Training Camp Through Documents from Behind the Iron Curtain," Conference on The Holocaust and Intelligence, City University of New York, 2–4 June 2003. I am grateful to Dr. Black for material on Trawniki guards from Zhytomyr, including the SS personnel and Nazi immigration files on the Becker brothers. On the ethnic German police in the Lublin area, see Peter Black's "Rehearsal for 'Reinhard': Odilo Globocnik and the Lublin *Selbstschutz*," *Central European History* 25 (1992), 204–26.
  28. The photo of the poster is reprinted in Ernst Klee, Willi Dressen, and Volker Riess, eds., *The Good Old Days: The Holocaust As Seen by Its Perpetrators and Bystanders* (New York: The Free Press, 1991), 107–17.
  29. Rosenberg came up with this plan in response to Stalin's 28 August 1941 order to liquidate the Volga German Republic and ship Volga Germans "as state enemies" to Asia. Rosenberg's deportation plan against German Jews became part of a general discussion among Hitler and his top brass about impending actions against Reich and other European Jews. See Christopher Browning and Juergen Matthaeus, *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939–March 1942* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 324. On Rosenberg's input, see Andrej Angrick, *Besatzungspolitik und Massenmord: Die Einsatzgruppe D in der suedlichen Sowjetunion, 1941–1943* (Hamburg, 2003), 263–64.
  30. The November 1943 massacres occurred at Majdanek, Trawniki, and Poniatowa (Lublin district). See war crimes trial material against Alfons J. Goetzfried, cited in Martin Dean, "The Participation of Soviet Germans in the Holocaust As Members of the German

- Police Forces in the Reich Commissariat Ukraine, 1941–1944" in Ray Brandon and Wendy Lower, eds., *The Shoah in Ukraine: History, Testimony and Memorialization* (forthcoming).
31. See the war crimes investigation of Dr. Siebert and his staff, *Zentralstelle Dortmund gegen Dr. Siebert und andere*, 45 Js 26/62, "Verfügung," 15 January 1974, 1–27.
  32. The "pacifistic" Mennonites comprised a large number of them. Nazi ethnographers such as Karl Stumpp traced German migration history further back to the medieval conquests of the Goths. Karl Stumpp, *Ostwanderung: Akten über die Auswanderung der Württemberger nach Russland 1816–1822* (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1941). This study was the second volume in a series: *Sammlung Georg Leibbrandt, Quellen zur Erforschung des Deutschtums in Osteuropa*. Leibbrandt was Rosenberg's chief of the political department in the Ostministerium, July 1941–1943. See the recent analysis of Stumpp's and Leibbrandt's work in Ukraine and their postwar fate in Eric Schmaltz and Samuel Siner, "The Nazi Ethnographic Research of Georg Leibbrandt and Karl Stumpp in Ukraine and Its North American Legacy," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 14 (Spring 2001), 28–64.
  33. On Nazi-Romanian diplomacy vis-à-vis the Holocaust in Transnistria, see Jean Ancel's *Transnistria, 1941–1943: The Romanian Mass Murder Campaign* (Tel Aviv: Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Center, 2003), volume 1.
  34. Radu Ioanid, *The Holocaust in Romania: The Destruction of Jews and Gypsies Under the Antonescu Regime, 1940–1944* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2000), 232–37. See *Zentralstelle Dortmund gegen Dr. Siebert und andere*, 45 Js 26/62; on the persecution of Roma by ethnic German farmers, see International Office of Migration Restitution Claims, *Roma Testimony*, Geneva, Switzerland, office.
  35. Dalia Ofer, "The Holocaust in Transnistria," in Lucjan Dobroszycki and Jeffrey S. Gurock, eds., *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union: Studies and Sources on the Destruction of the Jews in the Nazi-Occupied Territories of the USSR, 1941–1944* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1993), 136–38. On German involvement in Transnistria, see Ioanid, *The Holocaust in Romania*, 187–201. Ioanid estimates that 75,000 Jews were killed in the Gola region.
  36. Plans for increasing the *Selbstschutz* materialized at Hegewald where Commander von Oelhafen placed about 2,500 ethnic German men into police formations, established four *Selbstschutz* schools, and began training an additional one thousand men. Compare with the sixteen *Selbstschutz* schools in Transnistria, which trained seven thousand men. See undated report, NARA RG 242 T-175/R 72/2589180. Also see Valdis Lumans, *Himmler's Auxiliaries: The Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle and the German National Minorities in Europe, 1933–1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 246–247.
  37. For recent research on the German implementation of the Holocaust across Ukraine, see Dieter Pohl's "Schauplatz Ukraine: Der Massenmord an den Juden im Militärverwaltungsgebiet und im Reichskommissariat 1941–1943," in Norbert Frei, ed., *Ausbeutung, Vernichtung, Öffentlichkeit: NS-Lager und Vernichtungspolitik* (Munich: K. G. Sauer, 2000), 135–73.
