NETWORKS *of* NAZI PERSECUTION

Bureaucracy, Business and the Organization of the Holocaust

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GERALD D. FELDMAN & WOLFGANG SEIBEL

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Berghahn Books
New York • Oxford

First published in 2005 by

Berghahn Books

www.berghahnbooks.com

First paperback edition published in 2006

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Networks of Nazi persecution : bureaucracy, business, and the organization
of the Holocaust / edited by Gerald D. Feldman and Wolfgang Seibel.
p. cm. -- (Studies on war and genocide)
Includes bibliographical references.
ISBN 1-57181-177-X (alk. paper)
1. Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)--Causes. 2. Holocaust, Jewish
(1939-1945)--Economic aspects. 3. Germany--Economic policy--1933-1945.
4. Bureaucracy--Germany--History--20th century. 5. World War, 1939-1945--
Confiscation and pillage--Europe. 6. Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiter-
Partei. Schutzstaffel. 7. Jewish property--Europe. I. Feldman, Gerald D. II.
Seibel, Wolfgang, 1953- . III. War and genocide ; 6.

D804.3.N483 2004
940.53'181--dc22 2004043734

10/1957

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available
from the British Library.

ISBN 1-57181-177-X hardback
ISBN 1-84545-163-5 paperback

Printed in the United States on acid-free paper

Dedicated to the Memory of Roger V. Gould,
1962–2002

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List of Abbreviations

AG	Aktiengesellschaft
AOK6	Armeeoberkommando 6
BdS	Befehlshaber der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD
CDC	Caisse des dépôts et consignations
CDJC	Centre de documentation juive contemporaine
CDU	Christlich Demokratische Union
CGQJ	Commissariat Général aux Questions Juives
DAW	Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke
Dego	Deutsche Golddiskontbank
DFG	Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft
DNB	De Nederlandsche Bank
DSK	Devisenschutzkommando
DVL	Deutsche Volksliste
EK5	Einsatzkommando 5
ERR	Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg
EWZ	Einwandererzentralstelle
FA	Finanzamt
FK	Feldkommandantur
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
GDR	German Democratic Republic
GFP	Geheime Feldpolizei
GG	General Gouvernement
HJ	Hitler Jugend
HSSPF	Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer
HTO	Haupttreuhandstelle Ost
HTW	Handelstrust West
IfZ	Institut für Zeitgeschichte

Liro	Lippmann, Rosenthal & Co.
MBF	Militärbefehlshaber in Frankreich
NKVD	People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs
NS	Nationalsozialistisch
NSBO	Nationalsozialistische Betriebszellenorganisation
NSDAP	Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei
NSV	NationalsozialistischeVolkswohlfahrt
OFP	Oberfinanzpräsident
OK	Ortskommandantur
OMGUS	Office for Military Government (U.S.)
OT	Organisation Todt
PA	Provisional Administrator
PK	Propagandakompanie
POWs	Prisoners of War
RFM	Reichsfinanzministerium
RFSS	Reichsführer SS
RJM	Reichsjustizministerium
RKF	Reichskommissar für die Festigung Deutschen Volkstums
RM	Reichsmark
RSHA	Reichssicherheitshauptamt
RuSHA	Rasse- und Siedlungshauptamt
RV	Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland
RWM	Reichswirtschaftsministerium
SA	Sturmabteilung
SCAP	Service du Contrôle des Administrateurs Provisoires
SD	Sicherheitsdienst
SDHA	Sicherheitshauptamt
Sipo	Sicherheitspolizei
SK4a	Sonderkommando 4a
SNCF	Société Nationale des Chemins de fer français
SS	Schutzstaffel
SS-WVHA	SS-Wirtschaftsverwaltungshauptamt
UGIF	Union générale des Israélites de France
UWZ	Umwandererzentralstelle
VVRA	Vermögensverwaltungs- und Rentenanstalt

