

state and as long as its regime needed the Jews for the formation of a Magyar majority, the Jews also benefited from this situation. Furthermore, it was the low level of Hungary's economic development that enabled the involvement of the Jews at such an unprecedented scale in the modern capitalistic sector and their disproportionate overrepresentation in universities and in the free professions. However, the very continuation of the modernization processes in Hungary and the fact that it influenced larger segments of Hungarian society led to a situation that threatened the continuation of the Jewish dominance and contributed to the rise of sectors that challenged it. In the post-World War I period, the end of the multi-ethnic Hungarian kingdom made the capitalistic progress an inevitable process for much wider social sectors than before, and this brought to an almost immediate change in the attitude towards the Jews. This seems to be the explanation to the fact that Hungary, whose antisemitism did not have long and deep roots like in Poland or Germany, was the first European state to introduce the anti-Jewish Numerus Clausus law.

Jewish integration in Germany was an integral part or a by-product of modernization. Apparently, a direct continuation of these processes could have enabled the continuation of the Jewish integration in Germany, at the possible prize of gradual moderation or "normalization" of their dominance in certain economic sectors. What caused the eventual collapse of Jewish emancipation in Germany was the economic, social, and cultural crisis of the whole German society, which severely damaged its modernization and ruined the social groups and the liberal values that were the base of Jewish emancipation. In this sense, the tragic end of Jewish emancipation in Germany, like its beginning, was a by-product of the modernization process. The fate of the Jews was determined, to a certain extent, by the dynamic that shaped the whole development of the German society.¹⁰⁵

In Hungary, on the other hand, the problem was connected more directly from the beginning to the very form of Jewish emancipation. Due to the relative weakness of the ethnic Magyar modern urban middle class which identified with liberal values, the integration of the Jews in the state and the society was based on historical state of affairs that had to do mainly with the political values and interests of the ruling elite. The inner contradiction was that the Jews were supposed to help advance the capitalistic economy and the modernization process in the service of traditional social groups that sought to preserve their own traditional dominance in the post-feudal order. It was not merely the crisis of modernity but rather its very success that led to the crisis in the status of Hungarian Jews in the aftermath of the First World War.

¹⁰⁵ It is important to note that with the Nazi movement's success the fate of the Jews in Germany got a much more central place than a by-product of the whole German modernization crisis. However, it seems that this should not be attributed to the basic dynamic of the German society but rather to the centrality of antisemitism in the Nazi ideology and to the fact that this movement, of all others, was the one to rise to power in Germany.

NEUTRAL SWITZERLAND, NATIONAL SOCIALIST PAST, AND THE LEGACY OF HISTORY

Switzerland had difficulty finding its place in the new international system in the immediate post-World War II period as well as after the end of the Cold War. In the post-war period, Geneva, which had previously been the seat of the League of Nations, partially lost its importance, and only in 2002, after long abstaining from the United Nations, did Switzerland become a full member. It seems that such a political contradiction is interlocked with more than fifty years of amnesia which included forging and preserving myths about the history of Switzerland during and after the National Socialist Period. Since the 1960s, overcoming the Nazi past itself has become an enduring scandal in most European countries, but in Switzerland this really only occurred in the 1990s. An international indignation over unresolved Holocaust legacies and victims' assets disgraced a country that had traditionally embraced humanitarian values. The Swiss public woke up from a mental paralysis engendered by a metaphorical neutrality and the illusion that debates abroad were irrelevant for Switzerland. Many European as well as non-European countries felt obliged to give answers to the question of restitution or compensation for assets and goods once looted by the National Socialists. Ironically, the shock contributed much to a new political orientation of Switzerland towards the international community in today's changing global order; in 2001, Switzerland became a member of the United Nations Organization.

A POLICY OF MEMORY AND CONTINUITY

The classic view of neutrality is fundamentally still that which, apart from minor changes, emerged in the period prior to 1939-1945. It is viewed as necessary and useful, even if not understood by outsiders. Despite the aforementioned reservations, Swiss neutrality during World War II is regarded as successful. Long after the end of the war in 1945, Switzerland appeared to enjoy the respect of the rest of the world. The fact that the Swiss policy of neutrality is held to be in agreement with international and neutrality law, as interpreted at that time, is based on a setting of justification and explanations. Strict observation of legal imperatives, a justification that tends to employ reasons of state, made the argument of neutrality susceptible to criticism as "legalistic" and lacking "moral standards"; in this view,

Switzerland has been criticised recently by United States officials.¹ However, the historical role of neutrality has been questioned in connection with various political issues at different times.² After 1951 Switzerland acquiesced in the bipolar logic of the Cold War and secretly allowed NATO to vent its exports to the Warsaw Pact countries.³ In the first two or three postwar decades, any questioning of a closely watched and mythologized concept of neutrality only took place in passing, and precisely this "solution" of ignoring the issue turned out to be the "problem" that emerged in debates since the 1980s and 1990s.

Literary sensibility had already anticipated such finding though the author needs today to be discovered again. Kurt Guggenheim's 1959 novel, *Sandkorn für Sandkorn*, illustrates the power of "neutrality" when likened to a metaphorical quality of mythical immanence. He contrasts the themes featured in advertisements of national life insurance companies that play "a diabolically suggestive game with death, the one thing that is certain, even if the timing is not," with a figure, the "material manager," who takes care in everything he does, who discards tram tickets properly in the tram ticket bin and, out of "respect for material," lives his life without "wasting and squandering." What the author liked about his figure was his attitude towards life, which "contained the totality of Swiss neutrality, which had enabled this country to preserve peace and in doing so not only to save material," but above all "to accumulate a priceless store of self-confidence."⁴

The ongoing appeal to a special status, the sense of security in "accumulating" essential neutrality, gave credence to the belief that Switzerland existed as a neutral state in an apparently unbroken and stable "history." This attitude was strengthened by the fact that the divided European continent, despite the build up of arms on both sides, was paradoxically going through a quiet period of successful political peace initiatives. The perception that in Switzerland history was relatively untouched by these developments began to collapse around 1989. Up until then, this perception had promoted an image of neutrality that took the form of collective forgetting.⁵ The fabrication

1 U.S. and Allied Wartime and Postwar Relations and Negotiations with Argentina, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Turkey on Looted Gold and German External Assets and U.S. Concerns about the Fate of the Wartime Ustasha Treasury, coordinated by S. E. Elzenstat, prepared by W. Slany (Washington D.C., 1998), VI-XI.

2 G. Kreis, 'Der Stellenwert der Neutralität in der aktuellen Debatte um die Rolle der Schweiz während des Zweiten Weltkrieges,' in *Fluchtgelder, Raubgut und nachrichtenslose Vermögen*, ed. Swiss Federal Archives (Bern, 1997); E. Bonjour, *Swiss Neutrality, Its History and Meaning* (London, 1946) was intended as a rebuttal of the Allied position. See also by the same author: E. Bonjour, *A short history of Switzerland* (Oxford, 1952).