  38. Dean, "The Participation of Soviet Germans," drawn from Zentrale Stelle Ludwigsburg II 204 AR-Z 128/67, vol. 1, 139–40, investigation of Arthur Reglin, police chief in Vchoraishe. Also see Martin Dean's *Collaboration in the Holocaust: Crimes of the Local Police in Belorussia and Ukraine, 1941–1944* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000).
  39. See the report, "Hauptamt VoMi, Aussenstelle Shitomir: Arbeit und Aufgaben der Volksdeutschen Mittelstelle," September–December 1941, ZSA, P1151-1-120. Also see the Hoffmeyer report of 12 October 1941, NARA RG 242 T-454/R 100/000661-670.
  40. This was all done with the Nazi aim, as the gendarme captain in Korosten put it, "of integrating the ethnic Germans into [their] community and strengthening the position of Germans in this country [Ukraine]." From USHMM RG 53.002M, reel 5, 658-1-1. Quoted from Martin Dean's "The Participation of Soviet Germans in the Holocaust as Members of the German Police Forces in the Reich Commissariat Ukraine, 1941–1944," unpublished manuscript, forthcoming in *The Shoah in Ukraine*.
  41. BdO (Befehlshaber der Ordnungspolizei; Commander in Chief of the Order Police) Ukraine, *Polizeischulungsleiter*, 22 August 1942, ZSA, P1151-1-147a. Similar themes appeared in

- the training of Sipo-SD elites. See Juergen Matthaeus, Konrad Kwiet, Jürgen Förster, and Richard Breitman, *Ausbildungsziel Judenmord? "Weltanschauliche Erziehung" von SS, Polizei und Waffen-SS im Rahmen der "Endlösung"* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 2003).
42. KdO (Kommandeur der Ordnungspolizei; Commander of the Order Police) Shitomir, Schupo Abteilung Berditschew to KdO, Re: Politische Betreuung der Schutzmannschaft, 8 October 1942, ZSA, P1151-1-5, USHMM, reel 5.
  43. VoMi Aussenstelle Shitomir, Situation Report, September–December 1941, ZSA, P1151-1-120. *Sonderkommando* R, Hoffmeyer report, 12 October 1941, NARA, T 454, roll 100, frame 000661-670.
  44. On Rosenberg's deputies see Schmaltz and Siner, "Nazi Ethnographic Research," 28–64.
  45. On the continuity and changes in women's roles as colonizers, see Lore Wildenthal, *German Women for Empire, 1884–1945* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), and Elisabeth Harvey, *Women and the Nazi East: Agents and Witnesses of Germanization* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003).
  46. General Commissar Klemm, Shitomir, Lagebericht, 3 June 1942, Bundesarchiv, R6/310. I am grateful to Dieter Pohl for this document. On the NSV, see Pg. (Party Comrade) Kersten's reports to Berlin, USHMM, RG 31.002m, Kiev Archive October Revolution, roll 6/3206/6/255.
  47. General Commissar Leyser, Formation of Hegewald Report, 16 November 1942, ZSA, P1182-1-32.
  48. Himmler order to Oswald Pohl regarding Christmas supplies for *Volksdeutsche*, 24 October 1942, NARA, T-175, roll 129, frame 2655141. Also see RKU chief Paul Dargel to Hoffmeyer regarding ethnic Germans in Ukraine, 20 March 1943, NARA, T-175, roll 72, frame 2589146.
  49. Wendy Lower, "A New Ordering of Space and Race: Nazi Colonial Dreams in Zhytomyr, Ukraine, 1941–1944," *German Studies Review* (May 2002), 228–54. On the 1943–44 plight of the *Volksdeutsche* and the ambiguous, exploitative nature of the entire classification process, see Doris Bergen's "The *Volksdeutsche* of Eastern Europe and the Collapse of the Nazi Empire, 1944–1945," in Alan Steinweis and Daniel Rogers, eds. *The Impact of Nazism: New Perspectives on the Third Reich and Its Legacy* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 101–28.
  50. Valdis Lumans recently came to a similar conclusion that "in practice the two operations unfolded independently and transpired along different paths. Granted these paths occasionally crossed, at times by coincidence, at other times by plan; however, the relationship was not a linear one of cause and effect." See Lumans, "A Reassessment," 82.
  51. At Hegewald in September 1942, RuSHA Chief Otto Hoffman told his SS farmers and *Volksdeutsche* that they were "pioneers of Germandom in the East and that when they make decisions in the field as lone colonizers they should ask themselves: What would the Führer or Reichsführer SS do in my place?" See Heinemann, *Rasse, Siedlung, "deutsches Blut,"* 437.
  52. Ihor Kamenetsky, *Secret Nazi Plans for Eastern Europe: A Study of Lebensraum Policies* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1961), 72–73.