INTRODUCTION

THE HOLOCAUST AS DIVISION-OF-LABOR-BASED CRIME— EVIDENCE AND ANALYTICAL CHALLENGES

Gerald D. Feldman and Wolfgang Seibel

Division of Labor, Networks, and Organized Mass Crime

Organized mass crime is unthinkable without division of labor. The Holocaust is no exception to this rule but, rather, its most horrifying manifestation. Evidence related to the role of government bureaucracy was, to be sure, already part of classic Holocaust research.[1] Meta-theories of the Holocaust have drawn on the nature and consequences of modern bureaucracy as a tool of persecution and mass murder, the most prominent being Hannah Arendt's banalization theory.[2]

Both the planning and the implementation of genocide were carried out in accordance with conventional division-of-labor principles. From 1939 on, the Amt *IV*, "Gegnererforschung und Bekämpfung" (Researching and Combating the Enemy) of the Reichssicherheitshauptamt (Reich Security Main Office) with its Department IV B 4, run by Adolf Eichmann, was in charge of anti-Jewish policy. The enforcement of the persecutory measures was delegated to the Staatspolizeileitstellen (State Police Head Offices) or, in the German occupied territories outside the Reich, to the Befehlshaber der Sicherheitspolizei und des Sicherheitsdienstes (SD) (Commanders of the Security Police and Security Service) (BdS). These core institutions, however, were dependent on numerous other institutions and individual participants, state and private, German and, in the occupied territories, domestic agents, for the implementation of the "final solution." In the occupied territories in particular, anti-Jewish policy implied resource dependency of the occupation administration and the Berlin central offices.[3] Vertical division of labor was

eclipsed by the rivalry between different agencies, both German and domestic, resulting in "polycracy" or even "organized chaos."[4]

Thus, anti-Jewish policy and the persecution apparatus were obviously not just an SS and Gestapo matter. What is more, coordination of the complex persecution apparatuses could not be accomplished in an exclusively hierarchical manner. As the chapters in this volume reveal, coordination took place in a hierarchical as well as a cooperative way and, just as the differentiation of power within the regime or between the occupying power and domestic authorities played a role, so did the interdependence of a variety of agencies beyond formal rules of cooperation. To a large extent, the persecution apparatus was made up of inter-organizational networks as they have been described in political science and organization sociology literature.[5]

This perspective is supported by three strands of recent Holocaust research findings.

The first aspect concerns the situation of the SS and police apparatus, without question the core institution of the persecution apparatus. The degree of hegemony of the SS and police apparatus—abundantly described in the literature[6] —as it had been emerging in Germany since 1933 through the fusion of party organizations (SS, SD) with the state police and its independence vis-à-vis the general public administration, was, in the occupied areas, again dependent on the formal structure of the occupation regime. This, in turn, was shaped by the strategic goals of the occupying power, but it did not follow a standardized plan within these goals as is revealed by the situation even in a region so highly homogenous as German occupied Western Europe.[7] In one way or the other, however, division of labor meant collaboration of indigenous institutions and individuals.

The second aspect concerns the range of the anti-Jewish measures, mainly the relationship between economic and repressive police persecution. The "Aryanization" of Jewish-owned businesses was not controlled by the SS and Gestapo but instead took place under the jurisdiction of the Gauwirtschaftsberater (Regional Economic Advisors) of the Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (NSDAP) in cooperation with the self-administrative chambers of industry and commerce and the free professions, as well as the local governments, law firms, banks and insurance companies.[8] In German-occupied territories, the jurisdiction for "Aryanization" and the spoliation of Jewish assets in general lay with the regular civil or military occupation administration, which was again decisively dependent on domestic agencies.[9]

Finally, the destruction of the economic existence was inseparably connected to the physical extermination of the Jews. Although organization of the deportations was the exclusive domain of the Gestapo, the plundering of the last personal assets and belongings prior to deportation required cooperation with a large number of regular authorities, for instance, as has been reported for Germany proper, with the residential registration offices (Einwohnermeldeämter), fiscal authorities, housing offices, district courts, employment offices, and further with the chambers of trade and commerce,

trade guilds, savings banks and other banks, and, last but not least, with the Reichsbahn (state railroad).[10] In the German occupied territories, this pattern was repeated, despite considerable regional differences. In the final phase of the victims' complete defenselessness, there was a downright "enrichment race"[11] in both the "Aryanization" and the plundering of household and other personal belongings between the Gestapo and the finance administration[12] and, under the supervision of public authorities, between companies, private individuals, and banks.[13]