3 A. Schaller, *Schweizer Neutralität im West-Ost-Handel: Das Hotz-Linder-Agreement vom 23. Juli 1951* (Bern, 1987).

4 K. Guggenheim, 'Sandkorn für Sandkorn [1959],' in *Werke*, vol. 2 (Frauenfeld, 1992), p. 173.

5 J. Picard, 'Switzerland as a "Bystander" of History, On Neutrality in a Time of Global Crisis and Genocidal War,' in *Remembering for the Future. The Holocaust in an Age of Genocide*, ed. J. K. Roth and E. Maxwell (Houndsmill, 2001), pp. 71-95.

of recollection, especially in the form of state-organized descriptions of the past, fit into the framework of neutrality. As Regula Ludi has stated, it would enhance our understanding if we recognized that the concept of "neutrality" was used as a strategy to create continuity after 1945.⁶ It insulated the country from unpleasant questions about its past and present. Disentangling this connection would perhaps enable the Swiss to take a less biased view of "world history." It would clear the way for the Swiss to learn how to effectively pursue their foreign political interests in the developing structures of European civil society, which is starting to flesh out purely economic structures with political and constitutional institutions.

Rather than examining explanations of this postwar period in Swiss memory and historiography, let us look at the historiography on the pre-1945 period. For the period of Nazi rule, the German-Swiss relationship boiled down to the options available to any small state when confronting the policies and war economies of a large power. However intensively it was nurtured and carefully managed, this coexistence remained nonetheless an unequal relationship. The starting point is the National Socialist project of a "Germanised" Europe, which was linked to the idea of a "Greater Germany" based on racial foundations. In this context anti-semitism was an important factor in the complex web of ideology and had an effect on various policies and aspects of life. I will consider three features of the Swiss state of affairs, namely aspects of the history of Swiss policy with regard to military, economic, and refugee issues.

FACING NAZI GERMANY: LOOTING AND "LEBENSRAUM"

In his conception of politics Hitler linked radical and universal anti-semitism and racism with the declared goal of expansion within Europe. National Socialist racism was linked with the notion of Germany assuming a position as a world power within Europe and ultimately on the world's seas as well. This entailed an intention to profit from the expected dissolution of the British colonial empire. Elements of this planned foreign policy can be discerned in the efforts of senior members of the National Socialist movement to oblige the United States to maintain a neutral position by talking of a German "Monroe-Doctrine," which left no doubt about National Socialist intentions. In Europe itself, the primary aim was to acquire "Lebensraum" for the Germans in the East, in order to provide the Third Reich with the preconditions for world power status. The conditions of warfare and colonisation in the East allowed for a great deal of latitude in

6 R. Ludi, 'Waging War on Wartime Memory: Recent Swiss Debates on the Legacies of the Holocaust and the Nazi Era,' *Jewish Social Studies* 9/3 (2003); R. Ludi and A.-A. Speck, 'Swiss Victims of National Socialism: How Switzerland Came to Terms with the Past,' in *Remembering for the Future*, vol. II, ed. Roth and Maxwell (Houndsmill, 2001), pp. 907-22.

the carrying out of the mass murders of Jews and other groups among the population. Racism and territorial expansion were turned into reality by the politics of power.

If a democratic state had hitherto been identified with the principle of free trade, oriented towards the world market, National Socialist rule was eventually equated with a new "alternative" economic order based on state direction and control of private enterprise. Therefore National Socialist economic ideology put its money on the concept of a closed trading state, which bore the features of a *Planwirtschaft*, a planned economy. This ideal became attractive in several European countries where financial problems had disrupted society. In Germany, the conviction that an authoritarian approach and planned economy would work rested on a pact between major elites of the economy and the army as well as Wilhelminian conservatism and National Socialism, which had been brought about by experience of the economic crisis. The National Socialists took over the existing "reformist" slogans and combined them with plans for expansion in racist and colonising terms which were part of their foreign policy and their power politics. The development of a Central European economic sector clearly anticipated territorial expansion, i.e. the policy of "Lebensraum."

Streams of capital and knowledge are not bound by national borders, but, under the conditions of relatively free trade, follow transnational "areas" which are determined by systems of varied kinds. The chances and risks which affect political and entrepreneurial action are constantly reevaluated in the course of events.⁷ Even where the preferences for entrepreneurial action are dictated by economic advantage political risks also play a role in the decision making by economic elites. In decisions of foreign economic policy – for example the Swiss rejection of exchange control or their advancement of state credit to the Axis Powers and the Allies – basic values become the subject of conflicts between states and of conflicts of a social nature within states. Seen in retrospect, neutrality could turn into a theoretical trap: outside Switzerland its "neutrality" took on a negative value because it affected foreign economic decisions. The attitude adopted in the last two years of the war, 1944–45, of not freezing relations with Germany, but rather of investing in the expected "normality" of the postwar order was read by the Allies, in view of the criminal nature of National Socialist policies and economics, as a moral concession by Switzerland to a hostile ideology (though such a reading lasted only a few years).

Swiss attitudes in the face of the racist and expansionist economic policy of the National Socialist state are only comprehensible if we consider political decisions as the expression of a complex mixture of political calculation, ideological determinants, carefully controlled information, and economic interests. Swiss financial and commercial interests counted on a strong

⁷ See J. Tanner, 'Switzerland's International Financial Relations, 1931–50,' in *Switzerland and Second World War*, ed. G. Kreis (Basel, 1997), pp. 42 ff.

German economy not only during but after the war. Business circles therefore urged the authorities to sustain economic relations to Nazi-Germany.⁸ We may distinguish three levels to the system of rules behind such decisions: first of all, there is the microstructural area of entrepreneurs and firms, which cultivated links and supplied markets within the geographical power areas of the Third Reich and the Allies; second a middle level with state organisations and quasi-state organisations which controlled activities with the Reich and the Allies; and third, on the macroeconomic level, there are the basic economic and political conditions of the global situation and the ideological perspectives of the men in power. National Socialist anti-semitism, that is to say the measures of discrimination, justified by racist ideology, and the advantages of exploitation that result from it, produced different effects on these differing levels. It was only in the postwar period that these financial and economic relationships became visible as problematic political situations. Whether in current discourse the past should be interpreted against the background of Auschwitz and human rights, or exclusively as a politically "necessary" calculation in a particular situation, as a question of economic risk, and appealing to the law as it stood at that time, has been the cause of heated discussions since the 1990's.

Within Swiss economic history, the facts and aspects of finance, currency, industry, and trade appear as relatively synchronised factors. In brief, during the war the Swiss franc was a freely convertible currency of reserve and exchange. The net inflow of currency which resulted from the surpluses of the balance of payments determined to a large extent the monetary basis. The growth of the monetary reserves by 9.5% annually during the war years contrasts with the indices of prosperity, which described a largely stagnating national income and exports that had been falling since the 1930s. As a contrast to this recessive general development, there was a relative increase in the quantities of exports to the two Axis states. In the years 1940 to 1942, Swiss exports to Germany and Italy amounted to over 45% of the country's total exports. Germany had long since assumed a leading position in Swiss foreign trade: during the ten years before the outbreak of war, Germany's share of the goods imported by Switzerland was one quarter of the total value and its share of exports over the same period wavered between an eighth and a fifth. The balance of trade with Germany was largely equalised by the provision of services, which included the transfer of capital and the granting of licences.⁹

⁸ *Switzerland, National Socialism, and the Second World War: Final Report*, ed. Independent Commission of Experts Switzerland – Second World War (ICE) (Zürich, 2002); Recent historiography has stressed the decisive impact of business interests' on Switzerland's foreign policy; see P. Hug, 'Innenansichten der Aussenpolitik – Akteure und Interessen,' in *Etappen des Bundesstaates: Staats- und Nationsbildung der Schweiz 1848–1998*, ed. Brigitte Studer (Zürich, 1998), pp. 203–36.