The third aspect concerns the interrelation of the differing segments of tactical and strategic German warfare and occupying politics with the mass murder of the European Jews. The studies by Aly,[14] Dieckmann,[15] Gerlach,[16] Gutberger,[17] Heim and Aly,[18] Herbert,[19] Müller[20] and Friedrich[21] describe the interlocking of varying logics of action and interests within German warfare and occupation politics and their effects on the initiation and implementation of the Holocaust. This reflected the "polycratic" conglomerate of, for instance, health policy, population politics, economic planning, agriculture and nutrition, and warfare. Toward the representatives of the respective spheres of interests, the SS and Gestapo apparatus acted partly as a partner in cooperation and yet partly as an opponent within the sphere of their respective interests.

However overwhelming the diversity of actors and institutions involved in the persecution, the ways in which division of labor was linked to perpetrator agency have, by and large, remained unexplored. The present volume focuses on these issues.

One important fact to be acknowledged is that the formal status of division of labor varied substantially. It ranged from highly formalized and tightly coupled relationships between participating agencies to ephemeral and loosely coupled linkages between individual actors. Weberian bureaucracy with rigid rules and hierarchies did play a crucial role in the preparation and execution of persecution and mass murder. German fiscal administration with its endeavor to confiscate as much of the Jewish assets as possible is a prominent example.[22] It would be misleading to assume, however, that the machinery of public administration always acted in accordance with the conventional rules of hierarchy and regulated cooperation as far as the persecution of the Jews was concerned. A striking phenomenon is the self-initiative of local and regional authorities, which often took independent steps of anti-Jewish discrimination and persecution years ahead of central Reich regulations, and then asked for central coordination for the sake of homogeneity.[23] While this largely reflects the influence of local Nazi leaders in municipal administration, state administration, too, rigidly implemented anti-Jewish regulation without central initiation or coordination.[24] Moreover, public authorities and the Nazi party organization were not just acting as law-abiding agencies. Bribery and corruption were an integral part of the persecution.[25]

Other organizational forms of persecution were much more informal, and yet at least as effective as public bureaucracy. The spoliation of Jewish

assets, the "Aryanization" of Jewish-owned firms in particular, required a vast array of expertise and institutional assistance. Banks, brokers, law firms, investors (often former competitors), and intermediaries of the Nazi party as well as local and regional administration formed networks of spoliation and persecution whose extension and structure are illustrated in several chapters in this volume.[26] What made those networks stable and effective was, above all, the mutual benefit of those involved.

Networks and the presumptive source of their formation and stability make us aware that, although individuals persecuted the Jews in obedience to orders and in accordance with their own anti-Semitism, neither hierarchy nor ideology was an indispensable prerequisite for the active involvement in mass crime. As the chapters in this volume illustrate, individuals contributed to the radicalization of anti-Jewish policy without following orders or a particular commitment to anti-Semitism. Apparently, the motivational basis of persecution was much more encompassing. However extended the variety of motives of persecutors and their helpers, motivation was not just contingent. What several chapters of this book reveal is the coordinating and legitimizing role of professions and institutions. The looting of Jewish property or the "Aryanization" of Jewish businesses, for instance, was certainly stimulated by crude enrichment. But many accomplices had only limited opportunities—if any—to enrich themselves personally. Rather, they fulfilled what they perceived as an obligation toward professional standards and institutional roles as bankers, insurance representatives, lawyers, civil servants of the fiscal administration, etc. Those roles and standards, however, were not strictly binding. They certainly provided strong incentives but also left considerable leeway for personal choices.

It is here that anti-Semitism did play a crucial role in two dimensions. One is that many peripheral but indispensable actors within the persecution apparatuses shared anti-Semitic stereotypes and approved anti-Jewish measures in general. Removing Jews from entire industries and combating them as a group of uncertain loyalty to the Reich were what many outside the orbit of the SS and Gestapo perceived as justifiable and appropriate even if they did not share the idea of physical extermination. Once anti-Jewish stereotypes had been adopted, principled resistance against more radical steps of persecution was very unlikely. A second function of anti-Semitism as state ideology was coordination regardless of personal conviction. The anti-Jewish agenda produced signals that were unmistakably simple and unambiguous and, thus, could be taken into account independently of individual persuasion. In combination with the permanent threat of violent coercion, state anti-Semitism played a powerful role in homogenizing the action of tens of thousands of "helpers" who would not have taken the initiative to persecute the Jews themselves but did not hesitate to comply with the persecution once it was initiated by those in power.

The Structure of Organized Mass Crime and Moral Responsibility

Regardless of its uniqueness in history, the Holocaust shares crucial characteristics with organized mass crime in general, of which the present volume stresses networks and division of labor as predominant structural features. Organized crime is obviously a structural phenomenon, but a merely structural perspective entails obvious risks of misinterpretation. Criminal action, like any kind of human agency, is embedded in social structures in the sense of regularities of interindividual relationship, but crime as such is committed by responsible individuals. Assessing the degree of personal responsibility is what the structural analysis of organized crime should be ultimately aiming at. As the sense of moral obligation remains the very basis for distinguishing between right and wrong, the analysis of formal and informal structures of human agency can never exculpate individuals whose wrongdoing is beyond any doubt. But the analysis will nonetheless reveal regularities of interindividual and interorganizational relationship that enhance or reduce the risk of individual wrongdoing.

Networks are a particular case in point. Interindividual and interorganizational networks are portrayed in the relevant literature as an alternative to conventional governance in terms of public and corporate bureaucracy.[27] Deeper insight into the nature of organized crime, however, challenges such appraisals. The evidence presented in this volume, both empirical and theoretical in nature, supports the assumption that informal, network-type mechanisms of governance on the one hand and traditional bureaucracies on the other hand were equally effective in mobilizing human resources for evil purposes during the Holocaust. Certainly, one important difference between "good" and "evil" networks resides in the macro-political order in which they are embedded. But networks as a type of organized crime per se represent issues of judgment, leadership, and morality. The leadership of network elites may be designed either to mobilize or to demobilize human resources. The mobilization of networks of persecution, for instance, was dependent on intellectual capability, moral judgment, and ideological zeal.

However, when it comes to organized mass crime, moral judgment is obviously not only a matter of the leadership of criminal elites but also a matter of the compliance and support of rank-and-file participants. Support of participants and organizational cohesion, as described in organization-theory classics,[28] are fundamentally ambivalent phenomena based on an interplay of selfishness and legitimacy. On the one hand, it is precisely *not* the willingness to cooperate for the sake of common goals which makes organizations stable, powerful, and effective. Rather, individuals use organizations for personal purposes such as income, career promotion, etc. The decoupling of organizational performance from personal commitment to organizational goals makes organizations much more effective than cooperation on the basis of shared goals, the reason being the enormous diversification of motivational sources. Networks, reaching far beyond the

boundaries of formal organization, even enlarge this diversity. On the other hand, despite the dominant role of personal purposes, individuals are not unaware of organizational goals and no sustainable integration or true leadership can be based on immoral organizational purposes.[29] That is why organized mass crime is intrinsically connected to legitimating concepts and ideological rationalizations.