⁹ *Historische Statistik der Schweiz*, ed. Heiner Ritzmann-Blickenstorfer (Zürich, 1997), pp. 698 ff. and 805 ff; Compare also an early analysis of M. Steiner, *Die Verschiebung der schweizerischen Aussenhandelsstruktur während des Zweiten Weltkrieges* (Zürich, 1950).

In terms of financial policy, through the acceptance of gold, which was centralised after 1943, the government pursued a policy of creaming off money. This policy was continued after the end of the war. From the National Socialist point of view the Swiss rejection of exchange control made Switzerland into an important market for currency and goods. On the basis of the strong Swiss franc and a high internal savings rate the National Socialist state had not only the possibility of being able to secure the desired deliveries of high technology items and electricity in exchange for gold and raw materials, but also of having credit for its imports. These credits linked to goods were presented from the Swiss side as a "weapon" in the politics of neutrality, an argument that was also presented with reference to the Allies. Looked at more closely, they were a continuation of Switzerland's role as a country that exported capital; they were a wartime form of export or transfer guarantee for the Swiss economy whose interests as creditor were principally covered by taking up gold of German as well as Russian origin.¹⁰ Seen in this light, even the wartime rationing of food consumption inside Switzerland represents a form of state enforced savings.

The system of export and transfer guarantees also had its genesis in the financial crisis of Germany at the end of the 1920's, which made the Swiss economic elites pessimistic. The behaviour of the banks in Germany generated scepticism inside and outside the country. But the National Socialists played up the antisemitic myth of the "Jewish" character of banking.¹¹ As a reaction to the bank crashes which led to a dramatic reduction of Germany's gold and currency reserves, in 1933 the German government declared a moratorium on the transfer of financial payments to foreign creditors. Negotiations between Germany and Switzerland began shortly afterwards and led in 1934 to the conclusion of a clearing agreement. The legal basis of the clearing agreements was the law passed by the Federal Government *Über wirtschaftliche Massnahmen gegenüber dem Ausland* of 14 October, 1933, which empowered the Federal Government to take measures to protect national production, to promote exports and to equalise the balance of payments; inside Switzerland, the industrial sector was given clear preference over the financial side. A special aspect of this agreement concerned the Swiss export of electricity produced in hydroelectric power stations which was indispensable for the Southern Germany industrial area; this was not only an economic issue, but a strategic and political one.¹² Another example of the impact of the clearing policy is the fact that German Jews were not allowed to transfer their assets out of the Reich.

¹⁰ Compare the figures in *Switzerland and the Gold Transactions*, ed. ICE (Bern, 1998), p. 39.

¹¹ H. James, 'Die Deutsche Bank und die Diktatur 1933-1945,' in *Die Deutsche Bank*, ed. L. Gall et al. (München, 1995), p. 334.

¹² J.-D. Kleisl, 'Electricité suisse et le Troisième Reich, 1939-1945,' in *Rapport final*, vol. 5, ed. ICE (Zürich, 2001).

They were forced to smuggle currencies or, in some cases, invest their money in works of art.¹³

An important consequence of the clearing system in foreign trade was that payments were henceforth not made directly between importers and exporters but between two state institutions. Only recently has research shed light on the complex legal and financial "techniques" of this bilateral payments system.¹⁴ A precondition for the functioning of the system was an approximate balance between what the two sides had to offer. The exchange of goods and services was therefore limited as to quantity and value and subject to a quota. The establishment of appropriate quotas then became the subject of regular bilateral negotiations. Within the spectrum of the Swiss clearing system rivalries developed between various areas of trade and various firms who always wanted to be given preferential treatment in the payment arrangements. This ultimately required political decisions which were largely taken in favour of "work and capital," that is to say exportable industrial production. Internal Swiss arguments over the available funds for clearing were aggravated by Germany's demand for Swiss francs within the framework of the so-called currency overlap.¹⁵

The bilateralism which characterised the Swiss-German exchange arrangements from 1934 onwards, with the clearing system modelled after the planned economy, was not only significant for technical financial reasons. The system had an inclusive political and legal character which became dramatically visible under wartime conditions. Jakob Tanner sums up the structure of the clearing system at the intersection of financial, trade and war policies as follows: "Together with the so-called Clearingmilliard, a credit [of more than one thousand millions] given by Switzerland to Germany within the framework of the trade and finance clearing system, trade in gold formed the monetary counterpart to the largely concrete economic integration of the Swiss production base into the German war economy in the years 1940 to 1944."¹⁶ At the end of the war, German clearing debts amounted to 1.19 billion francs, the highpoint of export credit having been reached immediately before the German attack on the Soviet Union. To be fair, critics of this historiographical analysis have recently pointed

¹³ See the studies of the Independent Commission of Experts Switzerland - Second World War (ICE), as indicated below.

¹⁴ For this see S. Frech, 'Clearing, Der Zahlungsverkehr der Schweiz mit den Achsenmächten,' *Studien und Beiträge zur Forschung*, ed. ICE, vol. 3 (Zürich, 2001).

¹⁵ M. Meier, S. Frech et al., 'Schweizerische Aussenwirtschaftspolitik 1930-1948: Strukturen, Verhandlungen, Funktionen,' *Studien und Beiträge zur Forschung*, ed. ICE, vol. 10 (Zürich 2002). See also *Aufstieg und Niedergang des Bilateralismus, Schweizerische Aussen- und Aussenwirtschaftspolitik 1930-1960. Rahmenbedingungen, Entscheidstrukturen, Fallstudien*, ed. P. Hug and M. Kloter (Zürich, 1999), pp. 13-139 and 141-72.

¹⁶ J. Tanner, 'Finanzwirtschaftliche Probleme der Schweiz im Zweiten Weltkrieg und deren Folge für die wirtschaftliche Entwicklung nach 1945,' in *Probleme der Finanzgeschichte des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Rolf Caesar et al. (Berlin, 1989), p. 84.

out that Switzerland also gave a credit of around 800 millions to the British during war time.¹⁷

From the German point of view, Swiss trade policy corresponded to the necessity of the war economy. Switzerland became a place for production and finance, and increasingly turned out to be a useful channel for acquiring currency, transferring gold, and converting assets that had been acquired by theft or extortion.¹⁸ In a similar way Switzerland was a haven for tax evasion from Germany, France or other countries, or for Jews who smuggled currency out of Germany. All this was regarded as an illegal practice by National Socialist authorities.¹⁹ Admittedly, Switzerland was in an extremely difficult position because it lacked raw materials of its own, but the corresponding attitude of Switzerland during the prewar and the war years required some explanation even at the time for those involved. This is indicated by a broad range of statistics, accounts, and reports of both official and private character, which became available after the end of the war.

One example: Heinrich Homberger, the influential representative of the Swiss Association of Trade and Industry and member of the standing committee of the negotiating delegation of the Bundesrat, judged the clearing system to be "extremely useful in order to deal appropriately with the interests that are issue." It is interesting that he gives a hint in this document (whether concealed or unintended) that the clearing system itself was practised within the area under the control of the National Socialist state between Germany and the states it occupied: "since in the *occupied* territories payments were only permitted in Reichsmarks, Germany wanted without more ado to go over to that method in its clearing relations with Switzerland."²⁰ This had to be all the truer for unoccupied states which nevertheless participated closely in German policies, such as Romania or Hungary. In any case, Homberger saw that from his point of view, the fact that Switzerland practised the clearing system with Germany while insisting on the validity of the strong Swiss franc beside the Reichsmark as a "double currency" in their exchange relations, was a decisive "attribute of an independent state." However, he did not deal with the implications, in terms of looting and extermination, of National Socialist occupation policy.