The very ambivalence of organizations as such makes the structure of organized mass crime robust and vulnerable at the same time. The robustness stems from the decoupling of individual motivation from organizational goals, which makes "organized evil" decisively more dangerous than mobilization through shared goals or beliefs. The reason is, again, the enormous diversification of motivational sources.[30] The opacity and blurriness of networks do not help to reduce those risks. The fact, however, that individuals (accomplices, "willing executioners," "collaborators," etc.), in spite of all their selfishness, remain aware of organizational goals implies, first, that accomplices remain accountable for what they are doing even when they act in networks that are fluid and opaque in nature and, secondly, that the separation of organizational goals and individual motivation is limited by the quest for legitimacy and identity.[31]

If there is good sense in acknowledging that moral indifference is basically an unstable mind set,[32] this will also affect the moral indifference of accomplices: Hence the potential influence of moral standards and, not least, examples of civil courage and moral leadership.[33] Raising moral costs for accomplices can make the decisive difference and, therefore, is an important element of public awareness and policy. What Holocaust research reveals is not just the structural complexity of the persecution machinery but also the failure to observe the most elementary moral imperatives. Sustaining those imperatives remains as much an obligation as analyzing the linkage between "agency" and "structure," without which even the highest moral standards will fail in a world of complex organizations.

Organization of the Volume

The present volume is organized according to three principal configurations of division of labor and mobilization of individuals and agencies for persecution. The three thematic parts are introduced by prominent scholars in the field, Christian Gerlach, Gerhard Hirschfeld and Wolfgang Seibel, and Michael T. Allen. A concluding part is devoted to general issues of network analysis and division of labor when it comes to Holocaust research.

Part I with chapters by Wolfgang Dierker, Dieter Ziegler, Philippe Verheyde, Martin Dean, Jonathan Petropoulos and Frank Bajohr, refers to rivalry and competition as intensifying rather than impeding forces of persecution. Precisely because the persecution machinery was neither monolithic nor exclusively hierarchical, distribution of jurisdiction and power remained often blurred and contested. However, competition among indi-

viduals and agencies and eagerness to conquer or to defend jurisdiction in *Judenangelegenheiten* (Jewish affairs) rarely caused persistent friction. Rather, as with competition elsewhere, the result was a growing effort to outperform rivals, which crucially radicalized the persecution.

Part II with chapters by Alfons Kenkmann, Gerard Aalders, Marc-Olivier Baruch, Isabel Heinemann and Wendy Lower provides an alternative view on the consequences of division of labor. The chapters in this section analyze how perpetrators aptly coordinated their respective interests and strategies. This may prevent us from overstating the image of "organized chaos" as an ingredient of Nazi rule. Persecuting and annihilating the Jews were at the core of Nazi Germany's policy in all of Europe during World War II. While it is undeniable that division of labor and the network-type blurriness of jurisdiction and competencies had a particular impact on the implementation of the Holocaust, the perpetrators often were smart and energetic enough to overcome the disadvantages of administrative fragmentation.

Part III with chapters by Wolf Gruner and Gerald D. Feldman, sheds new light on the relationship between decentralized initiatives and central coordination when it comes to anti-Jewish policy in Nazi Germany. In the domains of both police repression and the economy local or non-governmental actors either initiated measures against the Jews or skillfully anticipated and operationalized what they perceived as the will of the ruling clique. The vertical axis of division of labor and reintegration is of particular interest. In some instances, as in the case of the municipal administration, decentralized agencies used traditional techniques of self-coordination in an effort to homogenize and thus radicalize anti-Jewish policy. In other instances, as in the case of the German insurance industry, anticipatory obedience led to flexible adaptation vis-à-vis the regime's anti-Jewish agenda at the expense of moral and professional standards.

In the concluding part IV, Jörg Raab and Wolfgang Seibel provide a discussion of networks, division of labor and the Holocaust from a social science perspective. Networks are more than just a metaphor. In recent decades, research has made considerable progress in the measurement and visualization of the informal relationship between individuals and institutions. Making networks of persecution measurable and visible is a most challenging task. Moreover, taking individual intention and its impact on the persecution seriously requires a reconciliation of methodological individualism with structural analysis. This implies building hypotheses on how division of labor and the differentiation of power within the persecution apparatus affected both the room to manoeuvre and the incentive structure of the perpetrators and their "helpers." Building and testing those hypotheses remains a challenge to future interdisciplinary research.

Acknowledgments

This volume originated from an international conference held at the University of Konstanz, Germany, in September 2000, which was generously supported by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG). The University of Konstanz sponsored the preparation of the present publication, including the translation of several contributions into English, through additional research funds. Final editing was made at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, where Wolfgang Seibel was a member of the School of Historical Studies in the second term of the academic year 2003–2004. The editors wish to thank James Fearns for translating the German papers selected for publication. Jürgen Klöckler and Insa Meinen, with the assistance of Anja Bertsch, Till Blume, Julia Galka, Katrin-Isabel Krähling and Tina Schmidt-Böhringer, assumed the tedious task of revising the manuscripts according to the publisher's formal demands.

The volume is dedicated to the memory of Roger V. Gould (1962–2002), a pioneer of historical network analysis, who served admirably as a general commentator to the conference from which this book emerged.

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18. Susanne Heim and Götz Aly, *Vordenker der Vernichtung. Auschwitz und die deutschen Pläne für eine neue europäische Ordnung* (Frankfurt on Main, 1991).
19. Ulrich Herbert, "Die deutsche Militärverwaltung in Paris und die Deportation der französischen Juden," in Herbert, *Nationalsozialistische Vernichtungspolitik*, pp. 170–208.
20. Rolf-Dieter Müller, *Hitlers Ostkrieg und die deutsche Siedlungspolitik. Die Zusammenarbeit von Wehrmacht, Wirtschaft und SS* (Frankfurt on Main, 1991).
21. Jörg Friedrich, *Das Gesetz des Krieges. Das deutsche Heer in Rußland 1941–1945. Der Prozeß gegen das Oberkommando der Wehrmacht*, 2nd ed. (Munich, 1996).
22. See contributions by Martin Dean and Alfons Kenkmann in the present volume.
23. See contribution by Wolf Gruner.
24. See again Alfons Kenkmann in this volume.
25. See contribution by Frank Bajohr.
26. See contributions by Gerald D. Feldman, Jonathan Petropoulos, Philippe Verheyde and Dieter Ziegler.
27. See H. Brinton Milward, "Governing the Hollow State," *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 10, no. 2 (2000): 359–379; Mark Thatcher, "The Development of Policy Network Analysis," *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 10 (1998): 389–416, for recent overviews.
28. See Chester I. Barnard, *The Functions of the Executive*, Thirtieth Anniversary Edition (Cambridge, 1968); Herbert A. Simon, *Administrative Behavior. A Study of Decision-Making Process in Administrative Organization* (New York, 1945).
29. Philip Selznick, *Leadership in Administration: A Sociological Interpretation* (New York/Evanston/London, 1957), as the classic reference and Steven P. Feldman, *Memory as a Moral Decision: The Role of Ethics in Organizational Culture* (Somerset, 2002) for a recent account.
30. A similar point, emphasizing the role of exchange and interorganizational competition, is made by James Buchanan, "A Defense of Organized Crime?" in Simon Rottenberg, ed., *The Economics of Crime and Punishment* (Washington D.C., 1973), pp. 119–132, with respect to organized crime in general and by Albert Breton and Ronald Wintrobe, "The Bureaucracy of Murder Revisited," *Journal of Political Economy* 94 (1986): 905–926, with respect to the Holocaust in particular. Ian Kershaw, *Hitler: 1936–45: Nemesis* (London, 2000), pp. 1–60 ("Ceaseless Radicalization"), gives a rich account of the disastrous dynamics resulting from the diffuse linkage between the various motives at the grass-roots level that made ordinary Germans comply with dictatorship and the overarching goals of Hitler and his clique. In a similar vein, Wolfgang Seibel, "A Market for Mass Crime? Inter-Institutional Competition and the Initiation of the Holocaust in France, 1940–1942," *Journal of Organization Theory and Behavior* 5 (2002): 219–217, analyzes French-German collaboration in the preparation of the Holocaust in France.
31. Harrison C. White, *Identity and Control. A Structural Theory of Social Action* (Princeton, 1992), for identity and control in interorganizational networks.
32. Thomas M. Scanlon, *What We Owe to Each Other* (Cambridge, 1998).
33. See Martin Gilbert, *The Righteous. The Unsung Heroes of the Holocaust* (New York, 2003).