17 See O. Inglin, *Der stille Krieg: Der Wirtschaftskrieg zwischen Grossbritannien und der Schweiz im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Zürich 1991).

18 Compare M. Perrenoud, F. Adank et al., 'La place financière et les banques suisses à l'époque du national-socialisme,' in *Rapport final*, ed. ICE, vol. 13 (Zürich, 2001).

19 An example is given in the documentary story of Israeli novelist R. Frister, *Ascher Levys Sensucht nach Deutschland* (Berlin, 1999), p. 10, 299.

20 H. Homberger, *Schweizerische Handelspolitik im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Zürich, 1970), p. 54 (emphasis mine).

NEW QUESTIONS, NEW REALITIES

From current research it is clear that at the interface between money and gold policy, trade policy and armament finance, questions about the history of ideology can also be illuminating – even if the effects of Swiss financial and economic policy have been ignored for all too long because of the historiographic filter of "neutrality."²¹ Switzerland obviously developed the principle of state financing of exports with its clearing credits at a time when the constraints of German exchange control and the Allied blockade policy were beginning to take effect. Indeed the Swiss attempt to keep out of the warfare between the Axis and the Allies cannot be understood exclusively from the perspective of Swiss self-perception, according to which Switzerland had remained neutral in terms of international law. Here – as never before – the legal position, the reality of war, and the metaphorical use of neutrality failed to coincide. A rigorous distinction must be made between them, just as the legal position and the real policy of neutrality differed from the employment of "neutrality" as imagery in contemporary explanations, polemics, and apologetics.²²

This much became accepted knowledge on new realities when Daniel Bourgeois established the importance of transnational analysis with his book *Le Troisième Reich et la Suisse* (Switzerland and the Third Reich).²³ Further research brought a more accurate estimate of the mutual interests and economic relations with the Axis powers²⁴ or the Allied states.²⁵ Details are less clear about the perspective from the German point of view, especially with reference to questions in the areas of financial and economic history. However, it can be stated that National Socialist policy itself necessarily had a strong interest in external trade links with Switzerland. Switzerland appeared more and more as an indispensable economic partner. In contrast to the other hegemonised and conquered states, especially in eastern and southern Europe, which from a National Socialist point of view needed to be exploited and disposed of as "racially and ethnically inferior," Switzerland, with its anti-Bolshevist attitude, scarcely offered much

21 G. Kreis, 'Die Schweiz und der Zweite Weltkrieg: Bilanz und bibliografischer Überblick nach dreissig Jahren,' in *La seconda guerra mondiale nella prospettiva storica a trent'anni dall'epilogo*, ed. G. Bianchi and G. Rigamonti (Como, 1977), 231.

22 See Picard, 'Switzerland as a "Bystander" of History,' pp. 71 ff.

23 D. Bourgeois, *Le Troisième Reich et la Suisse 1939-1941* (Neuchâtel, 1974). See also further articles by Bourgeois: *Das Geschäft mit Hitler-Deutschland* (Zürich, 2000).

24 R. U. Vogler, *Die Wirtschaftsverhandlungen zwischen der Schweiz und Deutschland 1940 und 1941* (Zürich, 1998); K. Urner, 'Die schweizerisch-deutschen Handelsbeziehungen während des Zweiten Weltkrieges,' *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 27 November, 2 and 6 December 1968.

25 M. Durrer, *Die schweizerisch-amerikanischen Finanzbeziehungen im Zweiten Weltkrieg. Von der Blockierung der schweizerischen Guthaben in den USA über die Safehaven-Politik zum Washingtoner Abkommen (1941-1946)* (Bern and Stuttgart, 1984); N. R. Wylie, *The Riddle of the Swiss: British policy towards Switzerland 1940-1943* (Cambridge, 1994).

reason for an attack. It must rather have been considered as somewhere that would be naturally hegemonised, at best analogous to Sweden or perhaps even to Vichy France. With the defeat of the Third Reich, the advance of Allied troops and the failure of the German counterblockade the system of mutually promised deliveries and the balancing out of demands for payment broke down. The economic collapse of the Third Reich, the turning away from the clearing system and credits linked to goods and the opening of Switzerland's western border naturally meant that Allied demands that deliveries and transits be stopped were automatically fulfilled. In this way the symbiotic structure of the clearing agreements was dissolved, but not the political significance of the remaining mutual demands and debts. Heinrich Homberger's testimony makes clear the amazement that overtook him when he was forced to realise the price of the "economic defence of the country" and the neutrality that was characterised in this way.²⁶ The adoption of the Bretton Woods resolution in 1944, in which neutral states were required to hand over those assets of the enemy which had been stolen, made it clear that the symbiosis which had been undertaken in the name of neutrality had been watched by outsiders with suspicion.

The vacuum left by the implosion of "Greater Germany," which had been "planned" in terms of economic ideology and realised as a campaign of robbery and murder, made it clear to the Swiss decision makers that their policy of remaining economically and financially linked to Germany for far too long had been imprinted by more than bad taste. Justifications in terms of neutrality seemed unbelievable in the eyes of the American government. The risky nature of Switzerland's relations with the Third Reich turned out to a trap of good faith which it laid for itself, inasmuch as the Swiss justified their policy to themselves, against their better knowledge.²⁷ Such self-deception could never obscure the fact that this policy carried a cost. The Swiss agreed to pay 250 million SFR in compensation for the purpose of reconstruction in Europe, and the Allies declared that they would forego any claims against the Swiss for gold which they received from Germany, though the issue of how to implement this agreement remained open. Additionally, in a settlement finalized at the end of August 1952, an agreement was reached on the liquidations of frozen German assets in Switzerland in return for a lump sum payment to the Allies.²⁸ But the

26 Homberger, *Handelspolitik*, pp. 119 f.

27 H. James, 'Der Goldmarkt als "Landesverteidigung",' *Tages-Anzeiger*, 26 September 1996. The concept "trap of good faith" is to be understood as the result, for which they only have themselves to blame, of a Swiss discourse of self-justification. Otherwise the misleading impression could arise that it concerned a "trap" set by the National Socialist state into which Switzerland fell to a certain extent "in good faith," which would present Switzerland as a putative victim.

28 L. von Castelmur, *Schweizerisch-alliierte Finanzbeziehungen im Übergang vom Zweiten Weltkrieg zum kalten Krieg: Die deutschen Guthaben zwischen Zwangsliquidierung und Freigabe, 1945-1952* (Zürich, 1997), p. 255. This author mainly ignored the questions of unclaimed assets of Nazi victims raised during and after the Swiss-American negotiations; in his study, the agreement seems to be a victor's success of Swiss diplomacy.

Washington treaty of 1946, as well as the London conference on war debts, marginalized restitution and the compensation of victims in favour of interstate war reparations. These arrangements were heavily determined by the new international conditions at the beginning of the "Cold War." The failure to address the missing assets of Nazi victims in Switzerland²⁹ or to solve that crucial problem between 1962 and 1972 provoked international discussions in the 1990s, pressures on the country from outside, payments of Swiss banks in favour of Holocaust victims, and the investigations by two international commissions.³⁰

In Switzerland, an international commission of historians begun to investigate the general relations between the country's economy and the National Socialist state; it presented its results in 2001.³¹ It is important to state that the investigations covered the period before 1945, as well as the time after the defeat of the National Socialist regime. This approach revealed several dimensions to the handling of the assets in banks and the life insurance policies of those who were persecuted by the National Socialists. On the one hand, the National Socialist practice of confiscation and stealing bonds, stocks, shares, and insurance policies, and the many promises to create new "Lebensraum" and large areas for future economic expectations, obliged the Swiss to decide whether they intended to profit and cooperate or not. On the other hand, the administration of unclaimed assets and life insurance policies after the war was part of a Swiss and international policy on the past (*Vergangenheitspolitik*) which includes not only restitution and compensation but more recent questions of historical and legal legitimacy.³²

29 J. Picard, *The Assets of Missing Nazi Victims in Switzerland* (Zürich, 1993); in a German version 'Die Vermögen rassistisch, religiös und politisch Verfolgter in der Schweiz,' in *Studien und Quellen 22* (Die Schweiz und die Flüchtlinge 1933-1945) (1996), pp. 233 ff; *Report on Dormant Accounts of Victims of Nazi Persecution in Swiss Banks*, ed. Independent Committee of Eminent Persons (ICEP) (Berne, 1999).

30 *Année politique suisse/Schweizerische Politik 1996*, ed. Institut für Politikwissenschaft, Universität Bern (Bern, 1997), pp. 119 f; *The Disposition of Assets Deposited in Swiss Banks by Missing Nazi Victims, Hearing before the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, House of Representatives, U.S. Congress, December 11, 1996* (Washington, 1997).

31 The Independent Commission of Experts Switzerland - Second World War (ICE) is the Editor of twenty volumes of research, published by the names of the authors, mainly in German, partly in French, at the Zurich Chronos-Verlag. A synthesis report of the Commission appeared in 2002. The research program started 1997; on this see J. Picard, 'Das Forschungsprogramm der Unabhängigen Expertenkommission Schweiz - Zweiter Weltkrieg,' in *Raubgold, Reduit, Flüchtlinge. Zur Geschichte der Schweiz im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, ed. P. Sarasin and R. Wecker (Zürich, 1998), pp. 169 ff.

32 See the recent research contributions edited by the Independent Commission of Experts Switzerland - Second World War (ICE) as follows: B. Bonhage, H. Lussy and M. Perrenoud, *Nachrichtenlose Vermögen bei Schweizer Banken. Annahme ausländischer Gelder seit 1931 und Restitution von Opferguthaben seit 1945* (Zürich, 2001); S. Karlen, L. Chocomell et al., *Expansion, Konfiskation, Nachrichtenlosigkeit Schweizerische Versicherungsgesellschaften im Machtbereich des "Dritten Reiches"* (Zürich, 2001); H. Lussy, B. Bonhage and C. Horn, *Schweizerische Wertpapiergeschäfte mit dem "Dritten Reich": Handel, Raub und Restitution* (Zürich, 2001).

The newly discovered history of IG Farben and the so-called *Interhandel* affair is a good example of this. Founded in 1910, this German company had come under "Swiss" control during the 1930s. Only now can we see how, after the war, it became a subject of conflict between a Swiss bank and American interests.³³ This collapsing together of different times and interests places historiographical continuity and discontinuity in a new light. Many other issues illustrate this development. The enforced auction of works of Jewish-owned art collections and "degenerate" works from German museums, the role of Swiss and German-Jewish emigrants as intermediaries in dealing with art works, and the restitution of stolen art works after the war have similarly erupted into the present.³⁴ The employment of forced labourers by subsidiaries of some Swiss companies inside Germany and the amnesia concerning their role in recent years is another example.³⁵ Or, the question of how the Swiss behaved in view of the wave of "aryanization" in Austria in 1938, which was raised anew because of the compensation made by Austria in recent years.³⁶ The latest investigations include case studies of how National Socialist criminals escaped at the end of and just after the war and managed to reach Latin American countries by using Swiss financial intermediaries or the help of Swiss governmental officials.³⁷

THE END OF HEROISM: A POSTWAR MILITARY DEBATE

It is evident that Switzerland's neutrality, armed or otherwise, was never unconditional and that its relations with the Third Reich followed a pattern set earlier in its relations with other powerful neighbours, France in particular. Initial discussions about cooperation between the French and the Swiss general staffs in 1939, papers about which had fallen into the hands of the German troops, were based on "Case North," the assumption that Hitler would unleash war on Switzerland. Switzerland wanted to make sure, in the event of an attack, that it would have an ally. Above and beyond these

33 M. König, *Interhandel: Die schweizerische Holding der IG Farben und ihre Metamorphosen. Eine Affäre um Eigentum und Interessen, 1910-1999* (Zürich, 2001); B. Bonhage, *Schweizerische Bodenkreditanstalt: "Aussergewöhnliche Zeiten bringen aussergewöhnliche Geschäfte"* (Zürich, 2001); both volumes edited by ICE.

34 E. Tisa Francini, A. Heuss and G. Kreis, *Fluchtgut - Raubgut. Der Transfer von Kulturgütern in und über die Schweiz 1933-1945 und die Frage der Restitution* (Zürich, 2001), edited by ICE.

35 L. Straumann and D. Wildmann, *Schweizer Chemieunternehmen im "Dritten Reich"* (Zürich, 2001); Christlan Ruch et al., *Geschäfte und Zwangsarbeit, Schweizer Industrieunternehmen im "Dritten Reich"* (Zürich, 2001); both volumes edited by ICE.

36 G. Spuhler, U. Jud et al., *"Arisierung" in Österreich und ihre Bezüge zur Schweiz* (Zürich, 2001). Edited by ICE.

37 C. Uhlig, P. Barthelmess et al., *Tarnung, Transfer, Transit: Die Schweiz als Drehscheibe verdeckter deutscher Operationen, 1939-1952* (Zürich, 2001). Edited by ICE. Petra Barthelmess has completed now a further research on these issues.

technical and military considerations, however, the discussions represented a breach of the laws of neutrality, in this case in favour of the Allies.³⁸ Accordingly the Swiss army was mobilised for a short time from autumn 1939, but after the Fall of France in June 1940 the situation was reassessed. The negotiations with France show the army acting in a political context which later, in the case of Germany, assumed a predominantly economic character. This can only mean that the basic principle of armed neutrality was applied very flexibly in accordance with the degree of threat and the state of the war. Implicitly the option to act in favour of the German side always remained open, and open to interpretation, and represented an invitation to make a gesture in the direction of Germany, if not necessarily a military one.³⁹ The decision for a partial demobilisation of the army, accompanied by a far-reaching review of the geopolitical and strategic situation, was a pivotal moment in Swiss history.

When in summer 1940 the army was demobilised by two thirds to a figure of 150,000 men and withdrawn into the Alps, the so-called "redoubt", the Swiss turned to economic cooperation with the great powers. There is a subtle but vital linkage between the "redoubt," and the myth of "armed neutrality," and the reality of economic cooperation with National Socialism. The commander of the army, General Henri Guisan, put a few Germanophile officers out to grass and projected himself as a symbol of order and resistance. He was able to attract to himself the energies of those parts of the population who were uncertain which way to turn.⁴⁰ But demobilisation benefited the labour market and the supply of raw materials, and freed up the resources necessary for economic cooperation. The implications of the decision to withdraw to the central alpine fortress did not go unchallenged among the army leadership at the time. The commander of the 2nd Army Corps, Fritz Prisi, was afraid the army could be starved out and saw no sense in "defending alpenstocks and glaciers, if the central area with its rich economic production, and the majority of the Swiss people is given up to the enemy without a fight."⁴¹ It was rather a matter of fighting, he said, for "constitution, honour, and freedom," because even today there was a point in dying for an *idea*. Many people who experienced the war years may have been very conscious of the threatened handing over to Germany of old people, women, and children who lived in the *Mittelland*, the non-alpine central area. So the decision in favour of a withdrawal to the "redoubt" hardly warrants the veneration of Guisan despite his success in

38 G. Kreis, *Auf den Spuren von "La Charité". Die schweizerische Armeeführung im Spannungsfeld des deutsch-französischen Gegensatzes* (Basel, 1976).

39 J. Tanner, "Reduit national" und Aussenwirtschaft, Wechselwirkungen zwischen militärischer Dissuasion und ökonomischer Kooperation mit den Achsenmächten, in *Raubgold, Reduit, Flüchtlinge*, ed. P. Sarasin and R. Wecker (Zürich, 1998), pp. 81-103, especially pp. 86 ff.

40 On this G. Kreis, 'Henri Guisan - Bild eines Generals. Glanz und Elend einer Symbolfigur,' *Schweizer Monatshefte* 5 (1990), pp. 413 ff.

41 W. Gautschi, *General Henri Guisan. Die schweizerische Armeeführung im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Zürich, 1989), pp. 310 f.

promoting the "intellectual defence of the country" and styling himself as a symbol of national resistance.

The conflict between Prisi and his opposite, Ulrich Wille, who was soon removed from the scene, anticipated, as it were, the later dispute among historians about the question whether the retreat into the Alps was really a matter of defending the country, in the sense of "neutrality and waging war," or it merely offered an illusion of heroism that was useful as a myth of legitimation during and even after war time. The "redoubt," as recent research shows, must be understood largely as a tactical deterrent and a gesture of resistance which only had value within political equations so long as there was *no* real war. The demobilisation of large parts of the army made possible the release of workers who set the apparatus of production in motion in the *central* area which was slated to be given up in case of invasion.⁴² Economic motives played only a minor role as far as General Guisan was concerned, but on the other hand they counted all the more in the circles of industry and the National Bank who demanded demobilisation.⁴³

The subtle connection between military and economic elements, which long remained unexplored, explains why in the past military aspects were more visible than economic ones. Research into Switzerland's financial history since 1980 proved that during the war the allocation of funds to the army, precisely for the building of the "redoubt" would not have been possible without profitable trade connections to Germany.⁴⁴ The earlier thesis of authors⁴⁵ critical to the army has been recently been confirmed from the military side. New work shows that the tension between the "military and economic defence of the country" was subsumed under the heading of the "war economy." In effect this denoted the export economy "demanding special dispensations" for army men to work for the industry and a stringent state control of the distribution of raw materials.⁴⁶ This connection finally deprived the army's self-justification of the weight it carried in historiography throughout the "Cold War" from 1947 to 1989. In the debate about the history of the war years, critics perceived the redoubt as a myth through which the army, even after 1945, was legitimised as a masculine, Swiss and Christian elite group. It was a fight about fixed images of history

42 J. Tanner, 'Or & Granit, La défense nationale et les liens économiques entre la Suisse et le Troisième Reich durant la Seconde Guerre mondiale,' *Les Annuelles, Histoire et société contemporaines* 1 (1990), pp. 31-48.

43 Compare *Documents Diplomatiques Suisses (1939-1940)*, vol. 13 (Berne, 1991), pp. 889 ff.

44 J. Tanner, *Bundeshaushalt, Währung und Kriegswirtschaft. Eine finanzsoziologische Analyse der Schweiz zwischen 1938 und 1953* (Zürich, 1986); M. Heiniger, *Dreizehn Gründe, warum die Schweiz im Zweiten Weltkrieg nicht erobert wurde* (Zürich, 1989).

45 See Heiniger, *Dreizehn Gründe*, pp. 9-19, especially the introductory chapter "Sonderfall Schweiz?"

46 H. Wegmüller, *Brot oder Waffen. Der Konflikt zwischen Volkswirtschaft und Armee in der Schweiz 1939-1945* (Zürich, 1998), pp. 103 ff, 134 ff.

and thus about the question of the appropriateness of a policy of collective security to the life of the individual and how such a policy should be understood in the present.

The fall of false images turned out to be an end of heroes and heroism. And the debates about military history however made evident that behind this stands a new question about "interactions between military, economic, and ideological factors" in the Swiss elites at that time.⁴⁷ In concrete terms this concerns the significance of the exporting economy, technological production and the delivery of war materials - before, during, and after the Second World War. It has been stated in a recent study that during war time Swiss companies exported 80% or 820 millions SFR of their war material production to Germany, Italy, and Romania. The most important of these companies had their origin in the period after the restrictive Versailles treaties of 1918-19 when the Germans saw a way out to maintain their war material production by relocating capital and technology into neutral countries.⁴⁸

HUMANITARIAN PRACTICES AND REFUGEE POLICIES

In view of the long amnesia after 1945 it scarcely needs to be stressed that the attitudes towards Jews and antisemitism, as well as towards Gypsies, in Swiss society must play a substantial part in such analysis.⁴⁹ This is not simply a matter of examining the active or quiescent adoption of antisemitic attitudes or measures, for example when German business partners put pressure on Swiss firms to get the authorities to ensure that Swiss citizens of Jewish extraction were removed from certain functions.⁵⁰ Resistance to antisemitism, the defence of human rights, and genuine, often risky efforts to help must not be left out of the analysis, either. Swiss courts resisted

47 On the dispute over this compare R. Jaun, 'The Military national Defense, 1939-45,' in *Switzerland and Second World War*, ed. G. Kreis (London and Portland, 2000), p. 202 ff.

48 P. Hug, *Schweizer Rüstungsindustrie und Kriegsmaterialhandel zur Zeit des Nationalsozialismus: Unternehmungsstrategien, Marktentwicklung, öffentliche Kontrolle* (Zürich, 2001). Edited by ICE. See also M. Perrenoud, 'Foreign Trade and Swiss Politics, 1939-45,' in *Switzerland and Second World War*, ed. G. Kreis (London and Portland, 2000), pp. 26 ff; and P. Hug, 'Biologische und chemische Waffen in der Schweiz zwischen Aussen-, Wissenschafts- und Militärpolitik,' *Studien und Quellen* 23 (1997), pp. 115 ff.

49 J. Picard, 'Investigating "Anti-Semitism"? On the Concept and Function of "Anti-Semitism" and Problems Involved in Research,' in *Switzerland and Second World War*, ed. G. Kreis, (London and Portland, 2000), pp. 132 ff.

50 An example of the way in which National Socialist attempts to exert pressure in the interplay between firms and authorities can be effective is illustrated by the following case: The German client of an insurance firm complains on a visit to Switzerland that he has confirmed the presence of a Jewish doctor at the border control and threatens to pass on this information to the Foreign Office in Berlin. The Swiss insurance firm gets in touch with the Political Department in Berne which demands in turn from the Federal Office for Military Welfare that "there should be no employment of Jewish officials or medical personnel on the German-Swiss border." Compare the files in the Swiss Federal Archives, Berne, BAR 2001 D 3, vol. 48, correspondence of 30 January and 10 February 1942.

National Socialist authorities by denying them access to assets which had been "aryanized" in Germany in "legal" terms, but which in reality had been deposited by their Jewish owners in Switzerland.⁵¹ For those German and Austrian Jews who had a fortune outside of the National Socialist realm this often meant that they had some prospects – if they were lucky enough to escape to Switzerland and to be accepted as refugees seeking asylum.

Before turning to this subject, it is necessary to make a few remarks about the legal situation. Although Swiss behaviour concerning the admission and treatment of military personnel was bound by international conventions, under international law the country had much greater freedom with regard to granting of asylum to civilian refugees. According to the understanding of the time, asylum was the right of the state to grant protection and refuge to foreigners who were being persecuted for political, religious, or other reasons. It was a right that could be exercised vis-à-vis other states, but did not create any duties towards foreign states or towards people fleeing persecution and seeking protection. At times, the negation of any individual claim to asylum was interpreted to mean that there was no need to justify the denial of asylum to a person seeking protection.⁵² According to this logic, the authorities' freedom of action led to the conclusion that the threat to which a refugee was exposed abroad did not automatically constitute a reason for granting asylum. In one decisive point, however, Switzerland was bound by international law. On 18 August, 1937 Switzerland, following the lead of Belgium, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, and Norway, signed the Geneva Agreement of 4 July, 1936 on the legal status of German refugees. This agreement was the predecessor to the Convention of 10 February, 1938, to which Switzerland was a signatory, though it never ratified the Convention.⁵³ Under the 1936 statute Switzerland and the other states were prohibited from sending back refugees that had succeeded in crossing from Germany into Switzerland.⁵⁴ Although poorly formulated, this provision of the Agreement was clear. However, it could not prevent increasing opposition to refugees in political policy and practice from 1938 onwards.

There was also the moral argument. Switzerland had repeatedly declared a tradition of asylum and humanitarian practice, presented as proof to verify its neutrality since the end of the 19th century. In this conception,

51 F. Vischer, 'Das nationalsozialistische Recht im Spiegel einiger Entscheidungen schweizerischer Gerichte,' in *Festschrift für Ulrich Drobnig*, ed. J. Basedow, K. J. Hopt and H. Kötz (Tübingen, 1998), pp. 455 ff; and the expertise of A. Lüchinger in *Die Schweiz, der Nationalsozialismus und das Recht. Band 2: Privatrecht*, vol. 19 (Zürich, 2001). Edited by ICE.

52 Bonjour, *Neutralität*, vol. 5, p. 289.

53 See C. Ludwig, *Die Flüchtlingspolitik der Schweiz in den Jahren 1933 bis 1955. Bericht an den Bundesrat zuhanden der eidgenössischen Räte* (Bern, 1959), pp. 68–71.

54 The question whether this also applied to refugees from states occupied by Germany cannot be answered clearly but with a historically qualified yes; further discussions cf. the opinion in a study report of W. Kälin, *Rechtliche Aspekte der Flüchtlingspolitik im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, commissioned by the ICE (Bern, 1999).

neutrality and humanitarian attitudes were co-dependent: the exercise of neutrality rendered possible a tried and tested asylum policy, and a humanitarian tradition gave credibility to the neutrality of the neutral state in the classic sense. Even though Switzerland did not at the time have a law against discrimination, only against arbitrary acts, neutrality law required equal treatment for citizens of all states. Besides the principle of equal treatment in admitting refugees, there was also the principle of universality in the provision of humanitarian aid. By referring to the enlightened concept of "the dignity of man" as the prerequisite and link,⁵⁵ the criterion of human liberty in the face of danger to life could have become the core of the refugee policy of the neutral state. In the politics of the international order that was emerging at the time, the dignity of man was seen as the last cause for the new international law.

In political practice, this would have meant showing no political and ideological consideration for the persecuting state, so as to gain some freedom of action for the neutral state and its humanitarian mission on behalf of the victims requesting help. However, as we know, that was not always the case. By adopting the anti-Jewish measures in August 1942, the authorities preferred to offend morally against humanity and justice rather than subordinate other considerations of justice and politics to humanitarian concerns. As a result, although Switzerland granted temporary refuge to 51,000 civilians, among them 21,000 Jews, it turned away or returned more than 25,000 refugees, mostly of Jewish origin.⁵⁶ It must be said clearly: The help and magnanimous solidarity of numerous Swiss towards refugees is a crucial and weighty factor that should never be forgotten.⁵⁷ Thousands of Jewish men, women, and children survived the atrocities of National Socialism in Switzerland, and the record of the many Swiss who lend their help and relief to the refugees deserve to be kept in mind and memory.

By contrast, the behaviour of the authorities in crucial moments in which persecution and genocide came to light kept practical Swiss refugee policy focused on deterrence for far too long. In addition, with reference to the then prevailing international law, and by exploiting the lack of any legal definition of victims, the Swiss authorities prevented the International Committee of the Red Cross from pursuing its ideals and using its influence to possibly do something.⁵⁸ It is interesting that occasionally the argument

55 I. Kant, 'Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Rechtslehre,' in *Metaphysik der Sitten. Werkausgabe*, vol. VIII (Wiesbaden, 1956), p. 569, in the section on "Duties of Virtue," dealt with critically in the paragraph "On grovelling."

56 G. Koller, 'Entscheidungen über Leben und Tod: Die behördliche Praxis in der schweizerischen Flüchtlingspolitik während des Zweiten Weltkrieges,' *Studien und Quellen* 22 (Die Schweiz und die Flüchtlinge 1933–1945) (1996), pp. 17–106.

57 J. Picard, 'Die Schweiz: Hilfe, Selbsthilfe und Solidarität entlang der Grenze,' in *Solidarität und Hilfe für Juden in der NS-Zeit*, ed. W. Benz and J. Wetzel (Berlin, 1996), vol. 1, pp. 233–70.

58 J.-Cl. Favez, *Das IKRK und das Dritte Reich. War der Holocaust aufzuhalten?* (Zürich, 1989), pp. 217 ff.

of "neutrality" was used to justify this stance. For instance, the despatch of a team of Swiss medical doctors to the German eastern front was justified by earlier assistance to the western democracies, but the knowledge of the atrocities committed by the Germans was suppressed.⁵⁹ Nowadays it appears that indiscriminate use was made of the neutrality argument, as is manifest in the following text dating from autumn 1942. The context is the question of whether Belgian and French children could be sent to Switzerland for a holiday. Jewish children were excluded from taking advantage of this opportunity.⁶⁰ The source is the minutes of the Swiss Red Cross: "On the question of antisemitism, Colonel Remund recalled that the Swiss people had always had certain reservations about Jews. Thus, antisemitism in Switzerland is not identical with the present attitude in Germany. [...] In the Jewish question, Divisional Commander von Muralt also shared the opinion of the chairman. Although the [Swiss] people are distressed by the lot of the persecuted emigrants, this has not changed their rejection of the Jews. Therefore, the Red Cross should not comment on this problem and should preserve its neutrality."⁶¹ In this case it is obvious that neutrality was used as an argument not only against a humanitarian action, but also in the discussion about what degree of antisemitism is acceptable.

Since 1938, the commitment of Swiss and foreign relief agencies as well as parts of the Swiss population and the many individuals, and their readiness to accept that neutrality involved a humanitarian obligation, contrasted sharply with the defensive attitude and indifference on the part of the federal and cantonal authorities. In addition, the cantons feared that they would be obliged to provide services. During the war, the asylum practices of the federal government towards refugees and internees were based on the 1939 decision to grant the government full powers, but were heavily influenced by the Law on Aliens (ANAG) of 1931 and earlier institutional measures of an ideological nature. Set antisemitic, anti-foreigner, and anti-minority views are combined in ANAG in a legally explicit effort to combat "foreign infiltration,"⁶² for good measure, the law also worsened discrimination against Swiss women.⁶³ This kind of domestic political and mental attitude strongly influenced the theoretical and practical discrepancy

59 G. Haas, "Wenn man gewusst hätte, was sich drüben im Reich abspielte..." 1941-1943. *Was man in der Schweiz von der Judenvernichtung wusste* (Basel and Frankfurt a. M., 1994).

60 J. Picard, *Die Schweiz und die Juden 1933-1945: Schweizerischer Antisemitismus, jüdische Abwehr, internationale Migrations- und Flüchtlingspolitik* (Zürich, 1994), pp. 430 ff. This book has been published with some new materials in French: J. Picard, *La Suisse et les Juifs 1933-1945*, Préface de Saul Friedländer (Lausanne, 2000).

61 Minutes of the working committee of the Swiss Red Cross to help children, 22 October 1942; Swiss Federal archives 2001 D 2, Nr.187. See A. Schmidlin, *Eine andere Schweiz. Helferinnen, Kriegskinder und humanitäre Politik, 1933-1942* (Zürich, 1999).

62 See the remarks of Sylvia and Gérald Arlettaz, Stefan Mächler and Patrick Kury in A. Mattioli, *Antisemitismus in der Schweiz* (Zürich, 1998), pp. 327 ff.

63 See M. Bigler-Eggenberger, 'Bürgerrechtsverlust durch Heirat: Ein dunkler Fleck in der jüngeren Schweizer Rechtsgeschichte,' *Recht* 2 (1999), pp.33-42.

between the ideal of neutrality, material interests, and humanitarian practice. Moreover, after the war it took far too long before people became aware of this insensitivity.⁶⁴

SOME CONCLUSIONS

The appeal to a special status, the sense of security in "accumulating" essential neutrality, gave credence to the belief that Switzerland existed as a neutral state in an apparently unbroken and stable "history."⁶⁵ This attitude of the 1940es to 70es was strengthened by the circumstance that the divided European continent, despite the build up of arms on both sides, was paradoxically going through a quiet period of successful political peace initiatives. However, in the long term the idea of an apparently unchanging neutrality matrix proved to be an illusion because of fundamental global shifts. The Cold War moved the focus of world politics away from Europe. Military conflicts took the shape of a struggle between the fundamental values of liberal democracy and Communism, which became an additional factor for the liberation movements in Asia, Africa, and the Near and Middle East in their struggle between self-determination and colonialism. After the United States assumed Great Britain's imperial role in 1947,⁶⁶ "East" and "West" became ideological shorthand for these conflicts over political power.

The wars in Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, and the Near and Middle East exhibited elements of terrorism, civil war, and genocide whose relative destructive potential corresponded to that of the superpowers' nuclear arms race. One condition of the US guarantee of security that the immobile Western European alliance partners were forced to accept was withdrawal from their colonies. The protective American umbrella and the penetration of liberal democratic values enabled Europe to gradually develop into a civil society that defined itself linguistically and organizationally in terms of its economy. This made it possible to increasingly "neutralize" the catastrophic historical background of the historical project of postwar Europe and whitewash the blot called "Auschwitz." The perception that in Switzerland history continued to unfold relatively untouched by these developments received one knock after another as changes took effect, until it began to collapse after 1989. Up until then, this perception had encouraged an imagery of neutrality that took the nature of a collective forgetting. The fabrication

64 See D. Thürer, 'Humanität und Neutralität - Zum politischen und völkerrechtlichen Spannungsverhältnis zweier Grundprinzipien der schweizerischen Aussenpolitik,' in *Festschrift für Hans Haug*, ed. Y. Hangartner and S. Trechsel (Stuttgart and Bern, 1986), pp. 279 ff.

65 S. Zala, *Gebändigte Geschichte. Amtliche Historiografie und ihr Malaise mit der Geschichte der Neutralität 1945-1961* (Bern, 1998).

66 T. H. Anderson, *The United States, Great Britain and the Cold War, 1944-1947* (Columbia, 1981); and W. Loth, *Geschichte des Kalten Krieges* (München, 1990), pp. 163 ff. on Truman's speech to the U. S. Congress 1947.

of recollection, especially in the form of state-organized descriptions of the past, fitted the frame of prerequisites of neutrality. Whereas Germany and France practised a policy of insulating their "prehistory," Switzerland narrated its history in the light of its neutrality. This excluded an examination of the time before and during World War II – whether and for what ideological and material reasons the legal and political views of unjust regimes were tolerated, or possibly even adopted. The argument of neutrality, having been subsequently used to contain questions about reappraisal and restitution, no longer fits. However, all this does not tell us if neutrality will be restored in the future and in a new definition after the recent demythologization during the past decade of contemporary history.

THE "SEMITIC" GAZE FROM THE SCREEN

German and Austrian Cinematic Discourse between Antisemitism and Philosemitism

Today, images of Jewish women, men, and children are basically imprinted in our minds through the moving images of Jewish characters on the screen or on the stage. When mentioning Anne Frank, most people in western countries will immediately recall images from stage or from one of the various cinematic depictions since the 1950s. Throughout the 20th century, and even more so in the first decade of the 21st century with its immense production and distribution of visual products, the visual imagination overshadows the traditional literary imagination. Visual culture, particularly feature films transport cultural signs that are central to our perception of the world, past and present. Films can indicate or illustrate major cultural, intellectual or artistic shifts. Films can represent cultural uneasiness or a whole cosmos of new perceptions of reality. In films the real becomes the virtual, and the virtual reveals the very heart of the real.¹

Films, however, can also dwell on hidden cultural, political or intellectual agendas of a society that need more time to come to the fore. They may have the character of a subversive cultural discourse that challenges our understanding, one that may even contradict our perception of open and visible cultural issues. This is extremely relevant in the visual representation of issues that mirror conflicting perceptions, attitudes, and lead to antagonistic reactions as is the case with antisemitic or philosemitic images in a democratic society. Films with historical subjects do not only represent history but histories, and they dwell on memories, sometimes even on antagonistic memories. Given the long tradition of chauvinism, xenophobia, nationalistic sentiment, anti-Jewish prejudice and racism in German culture, with their normative reversal after 1945, it is obvious that since the Shoah cinematic dealings with things Jewish became highly problematic in Germany and Austria.²

1 See F. Stern, 'Durch Glös Brille: Kino als zeit- und kulturgeschichtliche Herausforderung,' *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaften* 1/16 (2005), pp. 59–87, for a recent overview of German film see S. Hacke, *German National Cinema* (London and New York, 2002).

2 On Jewish topics in West and East German film see F. Stern, *Facing the Past. Representations of the Holocaust in German Cinema since 1945*, Joseph and Rebecca Meyerhoff Annual Lecture (Washington, 2000). For a general overview of Holocaust related issues in current film culture, see F. Stern, 'The Holocaust: Representing Lasting Images in Film and Literature,' in *Contemporary Responses to the Holocaust*, ed. K. Kwiet and J. Matthäus (Westport and London, 2004), pp. 193–217. For the first decades see A. Insdorf, *Indelible Shadows: Film and the Holocaust* (Cambridge, 1983, and following editions).